

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

1 In the Matter of:

2 IE TMI INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW

3 of John Hilbish  
4 Supervisor of Licensing

5 Rudy Lefin  
6 Supervisor of Mechanical and  
7 Systems Engineering

8  
9 Trailer #203  
10 NRC Investigation Site  
11 TMI Nuclear Power Plant  
12 Middletown, Pennsylvania

13 May 31, 1979

14 (Date of Interview)

15 July 5, 1979

16 (Date Transcript Typed)

17 286

18 (Tape Number(s))

19 7908290347

20  
21 NRC PERSONNEL:

22 Bob Marsh  
23 Thomas H. Essig  
24 Anthony N. Fasano  
25

891 012

1 MARSH: The date is May 31st. The time is 8:34 a.m., this is Bob Marsh and  
2 I'm an Investigator with the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, assigned  
3 to Region 3 in the Chicago, Illinois office. This morning we are at the  
4 facilities of Metropolitan Edison at 2800 Pottsville Pike in Reading, Pennsyl-  
5 vania, and we're here for the purpose of conducting interviews with some of  
6 the Met Ed staff. At this time, we have two Met Ed people in the room as  
7 well as two NRC representatives, and I would at this time like to have each  
8 individual introduce himself to spell his last name and to identify his  
9 position. Mr. Hilbish, if you would start.

10  
11 HILBISH: John Hilbish, H-I-L-B-I-S-H, Supervisor of Licensing for Met Ed.

12  
13 MARSH: Rudy.

14  
15 LEFIN: Rudy Lefin, L-E, F as in Frank, I-N. Supervisor of Mechanical and  
16 System Engineering.

17  
18 ESSIG: Thomas H. Essig, E-S-S-I-G, Chief, Environmental and Special  
19 Projects Section, NRC Region 3, Chicago.

20  
21 FASANO: Anthony N. Fasano, F-A-S-A-N-O, Inspection Specialist, out of  
22 Region I.

23  
24 MARSH: I thank you. Mr. Hilbish before we started, we had a short discus-  
25 sion regarding the two page memo which I provided you a copy of and I'm not

1 going to go into detail at this time, I just indicate that this memo does  
2 cover the purpose of the investigation, its scope and to some degree the  
3 authority under which we are conducting it. It also makes reference to  
4 certain of your rights and on the last page are a series of questions which  
5 I'd like to ask you at this time just to make them a matter of record on  
6 the tape as well as the signed copy which you've executed. First question  
7 reads, "Do you understand the above?" meaning the two page document.

8  
9 HILBISH: Yes.

10  
11 MARSH: Second question reads, "Do we have your permission to tape the  
12 interview?"

13  
14 HILBISH: Yes.

15  
16 MARSH: And thirdly, would you like a copy of the tapes or transcript?

17  
18 HILBISH: Yes.

19  
20 MARSH: Fine, I will provide you a copy of the tape and transcript as they  
21 become available. The tape I should have in a day or two, as soon as we  
22 get back to TMI where I have the duplicating facilities, we'll run it off  
23 and get down to you. Mr. Lufin, I guess you'll be taking part in the  
24 discussion also, so you have the same responses to the questions is there  
25 any objection to us taping the interview?

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1 LEFIN: No, but I wasn't aware that I'll be part of that discussion.

2  
3 MARSH: Ok, you're just going to be sitting in then, ok, I'll indicate then  
4 in that case that one question which was not called out at the rear of the  
5 memo but is covered within the body is that Mr. Hilbish, you do have a  
6 right to have a company representative present and you've indicated that  
7 would like Mr. Leflin to sit?

8  
9 HILBISH: Right.

10  
11 MARSH: Fine, thank you. Alright then at that time, at this time then I'll  
12 turn it over to Mr. Fasano I believe, you've got some questions you want to  
13 begin with?

14  
15 FASANO: Ok John, when did you become involved with the March 28th 1979  
16 event at Three Mile Island?

17  
18 HILBISH: I was notified about ten after seven on Wednesday morning, March  
19 28th, at home. . . that we had experienced a trip and to report here to the  
20 office.

21  
22 FASANO: What was your involvement then?

23  
24 HILBISH: Really for the, for the first oh, ten hours or so, just trying  
25 to, to help in communications, answering some specific questions for Mr.

1 Geoffer who was here in the office, trying to get specific questions for  
2 our company, management here, Mr. Creitz and also relaying information back  
3 to the home office of GPU in Parsippany and . . . I was just trying to help  
4 with some specific questions, some status, you know, how things worked,  
5 answering some specific questions about the transient.

6  
7 FASANO: John, who was asking questions?

8  
9 HILBISH: Mr. Geoffer, I had to answer one or two specific questions for  
10 Bob Arnold back in Parsippany.

11  
12 FASANO: Do you, can you. . . what were these specific questions?

13  
14 HILBISH: All I remember one was that . . . you know, by around noon or so,  
15 I was doing some checking on incore thermocouples, . . . trying to find the  
16 status of those. . . really I was just here in a support function trying  
17 to, trying to help Mr. Geoffer answer any questions, you know, that were  
18 asked of him. Later by approximately four or five o'clock, you know, in  
19 the afternoon I had gotten through to the island and specifically requested  
20 some, some more detailed information concerning the transient since one of  
21 our functions here was to assist in the communications and to try to help  
22 communication service help with some of the press inquiries, I had called  
23 through to Joe Logan the Unit Superintendent of Unit 2 and asked him to  
24 specifically take, you know, someone that was there and had been involved  
25 and to get together and call back and give us. . . more details on the

1 sequence of events from that morning and that, that happened about 5:00 or  
2 so.

3  
4 FASANO: On the question about the thermocouples, in particular, what was  
5 the concern and what was your conclusion?

6  
7 HILBISH: It was, that was just some background, some background informa-  
8 tion, you know, concerning the. . . really were the. . . where did they  
9 print out, how were they read type things. . .

10  
11 FASANO: Not specific data?

12  
13 HILBISH: I did not do any specific readings, no.

14  
15 FASANO: Were you... did you have any information where you were required to  
16 make any decision?

17  
18 HILBISH: No.

19  
20 FASANO: Did you make any suggestions?

21  
22 HILBISH: No.

23  
24 FASANO: So your part was to be an intermediate to communicate and to  
25 answer questions for Mr. Geoffer?

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1 HILBISH: Yes. Just to try to assist him, you know in any way if he had,  
2 if he had some questions, or needed some information.

3  
4 FASANO: So you came in at 7:00 approximately?

5  
6 HILBISH: I was here by twenty of eight.

7  
8 FASANO: Twenty of eight?

9  
10 HILBISH: I was notified at home at about ten after seven.

11  
12 FASANO: And then you stood by, just to answer particular questions as Mr.  
13 Geoffer would get them?

14  
15 HILBISH: That's right.

16  
17 FASANO: You mentioned one on the thermocouples, were there any other that  
18 you had to get involved in?

19  
20 HILBISH: I know there were other ones, I can't think of specific questions  
21 right now, it just runs together now as far as the first two days.

22  
23 MARSH: Were you tasked at all, Mr. Hilbish, with seeking subcontractor  
24 support either exercising subcontracts that were already established or  
25 reaching out and trying to contact other people to render support?

1 HILBISH: No, no I wasn't, I wasn't personally.

2  
3 FASANO: I ran across something in the FSAR and I wondered if they exist?  
4 Vent valve thermocouples, vent valve thermocouple nozzles. . . in here, I'm  
5 just curious.

6  
7 HILBISH: We can check that with the difference between the units, I don't  
8 think that they exist.

9  
10 FASANO: That's what I've heard before, thank you.

11  
12 MARSH: Tony if you would, identify what it is your making the reference to  
13 the drawing.

14  
15 FASANO: Three Mile Island, FSAR page, well actually it's figure 7.8-6,  
16 and. . .

17  
18 MARSH: And that's a drawing of what?

19  
20 FASANO: It's a drawing showing a vent valve thermocouple nozzle and it's a  
21 interesting position if there were thermal couples to lift up and tempera-  
22 tures, apparently, they don't exist, the thermal couples don't exist.

23  
24 MARSH: Alright, thank you.

25  
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1 MARSH: Your, just one or two last questions, that covers your actions  
2 during the morning and then how long were you on duty, coming in at, what  
3 approximately 8:00 you indicated?

4  
5 HILBISH: Yes, just before eight. I was here till late that evening. . .  
6 after I'd say after five, about six o'clock or so I help both on Thursday  
7 and and on Wednesday and Thursday evenings with, with communication service  
8 trying to answer, trying to assist them in some of the technical aspects of  
9 press inquiries and things like that.

10  
11 MARSH: Who would you have been reporting directly to? Who were you  
12 receiving your instructions from?

13  
14 HILBISH: George Geoffer.

15  
16 MARSH: And your contacts with Mr. Arnold, Mr. Arnold was where at this  
17 time, still back in the mountain lakes in Parsippany?

18  
19 HILBISH: Yes he was in Parsippany.

20  
21 MARSH: I have no other questions. Tony if you have.

22  
23 FASANO: Were you asked any questions on the spike of the reactor building  
24 high pressure spike on the first day?

25  
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1 HILBISH: No, not at all.

2  
3 FASANO: Was this mentioned at all, even into the evening?

4  
5 HILBISH: No.

6  
7 FASANO: And you say you were here until eight, nine that night?

8  
9 HILBISH: Eleven-twelve.

10  
11 FASANO: Eleven-twelve, oh, ok. So even till that point no questions?

12  
13 HILBISH: No.

14  
15 FASANO: That's a long time, a long day that you put in. Could you just go  
16 through your memory again and see if any of the, if you had any questions  
17 on. . . concern for the pressurizer indications or pressure indications or  
18 Tn, Tc, what, there was confusion I think on your temperature readings, not  
19 only on the incores but on the hot legs. Were these addressed at all?

20  
21 HILBISH: Not that I recall, however, a lot of the time, as I said some of  
22 the things I was doing was trying to answer a specific questions or get  
23 some specific information, available, a lot of the other time, you know,  
24 two or three of us would be sitting around trying to piece together what we  
25 had here and some of that may come up at that, you know may have come up at

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1 that time. I, I can't remember. Talking about Th's Tc's pressurizer level,  
2 you know, I'm sure in the sequence of event that were given down here in  
3 communication things like that, I'm sure that you know at one point they  
4 were, we were talking about, you know, high pressurizer level. . . . we  
5 certainly could have discussed it that day, I don't remember specifically  
6 going, you know, questioning those areas or getting specific answers for  
7 anybody in that, in that area.

8  
9 FASANO: Did you, were you, was there any evaluation done with regard to  
10 pressure, saturation temperatures?

11  
12 HILBISH: No. I did not do it.

13  
14 MARSH: I think I have covered it with the earlier questions, this is Marsh  
15 speaking, but did you have any course to speak with B&W representatives  
16 during the day?

17  
18 HILBISH: No I didn't.

19  
20 MARSH: Ok. I think that brings it to a close then if you have nothing  
21 else Tony? Oh, I'd like to say thank you Mr. Hilbish recognizing that you  
22 have other testimony with the state later on today, we'd like to draw this  
23 one to a close to give you some time for your own business there. We  
24 appreciate you time and at this time being 8:48 a.m., I'm going to terminate  
25 the tape with the reading of 271.