

## Transcript of the Testimony of Johnny Syner

**Date:** May 14, 2010

Case:

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## STATEMENT UNDER OATH

OF

## JOHNNY SYNER

taken pursuant to Notice by Brett Steele, a
Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the
State of West Virginia, at The National Mine
Health & Safety Academy, 1301 Airport Road,
Room C-137, Beaver, West Virginia, on Friday,
May 14, 2010, beginning at 1:09 p.m.

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- 1 PROCEEDINGS
- 3 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 4 My name is Derek Baxter. I'm with the
- 5 Office of the Solicitor, United States Department of
- 6 Labor. With me is Eric Sherer, an accident
- 7 investigator with the Mine Safety and Health
- 8 Administration, MSHA. Also present are personnel with
- 9 the West Virginia Accident Investigation Team. I'd
- 10 like them to identify themselves, please, the
- 11 questioners at the table.
- 12 MR. BECK:
- 13 I'm Jim Beck. I work for Davitt McAteer
- on the independent team.
- 15 MR. FARLEY:
- 16 I'm Terry Farley, with the West Virginia
- 17 Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.
- 18 MR. SNYDER:
- 19 Steve Snyder, with the West Virginia
- Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.
- 21 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 22 Today is May 14th, 2010. Several other
- 23 members of an investigation team are also present in
- the room. All members of the Mine Safety and Health
- 25 Administration Accident Investigation Team and all

- 1 members of the State of West Virginia Accident
- 2 Investigation Team participating in the investigation
- of the Upper Big Branch Mine explosion shall keep
- 4 confidential all information that is gathered from
- 5 each witness who voluntarily provides a statement
- 6 until the witness statements are officially released.
- 7 MSHA and the State of West Virginia shall keep this
- 8 information confidential so that other ongoing
- 9 enforcement activities are not prejudiced or
- 10 jeopardized by a premature release of information.
- 11 This confidentiality requirement shall not preclude
- investigation team members from sharing information
- with each other or with other law enforcement
- officials. Your participation in this interview
- 15 constitutes your agreement to keep this information
- 16 confidential.
- 17 Government investigators and specialists
- 18 have been assigned to investigate the conditions,
- 19 events and circumstances surrounding the fatalities
- that occurred at the Upper Big Branch Mine-South on
- 21 April 5th, 2010. The investigation is being conducted
- by MSHA under Section 103(a) of the Federal Mine
- 23 Safety and Health Act and the West Virginia Office of
- Miners' Health, Safety and Training. We appreciate
- 25 your assistance in this investigation.

- 1 After the investigation is complete, MSHA
- will issue a public report detailing the nature and
- 3 causes of the fatalities in the hope that greater
- 4 awareness about the causes of accidents can reduce
- 5 their occurrence in the future. Information obtained
- 6 through witness interviews is frequently included in
- 7 these reports. You should know that if you request
- 8 confidentiality, confidentiality will only be granted
- 9 on a case-by-case basis. Your statement may also be
- 10 used in other enforcement proceedings.
- 11 You may have a personal representative
- 12 present during the taking of this statement and may
- consult with a representative at any time. Do you
- have a personal representative with you here today?
- 15 MR. SYNER:
- 16 I have Reba.
- 17 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 18 Would you please identify ---?
- 19 MS. CRAWFORD:
- 20 Reba Crawford.
- 21 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 22 Thank you. You may refuse to answer any
- 23 question, and you may request a break at any time.
- 24 Since this is not an adversarial proceeding, formal
- 25 Cross Examination will not be permitted. However,

- your personal representative may ask clarifying 1 2 questions as appropriate. A court reporter will record your interview. Please speak loudly and 3 clearly. If you do not understand a question asked, 4 please ask that the question be rephrased. Please 5 answer each question as fully as you can, including 6 7 any information you've learned from someone else. 8 I'd like to thank you in advance for your appearance here. We appreciate your assistance in 9 10 this investigation. Your cooperation is critical in 11 making the nation's mines safer. After we finish 12 asking questions, you'll have the opportunity to make a statement and provide us with any other information 13 that you believe to be important. If at any time 14 after the interview you recall any additional 15 information that you believe might be useful, please 16 17 contact Norman Page at the telephone number or e-mail address provided to you. Would you please swear the 18 19 witness in? 20
- 22 AS FOLLOWS:

JOHNNY SYNER, HAVING FIRST BEEN DULY SWORN, TESTIFIED

21

- 23
- 24 EXAMINATION
- 25 BY MR. SHERER:

- 1 Q. Good afternoon. Could you please state your full
- 2 name and spell your last name for the record?
- 3 A. Johnny Ray Syner, S-Y-N-E-R.
- 4 Q. Okay. Thank you. How about your address and
- 5 telephone number, please?
- 6 A. My address is (b) (7)(C)
- 7 (b) (7)(C)
- 8 Q. And your telephone number?
- 9 A. (b) (7)(C)
- 10 Q. Thank you. Are you appearing here today
- 11 voluntarily?
- 12 A. I was requested to be here.
- 13 Q. Okay. Thank you. How long have you worked for
- 14 MSHA?
- 15 A. Two years.
- 16 Q. What's your current duty station?
- 17 A. Coal mine inspector at the Mount Hope office.
- 18 Q. Okay. How long have you worked at that location?
- 19 A. Two years.
- 20 Q. Okay. What's your present position?
- 21 A. Coal mine inspector.
- Q. How long have you been in that --- well,
- that's --- we have that. Who's your current
- 24 supervisor?
- 25 A. Thomas Moore.

- 1 Q. Thank you. Could you tell us a bit about your
- 2 experience with mining, Mr. Syner?
- 3 A. I started in the coal mines in 1976, running
- 4 equipment. Worked for Allied Chemical, Peabody Coal
- 5 Company, Cannelton Industries, and Eastern Associated
- 6 Coal.
- 7 Q. Thank you. Do you have any specialized training
- 8 or certificates in the coal mining industry?
- 9 A. Just foreman's papers.
- 10 Q. State of West Virginia?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Thank you. Can you briefly explain your areas of
- 13 responsibility, please?
- 14 A. Such as being a coal miner?
- 15 O. No.
- 16 A. Being a mine inspector?
- 17 Q. A mine inspector, yes.
- 18 A. To watch out for the health and safety of the coal
- 19 miner.
- 20 Q. Thank you. Are you the authorized representative
- assigned to the Upper Big Branch Mine this quarter?
- 22 A. I was one of them, yes.
- 23 Q. Okay. When was the last time you inspected the
- 24 Upper Big Branch Mine?
- 25 A. April the 5th, 2010.

- 1 O. And that was the date of the incident?
- 2 A. Yes.
- Q. What type of inspection were you conducting at
- 4 that time?
- 5 A. An EO1.
- 6 Q. EO1. Could you explain what that is for the
- 7 record, please?
- 8 A. It's just a general inspection of the coal mine
- 9 for the health and safety of the coal miners.
- 10 Q. A quarterly inspection?
- 11 A. Quarterly, yes.
- 12 Q. Thank you. Did you go underground that day?
- 13 A. Yes.
- Q. Did anyone accompany you on your inspection?
- 15 A. Yes, Rick Foster, the mine foreman.
- Q. So he was a company representative?
- 17 A. Uh-huh (yes). Yes.
- Q. Was there a representative of the miners involved?
- 19 A. No, there wasn't.
- 20 Q. Okay. Thank you. Could you start with when you
- 21 arrived at the mine and just walk us through the steps
- of your inspection?
- 23 A. If I had my notes, I could go through them a lot
- 24 better.
- 25 ATTORNEY BAXTER:

- 1 Let the record show you just provided him
- 2 a copy of his inspection notes.
- 3 MR. SHERER:
- 4 Yes. Uh-huh (yes).
- 5 A. I arrived at the coal mines before the dayshift
- 6 started, at 5:20 a.m., and went to the --- it's called
- 7 the South Portal, the mine office at the South Portal,
- 8 and held a pre-inspection conference there that
- 9 morning with Steve --- no, with --- let me think of
- 10 his name. Gary May and Rick Foster was present at the
- 11 pre-inspection conference. We just talked about
- 12 citations and looked at the map. And after that, I
- went down and gave the employees a brief safety talk.
- We talked about the ventilation, roof control and we
- talked about black lung some, and I gave the men some
- 16 stickers. And after that, we made a pre-operational
- 17 check on the manbus and followed the crew from the
- 18 portal to the barrier section, which was the section I
- 19 was going to inspect.
- 20 After I arrived at the section, I made an imminent
- 21 danger run across the faces, checking for dates,
- times, initials, roof bolt pattern, ventilation
- controls and that, then made a dust perimeter check,
- checked the sprays on the miner, the water pressure
- and checked the vacuum on the roof bolters. During my

- 1 imminent danger run, I think it was, I got an air
- 2 sample of the left return. And then after we went
- across the faces there, I started checking some
- 4 equipment. On my way across the section, as well as I
- 5 recollect, I found a cable splice on the miner that
- 6 wasn't sealed so as to exclude moisture, and I wrote a
- 7 citation on that.
- 8 BY MR. SHERER:
- 9 Q. Okay. What type of citation was that, please?
- 10 A. It was a 104 --- 104(a) citation I think is what
- 11 it was.
- 12 Q. Thank you. Was that a --- could you tell us what
- the standard was you cited in that case?
- 14 A. 75.604(b).
- 15 O. Thank you. And after that?
- 16 A. Let me see here what I'm doing after that. I done
- the dust perimeter checks on the miner and the roof
- 18 bolter, checked the vacuum, the --- checked the vacuum
- 19 and the dust boxes on the roof bolter, checked the
- 20 water sprays and the water pressure on the miners
- 21 and ---.
- 22 Q. You say there's miners. There were two miners on
- 23 that section?
- 24 A. Yes. And as well as I can remember, there were
- 25 two roof bolters. I guess you call it a super

- 1 section. You had part on the left and part on the
- 2 right, equipment on the left and the right.
- 3 Q. Did they have split ventilation?
- 4 A. Let me think. No. No, I don't think. I think
- 5 they just run one miner at a time.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. I think it was exhausting ventilation.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. And I checked the --- watched them run some coal,
- 10 watched the miner --- I think they were in the Number
- 11 Four entry, and watched them load coal and watched the
- 12 roof bolter bolt some. And then I checked the section
- 13 KVA box. Everything was okay on it. Checked the
- section escapeway map. Okay. There was --- it wasn't
- 15 up to date, so I issued a citation on the section
- 16 escapeway map.
- 17 Q. Okay. Do you remember what standard you cited for
- 18 that?
- 19 A. 75.1505(b).
- 20 Q. Okay. That escapeway map, that is important
- 21 because of the potential for people having to evacuate
- the mine. How many people would be affected by that
- 23 map?
- 24 A. Only the people on that immediate section. That
- 25 section that I went to wasn't very far underground.

- 1 It's called the barrier section.
- 2 Q. Do you remember how many people you marked as
- 3 affected by that citation?
- 4 A. No, I don't.
- 5 Q. okay.
- 6 A. No, I don't.
- 7 Q. Thank you. Okay. And then what did you do?
- 8 A. Checked the intake telephone. It was fine.
- 9 Checked the emergency supply sled. It was fine. I
- 10 checked the sanitary toilet, the section firefighting
- 11 equipment and the pressure pump.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. And then after that, I left the section and walked
- the belts back toward the outside.
- 15 O. Okay. What do you think about that section, if
- 16 you had to say? It was in good shape, bad shape?
- 17 A. The morning I arrived on the section, the section
- had been cleaned and had been rock dusted, and I
- 19 commented to Rick Foster that the rock dusting looked
- good on the section.
- 21 Q. Good. Thank you. Did you go through any record
- 22 books before you did this inspection?
- 23 A. Yeah. I think I went through the pre-shift book
- 24 for the barrier section, yeah.
- Q. Did the conditions you observed on the section,

- were they reflected accurately in the pre-shift books?
- 2 A. Yes.
- Q. Thanks. When you were documenting the two
- 4 violations you mentioned, was the company
- 5 representatives --- did they take any photos or take
- 6 any notes associated with those?
- 7 A. Notes, I don't know, but there was many photos
- 8 taken.
- 9 Q. Okay. Thank you. Did you have any conversations
- 10 with the mine workers, either before you went to the
- 11 section or while you were doing your duties there on
- 12 the section?
- 13 A. I held a safety meeting outside before we went in.
- Q. Did you have --- did they express any complaints
- or concerns to you at that time or some other time?
- 16 A. No, they didn't.
- 17 Q. Okay. Prior to the last --- or to this quarter,
- 18 have you ever been the authorized representative
- 19 assigned to the Upper Big Branch Mine?
- 20 A. I wasn't assigned to it, but I went down there and
- 21 helped another inspector some.
- Q. Did you get the opportunity to go to different
- 23 parts of the mine?
- 24 A. I checked --- I'm not sure what section it was. I
- 25 think they called it like Number Two section, the

- 1 section I went to. It was shut down. I just went
- 2 there to check equipment.
- Q. Okay. So you haven't done like walking returns
- 4 or ---?
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. I did as a trainee.
- 8 Q. Okay. How long ago was that?
- 9 A. Two years. Almost two years ago.
- 10 Q. Are you aware of any complaints lodged against
- 11 this mine?
- 12 A. Not to me there hasn't been any complaints.
- Q. Have you ever gone to this mine as a result of
- another hazardous condition complaint being phoned in
- 15 or ---?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Okay. Thank you. Are you aware of any conditions
- that ever required any or all the miners to be
- 19 evacuated from this mine or portions of this mine?
- 20 A. No.
- Q. Okay. Let's shift gears a little bit and go to
- the accident itself. I assume you finished your
- inspection and exited the mine. Do you know
- approximately when that occurred?
- 25 A. The day when I left the mines?

- 1 Q. Yes. Uh-huh (yes).
- A. Somewhere between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.
- Q. Okay. Did you leave the property at that time?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Okay. When and how were you notified of the April
- 6 5th accident?
- 7 A. I was notified at home. I was called at home.
- 8 Q. Okay. Were you involved in any of the rescue and
- 9 recovery efforts at the mine?
- 10 A. I went back that night and was just there, you
- 11 know, in case they needed something, more or less to
- 12 run errands and ---
- 13 Q. Sure.
- 14 A. --- stuff.
- 15 Q. Okay. Were you there at any later day?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Okay. So it was just the night of the event?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Do you remember who was in charge of the mine site
- when you arrived?
- 21 A. For MSHA or for ---?
- Q. For all the respective parties.
- A. No, I don't know.
- Q. Okay. So you just showed up and started trying to
- 25 help out?

- 1 A. Yeah. My supervisor called me at home, and I
- 2 reported to the office. And he told me to go to Upper
- Big Branch, and when I got there I'd be instructed as
- 4 to what to do.
- 5 Q. Okay. When you were making your inspection
- 6 earlier in the day, who was the responsible person?
- 7 A. Gary May.
- 8 Q. Gary May.
- 9 A. I'm sure that's who it was.
- 10 Q. And how do you know that?
- 11 A. How do I --- he's the superintendent.
- 12 Q. Was that listed on any bulletin board or
- whiteboard or anything?
- 14 A. I can't recall seeing --- you know, I don't
- 15 remember looking at it.
- Q. Do you know if he was in charge for the company
- when you arrived at the mine?
- 18 A. No, I don't.
- 19 Q. Thank you. When you arrived at the mine site,
- 20 were you approached by any of the miners wanting to
- 21 talk to you about the conditions in the mine or
- anything that may have contributed to the accident?
- 23 A. Not that I can remember, no.
- Q. Okay. And how long were you at the mine that
- 25 night?

- 1 A. Until about six o'clock the next morning.
- 2 Q. Okay. That was a long day?
- 3 A. Yes, it was.
- 4 Q. Do you have anything that you would like to add
- 5 that may be relevant to this investigation?
- 6 A. No, sir, nothing I can think of right now.
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 EXAMINATION
- 9 BY MR. FARLEY:
- 10 Q. Johnny, I think you indicated that prior to this
- 11 quarter, ---
- 12 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 13 Q. --- and this quarter would have started on April
- 14 1st; right?
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. Prior to this quarter, you had gone to UBB Mine to
- 17 help another inspector?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Now, prior to the quarter, can you tell me
- 20 approximately when that was?
- 21 A. It wasn't the quarter prior to this one but the
- 22 quarter prior to that. I can't remember the dates.
- O. Would that be like last fall?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. 2009?

- 1 A. I think so.
- Q. Okay. Approximately, how many days did you spend
- 3 there then; do you recall?
- 4 A. I'm thinking two days. It may have been three,
- 5 but I can recall two days being there.
- Q. Do you recall which inspector you accompanied?
- 7 A. Who I was helping?
- 8 Q. Yes, sir.
- 9 A. Yes, sir. Kevin Lyall was his --- the mines was
- 10 assigned to Kevin.
- 11 Q. Okay. Now, I think you said you went to the
- 12 Number Two section?
- 13 A. I think that's right. I'm not --- I'm not for
- 14 sure.
- 15 Q. Okay. Now, I may not be as familiar with the mine
- as you are, but can you point out on the map the
- section that was called Number Two at that time?
- 18 A. No, not really.
- 19 MR. SHERER:
- 20 You can either get up or we have a laser
- 21 pointer. If you can hand that over, Jim, please?
- 22 MR. BECK:
- 23 Sure.
- 24 MR. SHERER:
- 25 We had a laser pointer. Let me explain

- 1 it that way.
- 2 MR. FARLEY:
- 3 Oh, here it is.
- 4 A. It may have been that section right there.
- 5 BY MR. FARLEY:
- 6 Q. Are you referring to the section which is
- 7 immediately outby the mouth of the currently active
- longwall or the longwall which was active on April
- 9 5th?
- 10 A. It may have been right there. If I had my notes,
- I would know, you know, which section it was.
- 12 Q. Okay. Did you walk or ride through that section?
- 13 A. We road the mantrip.
- Q. Okay. Would that have been the only time prior to
- 15 your April 5th inspection that you were here, those
- 16 two days last fall?
- 17 A. Yes, sir.
- 18 O. Okay.
- 19 A. Now, when I was a trainee, I traveled with an
- inspector, but you know, I wasn't AR'd. I don't even
- 21 really recall where we were in the mines.
- Q. Okay. And that would have been how long ago?
- 23 A. Almost two years ago.
- Q. Okay. Did your conversations with any of the
- 25 miners at UBB during this quarter or last fall, did

- 1 you ever hear any discussion or talk of possible
- 2 methane feeders coming from the bottom that might have
- 3 disrupted the productivity?
- 4 A. No, I didn't.
- Q. Okay.
- 6 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 7 Do you have any questions?
- 8 MR. BECK:
- 9 Yeah.
- 10 EXAMINATION
- 11 BY MR. BECK:
- 12 Q. Mr. Syner, for this quarter, when you were
- assigned to Upper Big Branch, was April 5th the first
- 14 day of your quarterly inspection?
- 15 A. Yes, it was.
- 16 Q. And for a quarterly inspection, normally how many
- days do you expect to be at that mine?
- 18 A. I don't know. That's a big mines, and it takes
- 19 several days to --- you know, to complete it. I have
- 20 no idea how long ---.
- Q. I was just wondering if you had like a planned
- amount of days that you said, well, this probably will
- take us 30 inspections or whatever.
- A. No. No, I didn't.
- Q. Okay. Is there a procedure in place to notify

- 1 miners of their rights to designate a miners' rep?
- 2 A. Yes. And I explained those rights the morning I
- gave the safety meeting.
- 4 Q. In all, from the time you were a trainee to
- 5 getting your AR card, how many times do you think you
- 6 inspected Upper Big Branch, either as the AR or a
- 7 helper or a ---?
- 8 A. I think I was there twice as a trainee and maybe
- 9 three days as an AR.
- 10 Q. Three days as an AR?
- 11 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 12 Q. And I believe you stated earlier that you check
- the pre-shift books before you go in?
- 14 A. Yes. On the day that --- on April 5th I did.
- Q. In your travels as an inspector, do you ever come
- 16 across anything that is a violation and you think it
- should have been in the pre-shift book?
- 18 A. At this mines or at any mines?
- 19 O. At this mine.
- 20 A. No, I didn't. I didn't.
- 21 Q. Did you ever hear anyone joke about the air at
- 22 Upper Big Branch, for example, if you're going to
- 23 Headgate 22, bring your own air, anything like that?
- 24 A. Not that I can recall.
- Q. And you stated that you watched them load the coal

- 1 and bolt?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. How long did you watch them?
- 4 A. I watched the miner complete a cut, then watched
- 5 the roof bolter part of it, and then I went on with my
- 6 inspection.
- 7 Q. Are they normally running when you're there or are
- 8 they down more than they're running when you're ---?
- 9 A. At this mines here, I was only there one day and I
- 10 can't say. And the other time I was there when I was
- 11 helping Kevin, the section I went to, the section was
- 12 shut down. The power was even knocked on it.
- Q. Had you heard anything about the ventilation
- 14 system at this mine? Were there any problems? Was it
- in good shape or ---?
- 16 A. Only through other inspectors, you know, where I'd
- hear them discussing, you know, they being down there
- and then be in the office and hear them discussing it.
- 19 MR. BECK:
- 20 That's all I have.
- 21 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 22 Anything else? Let's take a break.
- 23 A. Okay.
- 24 SHORT BREAK TAKEN
- 25 ATTORNEY BAXTER:

- 1 Okay. Back on the record.
- 2 RE-EXAMINATION
- 3 BY MR. SHERER:
- 4 Q. I got one follow-up question. You mentioned that
- 5 you walked the belt south from the barrier section.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. What was your impression of their cleanup and
- 8 dusting program on this belt?
- 9 A. The belts looked --- I didn't write any citations,
- 10 so the belts were fair.
- 11 Q. Okay.
- 12 MR. SHERER:
- 13 Okay. That's all.
- 14 MR. BECK:
- 15 I have one.
- 16 RE-EXAMINATION
- 17 BY MR. BECK:
- Q. Mr. Syner, when you were assigned the AR, to be
- 19 the AR for Upper Big Branch, which I guess was April
- 20 5th; is that right --- April 1st?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Did anyone brief you as to any of the issues or
- any of the problems that were encountered on the
- 24 previous quarter so that you knew what you were
- 25 getting into?

- 1 A. Well, from --- the previous inspector sat right
- beside me, you know, and he would talk about, you
- 3 know, things that he had found down there. And I
- 4 reviewed the mine file, and so I was familiar with it,
- 5 yes.
- 6 Q. But is there any formal mechanism that says, you
- 7 got to do this, this, this and this before you go to
- 8 that mine?
- 9 A. Review the mine file.
- 10 O. Review the mine file?
- 11 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 MR. BECK:
- 14 Thank you.
- 15 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 16 MR. SHERER:
- 17 I've got one more as a follow-up to that.
- 18 RE-EXAMINATION
- 19 BY MR. SHERER:
- Q. The mine files you refer to, that's the uniform
- 21 mine file?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. That lists the previously-issued violations and
- things like that, doesn't it?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 O. It also lists whether the mine is on a (d) pattern
- 2 or not?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Does that serve as a indication of previous
- 5 conditions and problems that may have been encountered
- 6 at that mine?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 MR. SHERER:
- 9 Thank you.
- 10 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 11 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 12 On behalf of MSHA and the Office of
- Miners' Health, Safety and Training, I want to thank
- 14 you for appearing and answering questions today. Your
- 15 cooperation is very important to the investigation as
- 16 we work to determine the cause of the accident.
- 17 We require that you do not discuss your
- 18 testimony with any person, aside from your personal
- 19 representative. After questioning other witnesses, we
- 20 may call you if we have any follow-up questions that
- we feel that we need to ask you. But any time you
- 22 have additional information regarding the accident
- 23 that you'd like to provide to us, please contact us at
- the contact information that was previously provided
- to you.

- 1 If you wish, you may now go back over any
- answer you've given during this interview. You may
- 3 also make any statement that you would like to make at
- 4 this time.
- 5 A. Yeah. I'd like to clarify --- you asked me what
- time I left the mines and did I leave the mines
- 7 immediately. I came outside and issued two citations.
- 8 I held the daily closeout with the operator, and then
- 9 I left the coal mines. You know, after I issued the
- 10 citations and we discussed the citations, I didn't
- 11 hang around. I left.
- 12 MR. FARLEY:
- 13 Thank you.
- 14 ATTORNEY BAXTER:
- 15 Again, I want to thank you for your
- 16 cooperation in this matter.
- 17 A. Okay. Thanks.

18

20 STATEMENT UNDER OATH CONCLUDED AT 1:44 P.M.

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Page 31 1 STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA 2 3 4 CERTIFICATE 5 I, Brett Steele, a Notary Public in and for the State of West Virginia, do hereby certify: 6 7 That the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing deposition, was duly sworn by me on said 8 date and that the transcribed deposition of said witness is a true record of the testimony given by 10 11 said witness; 12 That the proceeding is herein recorded fully and accurately; 13 That I am neither attorney nor counsel for, 14 15 nor related to any of the parties to the action in which these depositions were taken, and further that I 16 17 am not a relative of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, or financially interested in 18 this action. 19 20 21 22 Brett Stale 23 24 25

August 24, 2010

Mr. Norman Page Lead Accident Investigator Upper Big Branch Mine – South Accident National Mine Academy Beaver, WV

Dear Mr. Page,

I was interviewed following the accident at Performance Coal Company, Upper Big Branch Mine – South. I have carefully reviewed the transcript of that interview and have found the following discrepancies.

- 1. Page 17, Line 7: Should have read "...there wasn't any photos taken"
- 2. Page 23, Line 13: I misunderstood the question. I thought I was asked if I walked or rode to that section. Therefore,
- 3. Page 23, Line 14: The answer should have been that I walked through the section.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to review the transcript.

Sincerely,

Johnny Syner
Johnny Syner