NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

February 2, 2015

Attachment 22 – Witness Statements

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

DCA13MA081

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A. WITNESS STATEMENTS

1.0 ATC Controller Statements

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____ (If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204 Airfield Operations Procedures and Programs.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery, depositions, and actual court testimony.

INSTRUCTIONS: This statement is to be completed in Microsoft Word, and your signature below certifies the accuracy of this statement. It will be neither edited or amended, once signed, and will constitute your original statement.

Written statement: I was working FD and watched as the 747 started to Depart. The Aircraft Began his Rotation @ Charlie he started at a very steep climb, looked abnormal to other Departures I have seen. I seen the A/c Begin to slow its climb and try to level off. I heard a noise like the Pilot was trying to start the engine again or get More Power, Then it Began to fall and Turn to the right until finally Hitting the ground. I Immediately rang the Crash Phone out Stating a

This statement contains the HATR Incident involving ISAF 95 AG at 1056 z Bagram AB, Afghanistan Airport on 20130429 UTC. My name is Dallon Gines

I am employed as an air traffic control specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc., Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the (FD) position from 0900 z to 1732 z

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

29 APR 13
Date

I stated a 747 crashed off the Departure End just North of Taxiway Kilo, asked for Questions and terminated the Crash Phone call. Further assisted when needed.

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____ (If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204, Chapter 4. Airfield Operations flight Management.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery, depositions, and actual court testimony.

INSTRUCTIONS: This statement is to be completed in Microsoft Word, and your signature below certifies the accuracy of this statement. It will be neither edited or amended, once signed, and will constitute your original statement.

Written statement:

This statement contains the HATR/Incident involving ISF95A CQ (NAC) (Vehicle Call Sign) at Bagram (City), Afghanistan (Country) Airport on 29/04/2013 (DD/MM/YYYY) 1055 (Time) UTC. My name is Christopher Solis (Full Name) (CS). (Operating Initials)

I am employed as an airfield management specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc., Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the (AIRFIELD 3) (Local/Ground/FD/CD/CIC/RADAR) position from 1030 (Z-Time) to 1930 (Z-time)

Text of Statement: I was posted at POL fuel point west of Bravo Ramp. The jets and T-wells obstructed my view of the Runway, but I observed the NAC 747 rotate at Taxiway Charlie and the aircraft was immediatly nose to the sky, similar to an F-16 max climb departure. At roughly 500ft AGL, it appeared the aircraft had zero ability to thrust, therefore no power. It proceeded to fall helplessly to the ground, crashing just east of the Runway 03 overrun.

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

29 Apr 2013
Date

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____
(If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204, Chapter 4. Airfield Operations flight Management.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery, depositions, and actual court testimony.

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Written statement: B-747 (NATIONAL AIR CARGO)

This statement contains the HATR/Incident involving 15-95AQ at
Vehicle Call Sign
BAGRAM, AFGHANISTAN report on 29/04/2013 1035 UTC. My name is BARRY LYNN MCKELVY
CITY Country DD/MM/YYYY Time Full Name

(BM).
Operating Initials

I am employed as an airfield management specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc., Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the (ARFIELD TWO) position from 1030 to 1930
Local/Ground/FD/CD/CIC/RADAR Z-Time Z-time

Text of Statement.

I WAS FOLLOWING THE ACFT DOWN THE RUNWAY TO CONDUCT A RUNWAY FOD SWEEP WHICH IS REQUIRED FOR ALL HEAVY (WIDE BODY) AIRCRAFT. THE DEPARTURE ROLL SEEMED NORMAL AND THE AIRCRAFT ROTATED JUST PRIOR TO TWY CHARLIE. THE AIRCRAFT SEEMED TO GO IN A STRAIGHT UP ATTITUDE IMMEDIATELY AFTER TAKE OFF. HE TRIED TO LEVEL OFF JUST SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT, ROLLED OVER AND WENT DOWN NOSE FIRST.

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

29 APR 2013
Date

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____ (If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204 Airfield Operations Procedures and Programs.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery depositions, and actual court testimony.

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Written statement: While working the Watch Supervisor position, I noticed (HBTN) I5F95AQ 3/4 field pulling up rather quickly. At this time runway ops were suspended (for widebody departure). I5F95AQ then started to fly and roll right while descending and ultimately crashed. The PCAS was then activated and proper authorities notified.

This statement contains the HATR/Incident involving I5F95AQ at 1054 z Bagram AB, Afghanistan Airport on 20130429 UTC. My name is Sayten Chatman

I am employed as an air traffic control specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the CWS I position from 0900 z to 1326 z

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

29 Apr 13
Date

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____ (If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204 Airfield Operations Procedures and Programs.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery, depositions, and actual court testimony.

INSTRUCTIONS: This statement is to be completed in Microsoft Word, and your signature below certifies the accuracy of this statement. It will be neither edited or amended, once signed, and will constitute your original statement.

Written statement: I WAS WORKING LC POSITION. I CLEARED 15F4SAG FOR TAKE OFF. AFTER DEPARTURE I OBSERVED THE 747 ROTATE PRIOR TO TAXIWAY CHARLIE. HIS ANGLE AIRBORN APPEARED TO BE VERY STEEP. THE NEXT APPEARED LEVEL AS THOUGH IT WAS IN A "GLIDE" IT THEN MADE A TURN TOWARDS THE RIGHT AND CRASHED NORTH OF TAXIWAY KILO.

This statement contains the HATR/Incident involving 15F4SAG at 1056 z Bagram AB, Afghanistan Airport on 20130429 UTC. My name is JAMES D. WILMOT

I am employed as an air traffic control specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc., Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the LC position from 0800 Z to 1132 z

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

4/29/2013
Date

Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc.
Personnel Statement

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT NUMBER: _____ (If Known)

ACTION: Complete in accordance with AFI 13-204 Airfield Operations Procedures and Programs.

BACKGROUND: Much of the information concerning the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident can be retrieved via some type of recorded data source. However, some of the facts concerning what you saw and what you did may not have been completely captured. The purpose of this statement is to provide any facts within your personal knowledge that you believe will provide complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding this accident/incident. Therefore, speculations, hearsay, opinions, conclusions, and/or other extraneous data are not to be included in this statement. Additionally, this may be released to the public through FOIA or litigation activities including pretrial discovery, depositions, and actual court testimony.

INSTRUCTIONS: This statement is to be completed in Microsoft Word, and your signature below certifies the accuracy of this statement. It will be neither edited or amended once signed, and will constitute your original statement.

Written statement: From, GC I am the aircraft rotate at Charlie taxiway. once airborn the aircraft had a very steep climb. once the aircraft got about 1000' agl it appeared to stall. It rotated to the right and began to lose altitude. The aircraft then impacted the ground just off the departure end north of the Kilo ramp.

This statement contains the HAIR/Incident involving KSF95PG at 1054 z Bagram AB, Afghanistan Airport on 2013 04 29 UTC. My name is Antwone Thomas

I am employed as an air traffic control specialist by Midwest Air Traffic Control Service, Inc., Overland Park, Kansas. I was working the (GC) position from 0400 z to 1132 z

I certify to the best of my knowledge and recollection, that the above statement is correct.

[redacted]
Signature

29 Apr 13
Date

2.0 Witness Statements

At 15:10L, the crew chief informed BlackJack 1 (driven by Jose Monserrate) and BlackJack 2 (driven by Jamie Cintron) that Aircraft N949CA was ready for launch. BlackJack 1 received flight manifest from the aircraft crew chief. I proceeded with BlackJack2 and 3 to remove the air-stair and chokes. At this point BlackJack 2 took over the launch and had ground-to-cockpit communications for engine start. Everything proceeded as normal.

29 Apr, / 13

[redacted]

April2013:

At approximately 1530L, I was in position to back-marshal a C-130 located on parking spot C 15. I was on the west side of Hotel Taxiway, facing the east towards the aft end of the C-130. While waiting to begin back-marshaling the aircraft, I began watching the take-off of the National Boeing 747 (N949CA). The 747 was airborne by the time it reached Charlie Taxiway. Shortly after going past Charlie Taxiway, the aircraft began to pull nose up. At first it didn't appear out of the ordinary, but then he continued to "nose-up" the aircraft. The aircraft continued to a severe nose up angle-of-attack (approx. 80 degrees nose up). At this point, he began losing airspeed. The aircraft momentarily slipped to the left while at the same time he began falling. I estimate that he was at about 800 feet when he began falling. The aircraft then pulled his nose over the right. His turn to the right continued as the aircraft fell. It appeared at this time to have no forward motion. The aircraft appeared to impact the ground at a 45 degree angle (nose and right wing impact same time) while the aircraft was perpendicular to the ground. Upon impact, I observed the fireball explosion followed by black smoke. While observing this sequence events, I did notice what appeared to be smoke coming from the tail-cone. I was unable to determine if was from the APU or from another source.

[redacted]

29 APR 13

TIMOTHY C TACKETT

3.0 Fluor Employee Statements

FLUOR

Fluor Intercontinental, Inc.
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan

ROBERT STAMPS
Special Counsel for Afghanistan
Fluor Government Group, LOGCAP IV
864-558-3025 (Rings in Afghanistan)
Email: Robert.stamps@Fluor.com

May 6, 2013

National Transportation Safety Board

Re: National Air Cargo 747 Incident

Sirs,

On behalf of Fluor's Country Manager, Steve Whitcomb, please note that Fluor wants to respond promptly and fully to any requests for information, documents or witnesses from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). In this regard, we note that one of the questions asked of our subcontractor, Excelis, related to changes in the noise of the engines of the 747. Two of our employees were injured in the crash and provided statements to Fluor Security (see attached Incident Report).

Mr Whitcomb has asked me and Chris Batt to serve as point-of-contact for further inquiries. Our contact data is as follows:

Bob Stamps / robert.stamps@fluor.com 864-558-3025
Chris Batt / chris.batt@fluor.com 864-607-9016

Please let Chris and me know if you have any questions.

Regards,

[redacted]

Robert Stamps
Special Counsel for Afghanistan

Atch:
Fluor Incident Report (IR) IR-AB1-29-APR-12-1527

FLUOR

Type of Report:	Incident Report (IR)	**Initial:**	X	**Follow Up #**	**Final:**
Report Title:	IR-AB1-29-APR-12-1527-Destroyed Government Property (Multiple)-UNK (Initial)			**Site/Task Order:**	AB1 / TO5
Reported By:	Glenn Abshire, Fluor Human Resources Supervisor			**Incident Date:**	29 APR 13
Report Written By:	Peter Karlewicz, Fluor Security Manager			**Report Date:**	30 APR 13

Subject(s)

Last/First/Middle	SAP	Department	Job Title
UNK			

Victim/Witness(s)

Last/First/Middle	SAP	Department	Job Title
Siddiqui, Sajid	10314434	Fluor / Environmental	Logistics Coordinator
Jonas, Eddins	10315666	Fluor / Environmental	Waste Disposal Senior Mechanic

SYNOPSIS:

On 29 April 2013 at approximately 1527L, a National Airlines Boeing 747 Cargo Aircraft crashed while attempting to take off from Bagram Airfield (BAF). Upon impact the aircraft to broke apart and caught fire. Flaming debris from the aircraft damaged or destroyed several structures on the ground, including Buildings 38209B and 38209D, in which the later was occupied by a Fluor Logistics Coordinator and a Fluor Waste Disposal Senior Mechanic. The two (2) Fluor employees managed to force their way out of the burning building and escape. All Government Property (GP) in the offices, as well as both individual's United States (US) issued Passports, Fluor issued laptops, GP ballistic helmets and vests and other various personal possessions were destroyed by the fire.

DETAILS:

On 29 April 2013 at approximately 1527L, a National Airlines Boeing 747 Cargo Aircraft crashed while attempting to take off from Bagram Airfield (BAF). Upon impact the aircraft to broke apart and caught fire. Flaming debris from the aircraft damaged or destroyed several structures on the ground, including Buildings 38209B and 38209D, in which the later was occupied by Fluor Expat Logistics Coordinator, Sajid Siddiqui (SAP 10314434), and Fluor Expat Waste Disposal Senior Mechanic, Eddins Jonas (SAP 10315666). Siddiqui and Jonas managed to force their way out of the burning building and escape. All Government Property (GP) in the offices, as well as both individual's United States (US) issued Passports, Fluor issued laptops, GP ballistic helmets and vests and other various personal possessions were destroyed by the fire.

On 30 April 2013 at approximately 1525L, Siddiqui provided Security with a written statement. Siddiqui stated on 29 April 2013 at approximately 1527L, he and Jonas were working in his office (Building 38209D) at the Old Landfill when they heard the sound of a plane with engine trouble. He stated in an instant the office container was struck and electrical power was lost. Siddiqui explained they tried to exit through the office door, but it was stuck. He further stated the ceiling began to catch on fire and the room filled with smoke. Siddiqui recounted that it took them two (2) minutes to force their way out through the stuck door and escape. Once outside Security Forces (SF) picked them up, transferred them to the Military Police (MP), who in turn transported them to the US Military Hospital where they were treated and released the following morning. (Attachment 1)

On 30 April 2013 at approximately 1525L, Jonas provided Security with a written Statement. Jonas reiterated Siddiqui's version of the events and explained they were both working in the Incinerator Maintenance Office when they heard a plane take off which did not sound normal. Jonas stated he and Siddiqui looked at each other and then felt an impact that moved the office container forward and threw them to the ground. Jonas recounted that they both checked on each other and then heard an explosion. Together they forced open the office door and ran outside. While running, Jonas elaborated that he looked back and saw the crashed aircraft's cockpit on fire. (Attachment 2)

This is an Initial report pending the release of further information and generation of a Lost, Theft, Damaged or Destroyed (LTDD) Notification and all other required documentation.

DISPOSITION:

A copy of this report has been provided to:

Fluor Security

Fluor Confidential

FLUOR

Bryan Wilson Peter Karlewicz	Country Security Manager AO Security Manager
ATTACHMENTS:	
Attachment 1 – Statement, Siddiqui, Sajid	Statement, Siddiqui, Sajid
Attachment 2 – Statement, Jonas, Eddins	Statement, Jonas, Eddins

End of Report

FLUOR

Statement Form

Name: SAP:

Job Title: Work Location:

Contact Number: Date:

Time:

What, Who, Where, When and Why

I am providing the following statement about matters of which I have personal knowledge. Furthermore, I am providing this statement voluntarily and of my own free will.

On [illegible] 2013 at [illegible] David S[illegible] and James Eddi[illegible] were in the old small we heard a pop and noticed the guards at the [illegible] looking [illegible] the container was [illegible] and power was [illegible] to open the door. [illegible] We [illegible] for two minutes (exact) we [illegible] to force the door open and [illegible] ex + we [illegible] (pr pained up by [illegible] up armored vehicle (SF) [illegible] wrapped us all to the TPL who took us to the US hospital we were then discharged [illegible] hospital at 2000 on the 30th [illegible]

Inside the Pakistani medical container contained Sensitive items (passports, Kevlar helmet and vest, and pr fluor issued computer) and personal [illegible] (MacBook hard drives Jacket, money, etc)

Name: Solon

This statement is page 1 of 1 page. This statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief

Name:	Signature:	SAP:	Date:
Sajid Saddiqui	[redacted]	103[illegible]4	Aug 30 2013
Witness Name:	**Signature:**	**SAP:**	**Date:**
Peter Karlewicz	[redacted]	10324714	30 Aug 2013
Witness Name:	**Signature:**	**SAP:**	**Date:**

Fluor Confidential

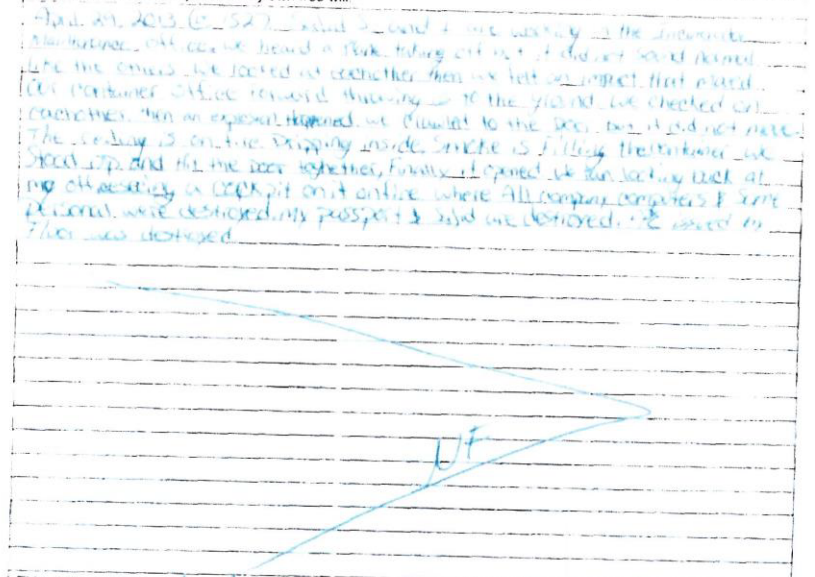
FLUOR

Statement Form

Name:
Job Title:
Contact Number:
Work Location:
SAP:
Date:
Time:

What, Who, Where, When and Why

I am providing the following statement about matters of which I have personal knowledge. Furthermore, I am providing this statement voluntarily, and of my own free will.



This statement is page 1 of 1 page. This statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Name:	Signature:	SAP:	Date:
[illegible]	[redacted]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Witness Name:	Signature:	SAP:	Date:
Peter Kurlewicz	[redacted]	10224714	30 Apr 2013
Witness Name:	Signature:	SAP:	Date:

Fluor Confidential

4.0 Emailed Statements

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2013 1:45 PM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Captain Lawrence,
On 4/29/13 I had just dropped off 3 workers for weed control operations around delta ramp west side. The national cargo pilot smiled and gave a thumbs up as he taxied out past us on the ramp to get to the active. I swung around the T-barriers when an airman that was riding with me said hey look at that plane. I turned around to see the plane witch appeared to be trying to climb to the right altitude suddenly started to climb straight up at a steady pace, to the point where the plane looked completely inverted. At this point the plane seemed to freeze there, it appeared that the plane could have stalled. I then remember it was very quiet I looked at the Airman next to me and said that plane is coming down. The plane then peeled to the right and landed belly down and immediately exploded. I rushed to make sure I had my men and then drove closer to the north end where the plane was. Along the way I picked up several Army medics and dropped them off the scene. I also remember it being very windy on the ramp that day. SRA Jesse sheppard took several photos of the plane when it exploded, I'm sure he would more than happy to assist you in your investigation. As a side note I was part of the crew that went through the wreakage with the equipment and by hand. Brien was very good to work with. If I can be any more of assistance to you please do not hesitate to give me a call.
Respectfully,
TSGT Dana L. LaPlante
455th ECES DIRT BOYZ SHOP
079-378-5781

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

WARNING!! THE EMAIL MESSAGE YOU RECEIVED HAS COME FROM AN UNSIGNED SOURCE. PLEASE VALIDATE THE ORIGINATOR PRIOR TO CLICKING ON ANY HYPERLINKS AND/OR OPENING ANY ATTACHMENTS. WARNING!!

Greetings,

My name is Captain David Lawrence, and I'm one of the investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board launched to Bagram to assist the Afghanistan Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) investigation in National Air Cargo B747-400 accident on April 29, 2013. Your name was provided by Bagram Base Safety officials as a potential

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witness to the accident. I am very interested in learning what you may have seen, heard, or even recorded. Please feel free to provide me your written account of your experiences. If you would, include your location relative to the accident sequence, what you saw, and what you heard. I would also be interested in any electronic recordings you may have may have made of the event.

Our goal is to assist the MoTCA in determining what may have occurred, why it occurred, and more importantly, steps we can take to prevent future occurrences. Your assistance is critical in our work, and I thank you for whatever information you can provide.

Most sincerely,

David

Captain David A. Lawrence

Senior Air Safety Investigator

Operational Factors Division (AS-30)

National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW
Washington, DC 20594
Phone: 202.314.6356

Cell: 202.746.0848
Fax: 240.752.6336

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2013 7:58 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

I was just walking into our building, and heard it take off. It seemed a little louder than most 747s, I looked up, and saw that it was vertical. I then saw it begin to fall to the ground. So I the ran in to the grass beside our smoke pit to see if the aircraft was going to recover. It did not and I watched it crash to the ground and explode on impact. If you have anymore questions please feel free to contact me.

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

WARNING!! THE EMAIL MESSAGE YOU RECEIVED HAS COME FROM AN UNSIGNED SOURCE. PLEASE VALIDATE THE ORIGINATOR PRIOR TO CLICKING ON ANY HYPERLINKS AND/OR OPENING ANY ATTACHMENTS. WARNING!!

Greetings,

My name is Captain David Lawrence, and I'm one of the investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board launched to Bagram to assist the Afghanistan Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) investigation in National Air Cargo B747-400 accident on April 29, 2013. Your name was provided by Bagram Base Safety officials as a potential witness to the accident. I am very interested in learning what you may have seen, heard, or even recorded. Please feel free to provide me your written account of your experiences. If you would, include your location relative to the accident sequence, what you saw, and what you heard. I would also be interested in any electronic recordings you may have may have made of the event.

Our goal is to assist the MoTCA in determining what may have occurred, why it occurred, and more importantly, steps we can take to prevent future occurrences. Your assistance is critical in our work, and I thank you for whatever information you can provide.

1

Most sincerely,

David

Captain David A. Lawrence

Senior Air Safety Investigator

Operational Factors Division (AS-30)

National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW
Washington, DC 20594
Phone: 202.314.6356

Cell: 202.746.0848
Fax: 240.752.6336

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2013 4:19 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt Lawrence,

I did observe the 747 taking off from approximately 3/4 mile away. I noticed the plane ascending and suddenly it appeared to have a much steeper incline of departure than a normal takeoff. This is the first thing that caught my eye.

Then the plane appeared to start leveling off slightly before taking a hard right turn toward the ground. I was not able to observe the impact due to facilities in the way. I also was running to enter the Joint Emergency Operations Center because it was clear that the plane was not going to recover.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

KEITH D. HODSDEN, Sr., P.E., Lt Col, USAF

Commander, 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan
DSN: 318-447-2414
VOSIP: 308-447-4050
ROSHAN: 079-751-9569
NIPR: keith.hodsden@bgab.afcent.af.mil
SIPR: keith.hodsden@bgab.afcent.af.smil.mil

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

WARNING!! THE EMAIL MESSAGE YOU RECEIVED HAS COME FROM AN UNSIGNED SOURCE. PLEASE VALIDATE THE ORIGINATOR PRIOR TO CLICKING ON ANY HYPERLINKS AND/OR OPENING ANY ATTACHMENTS. WARNING!!

Greetings,

Lawrence David

From: [redacted] AEG/ATOC <[redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 3:35 AM
To: Snyder Capt Kurtis D. RC(SW) USAF 651 AEG/ATOC
Subject: response
Attachments: Photos.pdf

I was asked to use our MHE for the upload of palletized MRAPs, which are the 60Ks that load and unload Aircraft. I was told to load the cargo using the 60K. Loading the cargo consists of putting cargo on the loader, raising it to the door or ramp of an aircraft and rolling the cargo off the loader using different switches. At no point did I get on the aircraft nor did I assist with locking any of the pallets into place once they were on the Aircraft. I believe everything was done correctly that SSgt Mang and I were told to do

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TCM

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 4:42 PM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt,

Sir I can tell you what I witnessed, just after we landed and was taxiing to parking spot D7 we were facing south stopped awaiting to be marshaled into our spot and I pointed out the 747 just starting to climb after rotation. The four of us in the front end were commenting on his unusually steep climb or angle of attack. We initially thought the 747 was performing a zoom climb or something of that nature until we realized he was barely gaining altitude and his attitude continued towards near vertical. We all agreed that what we were witnessing was not going to end well, within a half a minute to a minute the aircraft began settling listing first to the left then to the right as it descended towards the ground impacting and sending a giant fireball and mushroom cloud into the sky. We then turned into our spot shut down and reported to our ops.

If you have any more questions please email me at munchers2010@gmail.com I am leaving the AOR 13 MAY13. Can you keep me informed as I am curious what caused this unfortunate event?
Thanks,
SSgt, B. Nagler
-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Greetings,

My name is Captain David Lawrence, and I'm one of the investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board launched to Bagram to assist the Afghanistan Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) investigation in National Air Cargo B747-400 accident on April 29, 2013. Your name was provided by Bagram Base Safety officials as a potential witness to the accident. I am very interested in learning what you may have seen, heard, or even recorded. Please feel free to provide me your written account of your experiences. If you would, include your location relative to the accident sequence, what you saw, and what you heard. I would also be interested in any electronic recordings you may have may have made of the event.

1

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 6:02 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: FOUO: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan
Attachments: Location relative to accident.jpg

Mr. Lawrence,

As seen on the attached photo, I was outside working on the pad adjacent to building 36785 facing in the direction of the arrow. Like any other day, I take the time to watch any airplanes taking off especially the bigger ones.

On this particular day, I was working outside on the pad and heard what I thought initially to be C-5 taking off as those engines are usually louder and have a higher "groan/moan" to them. So I stopped what I was doing and turned towards the runway to watch the plane takeoff and was surprised to see that it was the Air National 747 taking off because it usually isn't that loud. While watching the 747 taking off, everything seemed fine until the nose pitched up. At this time something seemed wrong as it was apparent that the plane was losing speed (since the nose was pitched up) and the engines were struggling to provide thrust. Shortly after the engines started to struggle, it sounded like they quit altogether and no noise was being heard from them. At the sametime it sounded like the engines stopped working, I noticed the nose of the plane coming down as an effort to get the nose level and start gaining momentum again. At this point it seemed too late for the aircraft to recover as it seemed to be sliding backwards and rolling over to the right side. Shortly after watching the plane roll over to its side it disappeared from view as there is a berm wall obstructing the view. Then after a few moments when it disappeared from view, I then heard an explosion and saw the fireball rise from where the plane went down.

I did not have any type of recorded device on me that day.

If you questions or need clarification on the above let me know

WILLIAM M. SZALKAY, MSgt, USAF
NCOIC, Conventional Maintenance
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan
318-447-6094

From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 3:38 PM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt Lawrence,

I was walking toward the flight line on the road in front of Camp Vance when I saw the 747 take off. The plane was only a few hundred feet (200-300 maybe) when it pitched up at a very steep angle, which got my attention and made me stop in my tracks. It continued to climb but very slowly. It appeared to stall and then the engines got louder, as if the pilot was trying to come out of the stall by giving the plane more power (obviously, speculation). It rotated away from me as it began to lose altitude. I looked away just before it dropped out of my line of sight behind the t-walls on the North side of the road.

We were allowed on the flight line after a couple of minutes and smoke from the fireball had drifted over the 4ERS compound. I remember thinking that the plane had had a headwind when it stalled and crashed.

Please let me know if you have any questions and I will be happy to help you in any way that I can.

Respectfully,

Jessica H Friday, Capt, USAF, BSC
Physician Assistant
4ERS BAF

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Greetings,

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 3:44 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

I did not witness the accident but was a first responder with the Pararescue team and took on scene pictures at the scene during the recovery efforts. I have provided all pictures to wing safety. If you need any other details, let me know, thanks.

TRAVIS A. SHAW, MSgt, USAF
83 ERQS/SEM
NIPR: 3[redacted]
SIPR: 3[redacted]

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Our goal is to assist the MoTCA in determining what may have occurred, why it occurred, and more importantly, steps we can take to prevent future

1

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2013 2:33 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

I was near the taxiway mowing on the west side of the runway the day the incident occurred. I noticed the plane more because of its colors and the fact it was a wide body plane. I watched it taxi up to the hold line where I quit watching it. The next time I noticed the aircraft was out of my peripheral vision while mowing toward the runway. The plane caught my eye due to the extreme angle up wards and movement left and right. I noticed the plane continued to climb and then suddenly pull a hard right. The plane seemed to come straight down after the hard right.

As far as pictures I couldn't believe what I was seeing. My phone had been in my cargo pocket for months and I couldn't find it in the moment!! I also didn't want to look away. I took two pictures right at impact, with them both showing the wind socks straight out. I only heard the explosion, due to the tractor I was using.
SSgt Zimmerman
455 ECES

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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1

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 11:39 PM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt Lawrence,
I was walking by Camp Vance at the north end of base and heading east towards the flight line ECP near the 4th ERS. I looked up and saw the 747 taking off at a very steep angle - I would estimate 40-60 degrees. The plane appeared to lose airspeed and started to slow. I heard engine noise throughout the entire incident and I clearly heard the pilot try to power up the engines as the plane lost airspeed - the sound was consistent with other aircraft engines that I have heard during take-off. Despite the additional power, the plane continued to lose airspeed and started banking to the right while losing altitude. I lost sight of it behind one of the T-barriers and heard the explosion several seconds later. I did not see any smoke or fire from the aircraft at any time prior to the crash. I did not see any sign of damage to the plane from my view.

I'm not sure if this is helpful, but I did see the video on CNN taken from a dashboard camera. It was at a completely different angle than the view I had, but the sequence of events appeared to be consistent with what I saw.

Please let me know if you have any other questions or if I can assist in any other way.

Respectfully,
Capt Miller

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 10:46 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

I was on Charlie ramp working on one of our EC-130H aircraft. We were heading inside to our clamshell, one of the airman was walking to his tool box and I noticed him staring at something facing north. He said he watched it as it was taking off. I turned to see what he was looking at and it was the 747 in a very very steep climb, and the climb was only getting steeper, the aircraft was near complete vertical and it slowed and started to fall back to the ground tail first. From my point of view, I was able to see the entire top of the 747 as it unfolded. I saw it fall back to the earth tail first before it disappeared from view followed by a huge fire ball. I did not record it.
I don't know if the airman I was with has come forward but he told me that he watched it as it rolled down the runway, and he said as soon as the nose tires left the ground it shot straight up. Us being aircraft mechanics, we know generally what different types of aircraft are suspossed to look like when they take off, he said he knew something was wrong the second the nose left the ground its angle was far greater than what he has ever seen. The plane never appeared to ever try to nose down from what I witnessed. It went up very very very steep, stalled and kind of tilted to the right and then back center as it fell back to the ground.
If you have any questions sir, feel free to email me or call DSN 431-5314

V/R
Kyle T SSgt USAF AFCENT 455 EAMXS/ 41 EECS (EC-130H)

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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1

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 10:02 AM
To: Lawrence David
Cc: LeBaron Timothy
Subject: FW: National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Dave,
No surprises here, but fwd'g to you for the record.

Thx,
-wiz

Lt Col James Howell
455 AEW, Chief of Safety

-----Original Message-----
From: Snyder Capt Kurtis D. RC(SW) USAF 651 AEG/ATOC
[mailto:kurtis.snyder@afg.usmc.mil]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 5:46 PM
To: Howell, James J LtCol USAF AFCENT 455 AEW/SE

Captain Lawrence,

I am the commander of the aerial port here at Camp Bastion and I tasked A1C Sarah Lipfird and SSgt Garett Mang to provide 60K loader support to assist in the upload of MRAPs to the National Air Cargo(NAC) 747 using a USAF 60K loader.

We(the aerial port) were approached by a representative from NAC several weeks prior about the possibility of using one of our 60K loaders to lift some MRAPs to the aircraft door. This request was made to us because their equipment was not strong enough to lift the palletized MRAPs to the aircraft door. The rep that approached us with the request was Mr. Gayan Weeratunga. Since NAC was given the contract to move the vehicles, we were not involved in or responsible for the pallet buildup or tie down of the cargo inside the aircraft in any way at Camp Bastion. At the time of the request, we informed NAC that since our Air Force mission took priority, we would need to load their aircraft on a space available basis only, to which they agreed.

On the day of the cargo being loaded, I was not personally present to see the cargo or loading process. I was aware of the mission being completed but was not made aware of any issues during or in the short term after the load that would have raised any flags. The first time that I heard anything had gone wrong was the report that the aircraft had crashed at Bagram.

If I can be of any further assistance, I can best be reached at my work email address kurtis.snyder[redacted]

KURTIS D. SNYDER JR., Capt, USAF
651 AEG, ATOC Commander
Camp Bastion, Afghanistan
[redacted]

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

It was a clear colored fluid / liquid coming from what looked to be the bottom tail area. As far as the sounds, on initial takeoff, everything sounded normal. Once the nose began to pitch sharply, I cannot recall hearing any sounds. Honestly, it was eerily quiet, for such a large aircraft.

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 5:33 PM
To: Zullo, Michael S TSgt USAF AFCENT 455 EAPS/RAMP
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Michael,
Thanks for your account. Do you recall the color of the smoke trailing the airplane, and was it from the tail or engines? Also, do recall any unusual sounds from the engines?
Thanks,
David

-----Original Message-----
From: [redacted]
[mailto:[redacted]]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Sir,

Attached is my account of the B747-400 accident. Please let me know if you would like for me to clarify any areas of my account. Thank you

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt Lawrence,

I was traveling as a passenger on the perimeter road that circles the base, coming from the West Side to the East of the Base. We were approximately where they are working on the attachment to this road about perpendicular to the runway. I heard a sound of an aircraft take off and did not think much of it because you always hear that sound on this road. A few seconds later a heard another strange sound and noticed the cars in front of us slowing down. I then looked out the window and saw the plane going down, hit the ground and explode. We were about 30 seconds from where the fireball crossed the road and damaged the B-Huts. I did not take any pictures or have any recordings of the accident.

Charles R. Aston
Logististics Management Analyst Asc.
Lockheed Martin
455 Expeditionary Communications Sq.
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan
DSN: [redacted]
Cell: [redacted]

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Capt Lawrence,
The day of the mishap I was in my GOV traveling southbound down Disney BLVD and I turned eastbound into a parking lot near Bldg 25180. As I was pulling in I saw the Silver and Blue National Air Cargo 747 traveling northbound on runway 03-21. At approx. the 5500 foot marker the plane was airborne and it immediately went vertical. I knew something went horribly wrong because I have never seen a massive cargo plane pull that kind of maneuver. I became fixated on the sight of the plane going vertical and I knew it was just a matter of time that it would lose thrust and stall. If I were to guess I would say that the plane elevated to approx. a 1000 feet before it stalled. Once the plane stalled, it leveled out and started to fall from the sky. As it was coming down I witnessed the plane rolling from one side to the other and it was obvious the pilot had no control over the plane. Immediately after I saw the plane hit the ground it erupted into a giant fireball.

If can be of further assistance, please let me know.

JEFFREY A. COOKE, MSgt, USAF
First Sergeant ◊ 455 EAMXS/CCF
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan
DSN: [redacted]
Cell: [redacted]
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-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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Lawrence David

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 8:47 AM
To: Lawrence David
Subject: RE: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

Hello Sir,

I was in the 455th EAPS Cargo Yard when the event took place, so I saw the crash happen from behind. I saw the aircraft take off and begin to do what appeared to be a combat take off very soon after the wheels were off the ground. It then began to climb steeper then I have ever seen a cargo aircraft take off until at one point it was climbing straight up into the sky. It continued to struggle upward and I could hear the engines power up and finally the engines appeared to putter or stall out and the aircraft was suspended in mid-air for a second or two. Then I am not sure if it was the strong cross winds we had that day or if the pilot was trying to maneuver the aircraft but it began to turn to the right and the nose began to come down finally but at that point it looked like that had lost too much altitude and then slammed into the ground. The landing gear appeared to be down the whole time so I am assuming the pilot knew soon after takeoff something was wrong and the tail seemed to be swinging under the entire time. We had also been on weather watch on and off a lot that day between winds 30-45knots and lightning within 5NM. I hope this was some what helpful and if you need any more information please let me know.

v/r

Joshua K. Mullennix, SrA, USAF
455 EAPS/ Special Handling
Bagram AF, Afghanistan
DSN:4[redacted]

-----Original Message-----
From: Lawrence David [mailto:david.lawrence@ntsb.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 4:45 PM
Subject: [UNSIGNED MSG] National Air Cargo B747-400 Accident - 4/29/2013 Bagram Afghanistan

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