

Transcript of the Testimony of Matthew Walker

Date: September 9, 2010

Case:

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CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT UNDER OATH

OF

MATTHEW WALKER

taken pursuant to Notice by Alison Salyards, 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 Thursday, September 9, 2010, beginning at 3:40 p.m.

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- 1 PROCEEDINGS
- 2 ------
- 3 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 4 My name is Pollyanna Hampton. Today is
- 5 September 9th, 2010, and I am with the Office of the
- 6 Solicitor, U.S. Department of Labor. With me here is
- 7 Erik Sherer. He is an accident investigator with the
- 8 Mine Safety and Health Administration, MSHA, an agency
- 9 of the United States Department of Labor. And also
- 10 present at the table are several people from the State
- of West Virginia, and I ask that they now state their
- 12 appearance for the record.
- 13 MR. FARLEY:
- 14 I'm Terry Farley, with the West Virginia
- 15 Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.
- 16 MR. O'BRIEN:
- John O'Brien, with the Office of Miners'
- 18 Health, Safety and Training.
- 19 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 20 Barry Koerber, Assistant Attorney
- 21 General, assigned to represent the West Virginia
- Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.
- 23 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 24 Patrick McGinley, with the Governor's
- independent investigation team.

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1		
2	MATTHEW WALKER, HAVING FIRST BEEN DULY SWORN,	
3	TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:	
4		
5	ATTORNEY KOERBER:	
6	Would you please state your full name for	
7	the record and spell your last name?	
8	A. Matthew Scott Walker, W-A-L-K-E-R.	
9	ATTORNEY KOERBER:	
10	And would you please state your address	
11	and telephone number?	
12	A. (b) (7)(C)	,
13	(b) (7)(C)	
14	ATTORNEY KOERBER:	
15	And do you have an attorney representing	
16	you here today?	
17	A. Yes.	
18	ATTORNEY KOERBER:	
19	And he is? His name is?	
20	ATTORNEY SEARS:	
21	Chris Sears.	
22	ATTORNEY KOERBER:	
23	And you're with who?	
24	ATTORNEY SEARS:	
25	Shuman, McCuskey.	

- 1 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 2 And is Mr. Walker your client?
- 3 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 4 Yes.
- 5 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 6 Mr. Walker, are you appearing here today
- 7 as the result of receiving a subpoena?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 10 And would this be a copy of that
- 11 subpoena?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 14 And I noticed that the subpoena subpoenas
- you here for September 10th, at 1:00 p.m., and this is
- September 9th, at 3:30 p.m.; is that correct?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 19 I had a discussion with your --- one of
- 20 your attorneys yesterday, Mr. McCuskey, and he
- 21 requested this change, and we granted it. Was you
- 22 made aware of it?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 25 Okay. I'd like this to be Exhibit One.

- 1 (M. Walker Exhibit One marked for
- 2 identification.)
- 3 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 4 And I'd like this to be Exhibit Two,
- 5 which is the green card signed by ---
- 6 A. Daniel Walker.
- 7 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 8 --- Daniel Walker.
- 9 (M. Walker Exhibit Two marked for
- 10 identification.)
- 11 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 12 I also notice that there's another
- attorney in the room. I'd ask at this time that he
- identify himself and his firm and who he represents.
- 15 ATTORNEY AKERS:
- 16 My name is Rob Akers. I'm with Allen,
- 17 Guthrie & Thomas in Charleston, and I'm here on behalf
- 18 of Performance Coal.
- 19 ATTORNEY KOERBER:
- 20 Okay. Mr. Walker, the statute that
- 21 authorizes the Director to subpoena witnesses to
- interviews such as this requires the Director to offer
- to each witness subpoenaed a \$40-a-day witness fee,
- 24 plus, pursuant to the statute, roundtrip mileage at
- 25 the rate of 15 cents a mile from your house to here

- and back so long as you drove in your personal
- 2 vehicle, plus reimbursement for any toll you may have
- 3 passed on the way down or on the way back. In order
- 4 to receive that money, I have two forms that need to
- 5 be filled out, one of which is an IRS Form W-9, which
- 6 is requesting your Social Security number. It is my
- 7 understanding that the \$40 witness fee is considered
- 8 taxable income and will be reported to the IRS, and
- 9 you will get a 1099 miscellaneous at some later date.
- 10 If you would like to receive that money, you must fill
- out both forms, and you can do so at the end of this
- interview. If you are reluctant to give me your
- 13 Social Security number or you do not want to fill out
- the forms, you can decline to do so. But by declining
- to fill out the forms, you're declining the money as
- 16 well. What is your choice?
- 17 A. I'll decline.
- 18 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 19 All members of the Mine Safety and Health
- 20 Accident Investigation Team and all members of the
- 21 State of West Virginia Accident Investigation Team
- 22 participating in the investigation of the Upper Big
- 23 Branch Mine-South mine explosion shall keep
- 24 confidential all information that is gathered from
- 25 each witness who provides a statement until the

- 1 witness statements are officially released. MSHA and
- 2 the State of West Virginia shall keep this information
- 3 confidential so that other ongoing enforcement
- 4 activities are not prejudiced or jeopardized in any
- 5 way by a premature release of information. This
- 6 confidentiality requirement shall not preclude
- 7 investigation team members from sharing information
- 8 with each other or with other law enforcement
- 9 officials. The team members' participation in this
- 10 interview constitutes their agreement to keep this
- information confidential.
- 12 Government investigators and specialists
- have been assigned to investigate the conditions,
- events and circumstances surrounding the fatalities
- that occurred at the Upper Big Branch Mine-South on
- 16 April 5th, 2010. The investigation is being conducted
- by MSHA under Section 103(a) of the Federal Mine
- 18 Safety and Health Act and the West Virginia Office of
- 19 Miners' Health, Safety and Training. We really do
- appreciate your assistance with the investigation.
- 21 You may have a personal attorney present
- during the taking of this statement or another
- 23 personal representative, if MSHA has permitted it.
- 24 You may consult with this attorney at any time. Since
- 25 this is not an adversarial proceeding, formal Cross

- 1 Examination will not be permitted. However, your
- 2 personal legal representative may ask clarifying
- questions as appropriate. Your identity and the
- 4 content of this conversation will be made public at
- 5 the conclusion of the interview process and may be
- 6 included in the public report of the accident, unless
- 7 you request that your identity remain confidential or
- 8 your information would otherwise jeopardize a
- 9 potential criminal investigation. If you do request
- 10 us to keep your identity confidential, we will do so
- only to the extent permitted by the law. That means
- that if a judge orders us to reveal your name or if
- another law requires us to reveal your name or if we
- need to reveal your name for any other law enforcement
- purpose, we may need to do so. And just so that you
- know, this statement is only coming from the Federal
- 17 team. The State has their own confidentiality laws by
- 18 which they must abide, and they cannot make you that
- 19 same promise.
- 20 Also, there may be a need to use the
- 21 information you provide to us or other information we
- 22 may ask you to provide in the future in other
- investigations into and hearings about the explosion.
- 24 Do you understand?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 2 Do you have any questions about that?
- 3 A. No.
- 4 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 5 After the investigation is complete, MSHA
- 6 will issue a public report detailing the nature and
- 7 causes of the fatalities in the hope that greater
- 8 awareness about the causes of accidents can reduce
- 9 their occurrence in the future. Information obtained
- 10 through witness interviews is frequently included in
- 11 these reports. Since we will be interviewing other
- individuals, we do request that you not discuss your
- 13 testimony from any other person aside from your
- 14 attorney. A court reporter is here. She is making a
- record of everything that is said out loud, so please
- 16 speak loudly and clearly. If you don't understand a
- 17 question, please ask the questioner to rephrase, and
- 18 we certainly can accommodate you. And please answer
- 19 each question as fully as you can, including giving
- 20 any information you might have learned from somebody
- else.
- 22 We'd like to thank you in advance for
- 23 your cooperation and appearing here today. Your
- cooperation is critical in making the nation's mines
- 25 safer. After we have finished asking questions,

- 1 you'll then have an opportunity to go over any
- 2 question that you have answered and provide any
- additional information or make any clarification. And
- 4 if there's any statement you would like to make at
- 5 that point, you can do so. And if at the point after
- 6 you leave here today, if you have additional
- 7 information you'd like to provide to the team, you may
- 8 contact us through the information provided to you in
- 9 the letter that I handed you before we started the
- 10 interview. Norman Page is the team leader for the
- 11 MSHA Accident Investigation Team, and he can be
- 12 contacted through the information.
- 13 Any statements given by miner witnesses
- to MSHA are considered to be an exercise of statutory
- rights and protected activity under Section 105(c) of
- the Mine Act. If you believe any discharge,
- discrimination or any other adverse action is taken
- 18 against you as a result of your cooperation with this
- 19 investigation, you may contact MSHA and file a
- complaint under Section 105(c) of the Act.
- 21 MR. FARLEY:
- 22 Mr. Walker, on behalf of the Office of
- 23 Miners' Health, Safety and Training, I'd like to
- inform you that the West Virginia Mining Regulations,
- 25 specifically West Virginia Code, Chapter 22A-1-22,

- 1 provides protection to miners against potential
- discrimination for participating in these type
- 3 interviews. And I'd like to pass along some contact
- 4 information from the West Virginia Board of Appeals.
- 5 The Board is charged with hearing discrimination
- 6 complaints from miners. Should you experience any
- 7 such problems, you should contact the Board
- 8 immediately. I would caution you that should you need
- 9 to file a claim, you would need to do so within 30
- days of when the problem occurs.
- 11 A. Okay.
- 12 EXAMINATION
- 13 BY MR. SHERER:
- 14 Q. Thanks for coming down here this afternoon, Mr.
- Walker. We're investigating the April 5th explosion
- 16 at Upper Big Branch, and your testimony and input is
- 17 critical. We're doing this for two reasons. The
- 18 first is the 29 families and the friends and the
- 19 coworkers of the victims deserve some answers. The
- 20 second reason we're doing this is we want to prevent
- 21 this type of explosion from ever occurring again. And
- 22 any information you can provide that will help us
- achieve those goals is greatly appreciated. Roughly,
- how many years of mining experience do you have?
- 25 A. Around five.

- 1 Q. Okay. When did you start working for the Massey
- 2 organization?
- 3 A. April 2006.
- 4 Q. Okay. What was your position on April the 5th?
- 5 A. Within the company?
- 6 Q. Yes.
- 7 A. Mine engineer.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 10 As of 2010; right?
- 11 MR. SHERER:
- 12 2010, exactly.
- 13 BY MR. SHERER:
- Q. How long have you worked as a mining engineer?
- 15 A. At that point, it would have been right at four
- 16 years.
- 17 Q. Okay. Had you had any prior positions?
- 18 A. Not within Massey, no.
- 19 Q. Okay. What part of Massey did you work for?
- 20 A. What we refer to as Route 3 Engineering. It takes
- care of Performance, Marfork, Elk Run and a little bit
- of Goals.
- Q. And what was Goals?
- A. It's basically a prep plant.
- Q. Oh, okay. Thank you. What sort of services does

- 1 Route 3 Engineering provide?
- 2 A. I guess we take care of the surveying. We do the
- 3 mine permits and that type of thing. We do mapping
- for all our operations on Route 3.
- 5 Q. Do you prepare and submit plans required by MSHA?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Now, what was your typical duties on Route 3
- 8 Engineering prior to the explosion?
- 9 A. I guess all of the things that I listed there
- 10 earlier in addition to the one you mentioned.
- 11 Q. Okay. Thank you. Who did you report to?
- 12 A. At that time, Paul McCombs.
- 13 Q. Were you hourly or salary?
- 14 A. Salary.
- 15 Q. Did you direct any other workers?
- 16 A. Unofficially, yes.
- 17 O. Who were those workers?
- 18 A. AutoCAD technicians, surveyors.
- 19 Q. Could you --- did you plan the work for those
- 20 autoCAD technicians and surveyors?
- 21 A. Somewhat, yeah.
- Q. Okay. Could you hire or fire those employees?
- 23 A. No.
- Q. Could you discipline them?
- 25 A. To an extent I would say, yes.

- 1 Q. Were you responsible for reviewing their
- performance?
- 3 A. Yes. Some of them, not all of them. Some of
- 4 them.
- 5 Q. Okay. Could you purchase any parts, supplies or
- 6 services?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Did you prepare or review plans?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Did you ever meet with District 4 to discuss maps
- or plans from Upper Big Branch?
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. Are you a professional engineer?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Are you a professional land surveyor?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Are you an engineer in training?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Are you a land surveyor in training?
- 20 A. No.
- 21 Q. And you're an EIT in the State of West Virginia?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Thank you. Do you have responsible charge over
- the production of any maps or plans?
- 25 A. Yes.

- Q. What's your educational background, please?
- 2 A. I guess I have a B.S. in mechanical and a B.S. in
- 3 aerospace from WVU.
- 4 Q. Okay. Do you have any Federal or State mining
- 5 certifications?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Are you a red hat or a black hat?
- 8 A. Red hat.
- 9 Q. Okay. What's the management structure at route 3
- 10 Engineering?
- 11 A. I guess the chief engineer would be over all
- the --- over I guess the entire office. We're kind of
- 13 divided into two separate entities. We have a
- 14 permitting environmental side and then an underground
- 15 side.
- 16 O. Okay.
- 17 A. And Paul McCombs was the chief engineer at that
- 18 time. And they had three or four engineers on the
- 19 permitting side and three on the underground side.
- 20 Each side had --- they had two autoCAD technicians,
- and we had four autoCAD technicians.
- 22 Q. Now, when you say that Mr. McCombs was the chief
- engineer, ---
- A. Uh-huh (yes).
- Q. --- I'm not --- has he taken another position?

- 1 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know where he went?
- 3 A. Marshall Miller.
- 4 Q. Marshall Miller, okay. Who replaced Mr. McCombs?
- 5 A. I guess --- right now we just had two people hired
- 6 within the last week that --- one being, I guess, the
- 7 chief surface engineer and one being the chief
- 8 underground engineer. Barry Hudson is now the chief
- 9 underground engineer.
- 10 Q. Okay. How much authority did the chief engineer
- 11 at Route 3 have? Could he override mine management?
- 12 A. No, I don't think so.
- 13 Q. Who is Raymond Brainard?
- 14 A. He's also an engineer that works out of the Route
- 15 3 office. He does mostly taxes and that type of
- things for all of Massey.
- 17 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 18 I'm sorry. I couldn't hear you.
- 19 A. He mostly does --- I guess his main function now
- is to do taxes for Massey, the local taxes, property
- 21 taxes type thing for Massey.
- 22 BY MR. SHERER:
- 23 Q. Okay. Now, you mentioned that there were three
- underground mining engineers. I assume you're one of
- 25 those three?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 O. Who were the other two?
- 3 A. Heath Lilly and Eric Lilly.
- 4 Q. Did you guys have specific mine assignments?
- 5 A. Somewhat, yes.
- 6 Q. Which mine were you assigned to?
- 7 A. Elk Run I guess would be the ones I took care of,
- 8 Marfork, Elk Run.
- 9 Q. Did you have any association with Upper Big
- 10 Branch?
- 11 A. Somewhat, yeah.
- 12 Q. What was the nature of that work with Upper Big
- 13 Branch?
- 14 A. With being three engineers, we'd help each other
- out as much as possible. So any time that, you know,
- anyone would need our assistance with it, we would
- 17 help on it.
- 18 O. So if you primarily did Elk Run, would you fill in
- 19 when there was a rush job or something like that at
- 20 UBB?
- 21 A. Somewhat, yeah.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. Any time that one of the other ones wouldn't be
- 24 available or any time an extra one was needed or any
- 25 time --- that type of thing. So if someone is off

- 1 sick, that type of thing.
- 2 Q. Sure. Thank you. Have you ever received any
- 3 training at Route 3 Engineering?
- 4 A. As far as what kind of training.
- 5 Q. Well, let's split it up into two categories. The
- first would be associated with your work as a mine
- 7 engineer.
- 8 A. I guess none specifically from Route 3
- 9 Engineering, no.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. They allow us to go to seminars, that type of
- thing, but nothing through Route 3, no.
- Q. Okay. Now, have you received any safety-related
- 14 training ---
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. --- through Route 3 Engineering? What was that,
- 17 please?
- 18 A. I guess the Massey initial training, the MIT
- 19 Training, what it's commonly referred to, MIT
- training, when you're first hired, and then annual
- 21 refresher courses.
- Q. Okay. Now, that Massey initial training, how long
- 23 did that take?
- 24 A. I think originally --- it's eight hours, I believe
- is what it is. It's when you're first hired on, so

- 1 it's been --- I think it's eight hours.
- Q. But it was about a day or so?
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. Okay. Have you received your 80-hour training
- 5 anywhere?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Where did you receive that from?
- 8 A. Coal River Training , I believe it's called, in
- 9 Whitesville.
- 10 Q. And you said that you got an annual retraining.
- 11 Is that also eight hours?
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. When was the last time you did a firefighting and
- emergency evacuation drill?
- 15 A. I have not.
- 16 O. You have not?
- 17 A. Uh-uh (no).
- 18 Q. Have you been underground recently?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Which mine did you go underground at?
- 21 A. I guess it's Castle Mine.
- 22 Q. Okay. Thank you. Are you familiar with the P2
- 23 standards?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. Have you received any training or instruction on

- 1 those?
- 2 A. I guess just a document describing what they would
- 3 be.
- 4 Q. What were your responsibilities as an engineer
- 5 employed by Route 3?
- 6 A. What were my responsibilities?
- 7 Q. Uh-huh (yes).
- 8 A. The aforementioned things, the mine plan, mine
- 9 plan preparation, correspondence with regulatory
- 10 agencies, budget and reserve studies.
- 11 Q. Did you participate --- or were you involved in
- any of the production reporting, like midnight or end
- of the month reporting?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Did you report the footage advance at the mines
- 16 you were responsible for?
- 17 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know if that footage or areas associated
- 19 with that footage was used for bonuses or anything
- 20 like that?
- 21 A. I believe it is, yes.
- Q. Thank you.
- 23 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 24 I'm sorry. I didn't hear.
- 25 A. I believe it is, yes.

- 1 BY MR. SHERER:
- Q. Do you recall the last time you were underground
- 3 at Upper Big Branch?
- 4 A. I've never been.
- 5 Q. Never been, okay. You say you're responsible for
- 6 the mines at Elk run. Is that a single mine or
- 7 multiple mines?
- 8 A. No, multiple mines.
- 9 Q. How many mines, please?
- 10 A. Active mines, five.
- 11 Q. Okay.
- 12 A. Five right now.
- Q. Okay. Who's responsible for the exploration and
- geologic evaluation at UBB; do you know?
- 15 A. The exploration?
- 16 Q. Uh-huh (yes).
- 17 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 18 And geological evaluations.
- 19 A. I really don't know. I have no idea.
- 20 BY MR. SHERER:
- 21 Q. Thank you. Do you participate in the surveying or
- drafting of maps at any of those mines?
- A. Not personally, no.
- 24 O. Who does?
- 25 A. We have surveyors who are hired to do that and

- 1 contractors and then ones hired through Massey as
- well.
- Q. Do you ever have to review their work?
- 4 A. Not personally, no.
- Q. Okay.
- 6 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 7 If I can ask a clarifying ---.
- 8 MR. SHERER:
- 9 Sure.
- 10 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 11 Do you mean review as far as checking for
- 12 errors or review as far as looking at the data
- 13 prepared by them?
- 14 MR. SHERER:
- 15 Review as far as an engineer, which would
- be looking for errors and looking at the overall
- 17 system.
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 Does that change your answer at all?
- 20 A. Looking at the overall system?
- 21 BY MR. SHERER:
- 22 Q. Yeah.
- 23 A. I don't know what that means.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 MR. FARLEY:

- 1 Excuse me. Mr. Walker, can I please ask
- 2 you to speak up just a little bit?
- 3 A. Okay.
- 4 MR. FARLEY:
- 5 I'm having a hell of a time hearing.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 BY MR. SHERER:
- Q. Do you ever develop mine plans and projections?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Did you ever develop any for Upper Big Branch?
- 11 A. Yes, I have.
- 12 Q. Do you know who laid out the current longwall
- panel at Upper Big Branch?
- 14 A. As far as just general design or ---
- 15 O. Yes.
- 16 A. --- or actual put into a computer ---?
- 17 Q. General design first.
- 18 A. It would --- there's no one person that would have
- 19 specifically done it, but it would have been multiple
- 20 people.
- Q. Who were those people?
- 22 A. I guess Chris Blanchard, being the president,
- 23 would have been one of the main ones and with input
- from I'm sure his superiors as well. I mean, we had
- 25 some input into it. Bill Ross has input into it.

- 1 Q. Okay. And did you attend any meetings with those
- 2 individuals to discuss this current longwall panel?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Who chose the pillar dimensions, pillar layout?
- 5 A. Our engineering office would have calculated the
- 6 stability factors and such on different ones and
- 7 provide that information, but I guess the final call
- 8 would have been Blanchard as to what ones to use. I
- 9 mean, ---.
- 10 Q. Okay. How often did you have to change the
- 11 projections up at Upper Big Branch?
- 12 A. I don't know what that means. There's no set way
- to answer it. As needed, I'll say. I mean, it wasn't
- often and it wasn't never, so ---.
- 15 O. Okay. As needed.
- 16 A. As needed, I guess.
- 17 Q. Okay. Who decided that a change in the
- 18 projections should be made?
- 19 A. It would depend on the situation as well. I
- 20 mean, ---.
- 21 Q. Okay. Do you do any design modifications or
- 22 evaluation of the ventilation systems at Upper Big
- 23 Branch?
- A. I guess to a degree, yeah.
- Q. Okay. Who was in charge of ventilation at Upper

- 1 Big Branch?
- 2 A. I don't know really that there's someone
- 3 specifically in charge of ventilation. I mean, Eric
- 4 Lilly was the engineer that was assigned there. He
- 5 wasn't necessarily responsible for the ventilation.
- 6 It was I guess, you know, between him and the
- 7 superintendent, the mine foreman and the president and
- 8 --- so there wasn't a specific person assigned to
- 9 oversee ventilation on it.
- 10 Q. Okay. Does Route 3 Engineering have a ventilation
- 11 specialist?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. At Upper Big Branch, if there was an issue related
- to ventilation, who would be the ultimate decider?
- 15 Who had the final word?
- 16 A. I guess the final word would have been Chris
- 17 Blanchard as far as ---.
- 18 O. Okay. Thank you. Tell me what the normal
- 19 procedure for a ventilation-related change at Upper
- 20 Big Branch --- how did that work?
- 21 A. I guess when it was determined that something was
- needed, then I mean it was discussed with the
- 23 superintendent, the mine foreman normally. It would
- 24 be prepared. It would be sent to management to review
- 25 normally. It would be submitted to the agency. They

- 1 would review it, get back to us. Any corrections
- 2 would be discussed again with management, what changes
- 3 to be made or discussed with them or however, and it
- 4 would be implemented.
- 5 Q. And you participated in some of these
- 6 ventilation-related changes?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 9 At UBB?
- 10 MR. SHERER:
- 11 At UBB, yes.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 BY MR. SHERER:
- 14 Q. What do you recall was the normal reason for a
- 15 ventilation change?
- 16 A. Once again, it's not --- it's a broad question
- 17 for ---.
- 18 O. Okay.
- 19 A. I mean, it's a blanket question I guess I'm
- 20 saying. I mean, there's no one answer to it.
- 21 Q. Okay. The ventilation-related changes that you
- 22 participated in, were they initiated because of some
- change in conditions of the mine or the mine plan?
- A. At times, yes. I mean, but the initial plan was
- 25 needed because we wanted to start our longwall in the

- seam, so that was one I had some dealings with.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 4 I'm sorry, can you speak up?
- 5 A. The initial --- you know, the ventilation
- 6 originally to put a longwall into the mine was done
- 7 because we wanted to put a longwall into the mine. So
- 8 I mean, that was the reason we did it. And as far as
- 9 individual changes, it would be whatever --- whether
- 10 you would be moving the section once it finished
- developing that area, you would need to move back
- here. So it's not necessarily changing conditions in
- the mine, but I guess it would be considered changing
- conditions in the mine plan because they would be
- 15 moving from one location to another. Those would be
- the majority of them, just ---.
- 17 BY MR. SHERER:
- 18 O. Okay.
- 19 A. We had kind of four --- in this mine we had four
- sections in the longwall, and any time one of them
- 21 moved to another location we would have to go through
- that process. So that was the majority of it.
- 23 Q. Did you ever have to make changes based on any
- 24 citations or order from MSHA?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. How often did that happen?
- 2 A. I know of one time that I did. And that's
- 3 probably it, just one time.
- 4 Q. Okay. Now, when you --- you worked on that
- 5 ventilation plan change that was initiated by the
- 6 citation or order that MSHA issued. Did MSHA tell you
- 7 how to do the mine plan?
- 8 A. In this case, yes.
- 9 Q. Specifically what was that?
- 10 A. Previously we'd have --- in our plan it said --- I
- 11 believe it was --- I don't know. I believe it was
- we'd have at least one break that the air could
- circulate up on it and they had it going up multiple
- ones and the plan said at least one. And MSHA wrote a
- 15 citation for that and shut the longwall down. And we
- had to go in and build the stopping line back in and
- 17 allow only one, I guess.
- 18 Q. Okay. That was on the tailgate of the longwall?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Who worked on the 75372 ventilation map at Upper
- 21 Big Branch?
- 22 A. As far as getting the information on it or putting
- the map together as far as autoCAD version?
- Q. All or both.
- 25 A. I guess getting the information would be fire

- 1 bosses, mine foremen, superintendent mostly. Putting
- 2 the information into the digital --- taking that
- 3 information and putting it --- I guess surveyors did,
- 4 too, as far as updating works.
- 5 Q. Okay.
- 6 A. As far as putting that in, we would normally have
- 7 either the engineer, autoCAD or a lot of times both to
- 8 an extent. The autoCAD technician would put that
- 9 information into our digital drawing file.
- 10 O. Who certified that ventilation map?
- 11 A. Paul McCombs or Ray Brainard are the two P.E.s at
- that office that certified the maps.
- Q. Okay. Did Mr. McCombs or Mr. Brainard ever go
- underground to check any of those readings?
- 15 A. Not usually, no.
- 16 Q. Thank you. Are you aware of any ventilation
- 17 surveys being done at Upper Big Branch?
- 18 A. Prior to the accident, we had U.K. did one, Doctor
- 19 Wala.
- 20 O. Doctor who?
- 21 A. Wala.
- Q. Can you spell that, please?
- 23 A. I believe it's W-A-L-A.
- Q. Do you know approximately when he did that?
- 25 A. 2006/2007 I believe is when the actual survey

- 1 underground work was done. He developed the computer
- 2 modeling up until --- oh, we had a meeting II guess in
- about the time we put the shaft down, whatever day it
- 4 could be for that, and deciding the fan side and that
- 5 type of thing it was going in.
- 6 Q. Okay. And did you acquire the computer model ---
- 7 ventilation computer model for your use of Route 3
- 8 Engineering?
- 9 A. I didn't personally, no.
- 10 Q. Did anyone at Route 3 Engineering?
- 11 A. We had an engineer at --- he was an independent
- actually that worked with --- he went through the U.K.
- programs and worked with Doctor Wala and everything
- and was familiar with the program that they used ---
- is what he used on that.
- 16 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 17 I can't hear. I'm sorry.
- 18 A. At U.K., I quess, and he was familiar with him and
- 19 was familiar with the program that they used for their
- 20 ventilation survey.
- 21 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 22 MR. FARLEY:
- 23 Who was the individual working with
- Doctor --- the guy at U.K.
- 25 A. Reddy ---.

- 1 MR. FARLEY:
- 2 I know who you're talking about.
- A. Rayhuveer thadisina is how I guess it's
- 4 pronounced. Reddy is how he's known to us, everyone
- 5 throughout the area.
- 6 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 7 How do you spell that?
- 8 A. R-E-D-D-Y.
- 9 BY MR. SHERER:
- 10 Q. Is he still employed by Independence?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Okay. Thank you. Were you aware of the numerous
- violations and orders received at UBB for ventilation
- 14 problems and deficiencies?
- 15 A. I quess I --- numerous violations kind of ---.
- 16 Q. Let's put it this way.
- 17 A. A loaded question, I guess.
- 18 O. We issued a lot of paper related to ventilation in
- 19 the four or five months prior to the explosion. Did
- 20 you have any knowledge of that?
- 21 A. I knew of --- I guess I knew of some violations.
- I mean, I don't get a copy of every violation that's
- 23 written at the mine, no.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Anything that would have any dealings with, I

- guess, our office, normally we would receive a copy of
- 2 that, so ---.
- Q. Now, when you developed ventilation plans that
- 4 were submitted to MSHA, did you ever go underground
- 5 and then evaluate the effectiveness of those plans?
- 6 A. Me personally, no. But we normally have --- you
- 7 know, we have people at the mine do it and we'll get
- 8 information from them, but ---.
- 9 Q. Okay. So people at the mine would go underground
- 10 and take ---
- 11 A. Air readings ---
- 12 Q. --- air readings?
- 13 A. --- and such to --- yeah, if the pressure drops
- some. Eric Lilly went in and got pressure drops
- multiple times and such in areas. Me, personally, I
- 16 never at this mines.
- 17 Q. Have you done any of the mines?
- 18 A. Have I ---?
- 19 Q. Have you done PQ-type work at any of the mines?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Pressure quantity.
- 22 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 23 Still a student.
- 24 MR. SHERER:
- 25 We all are.

- 1 BY MR. SHERER:
- 2 Q. Did you work on the long-term projection or
- 3 five-year mine plan at Upper Big Branch?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Did the current mine layout at UBB correspond with
- 6 that five-year plan?
- 7 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 8 Can you define what you mean by current
- 9 layout?
- 10 MR. SHERER:
- 11 The layout at Upper Big Branch,
- 12 particularly the northern part of the mine, as it was
- 13 at the time of the explosion.
- 14 A. Those are all --- the budget five-year plans are
- only done annually, and it would have been, I guess,
- the previous June when it would have been done. So I
- mean, exactly, no, it wouldn't have matched it as ---.
- 18 BY MR. SHERER:
- 19 Q. Okay. Did it ---?
- 20 A. In general it matched it, but I mean, as far as
- 21 exactly matching it ---.
- 22 Q. Okay. Thank you. Did mine management at Upper
- 23 Big Branch regularly call you guys up at Route 3 and
- 24 discuss ventilation-related problems?
- 25 A. I guess it would depend on what regular would be.

- I mean, they did, but you know, every day they didn't
- 2 call me.
- Q. Not every day, but ---.
- 4 A. Yes, whenever there was ventilation issues or such
- 5 I guess they would normally discuss it with someone
- 6 from Route 3 Engineering.
- 7 Q. And did you guys look at how to change the
- 8 ventilation, what stoppings to build, what stoppings
- 9 to take out? Was that part of your recommendations?
- 10 A. Usually, yeah.
- 11 Q. Did you have anything to do with roof control or
- 12 rib control or pillar layouts at UBB?
- 13 A. I guess to an extent. I mean, not --- a little
- 14 bit, I guess, yeah.
- 15 O. A little bit, okay. Was there someone at Route 3
- 16 Engineering that primarily did that sort of work?
- 17 A. Eric Lilly also would have been the one that would
- 18 have done that at UBB normally ---
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. --- under normal circumstances. I'm sure he
- 21 didn't do it every time, but normally that's who ---.
- 22 Q. Do you know if anybody did any engineering design
- work on a dewatering system at UBB?
- 24 A. Yes. And that would have been more I guess how I
- 25 said we were divided into underground and permitting

- 1 stuff. The water issue and stuff would normally goby
- 2 the other office. Paul McCombs would have been the
- 3 one that had the most information on that then.
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 6 BY MR. SHERER:
- 7 Q. Was there any sort of annual or other periodic
- 8 review of the general conditions and mine plans at
- 9 Upper Big Branch that you're aware of?
- 10 A. There's not a regular scheduled audit or whatever
- 11 you call it, no.
- 12 MR. SHERER:
- 13 That's all the questions I've got for
- 14 right now.
- 15 EXAMINATION
- 16 BY MR. FARLEY:
- 17 Q. Mr. Walker, Erik asked about the ventilation
- 18 survey at UBB, and of course you answered that Doctor
- 19 Wala from U.K. ---
- A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 21 Q. --- had done some considerable work there. Now,
- 22 do you know any more details as to actually what type
- of survey was performed or did it encompass a lot of
- things, such as air quantity, pressures, direction of
- 25 airflow, mapping? How did it play; do you know?

- 1 A. I believe they spent two days underground doing
- air quantities, pressure drops and barometric pressure
- and all that and pressure drops, I guess control map
- 4 and that type of thing, too, as well, air direction.
- 5 All the things you listed were involved in, I guess,
- 6 the underground survey portion of it. And then he
- 7 built computer model using what they found with their
- 8 underground survey and, you know, would make
- 9 adjustments to that, too, you know, to make
- 10 predictions for how far you can do this or what's
- 11 going to happen when this will happen or whatever.
- 12 Q. Now, if I understood you correctly, this survey
- 13 was done in 2006 and 2007?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Okay. Now, at that time, were there any
- 16 adjustments, significant adjustments that you can
- 17 recall that were made following the survey?
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. Was the longwall --- the installation for the
- 20 longwall panel at that time being considered? Was it
- on the drawing board at that time?
- 22 A. I guess it --- it had been going back and forth
- whether to put a longwall in the northern area for
- some time prior to it, so it would have been
- considered at that time, yes.

- 1 Q. Now, as we understand it, the longwall was moved
- 2 out of UBB a few years ago?
- 3 A. Yeah, 2006, I believe.
- Q. Yeah, prior to the --- a few years prior to the
- 5 explosion.
- 6 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 7 Q. Now, at what point did the idea of bringing it
- 8 back to UBB first appear on your radar screen. When
- 9 did you become aware of that?
- 10 A. I guess there had always been, you know,
- 11 projections shown for that area that we had had where
- it had been considered prior to moving the longwall
- out of there, so ---.
- 14 Q. Okay. So as best you can --- you've been with the
- 15 company about what, five years?
- 16 A. Almost, yeah. Not quite five years.
- 17 Q. So would it have been on your radar screen for as
- long as you've been employed there?
- 19 A. Yeah.
- 20 Q. Okay. I asked you if there were any adjustments
- 21 made following the ventilation survey. Were there ---
- 22 was there a document or a report prepared? And you
- indicated a computer simulation that was done, too; is
- 24 that correct?
- 25 A. Yeah. He had done a computer simulation and a

- group from, I guess, UBB representatives met with them
- and discussed everything. As far as an actual report,
- I don't know that there was a report written, any kind
- 4 of text or anything, but ---.
- 5 Q. Okay. Did the computer simulation incorporate
- 6 plans for the longwall development?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Okay. All right. Is the computer simulation
- 9 still available in some form?
- 10 A. I'm sure it is. I don't have a copy of it. I
- 11 would say that he would still have what he did at that
- 12 time, I would think. And I mean, I believe Massey has
- done its own simulation since the explosion, too,
- using the same type of things, even a PC, I guess.
- 15 Q. Okay. So you think Massey has done a simulation
- 16 since the explosion?
- 17 A. Yeah. But his original one, I would assume he
- 18 would likely still hhave a copy of it as well.
- 19 Q. Okay. Is there still a relationship between
- 20 Doctor Wala and Massey currently?
- 21 A. Yeah. As far as I know, yeah.
- 22 Q. Okay. Some discussion here of ventilation changes
- 23 at Upper Big Branch Mine prior to the explosion. Did
- 24 you ever actually participate in any of this or were
- 25 you ever involved personally?

- 1 A. As far as, I guess, planned preparation sections
- 2 normally within my --- the limits of my involvement in
- 3 it, I guess. As far as saying this is what we --- you
- 4 know, this is what we're going to do and you have a mp
- 5 and you're going to build this stopping and this
- 6 stopping, no, I wouldn't go underground and say, you
- 7 build that stopping and you build that stopping.
- 8 Q. Who would ordinarily direct the ventilation
- 9 changes, if you know?
- 10 A. The superintendent was normally the one that does
- 11 it, the mine foreman. Either one of those two would
- 12 be the two that ---
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. --- did that.
- Q. I think you said that Mr. McCombs, is that
- 16 correct, ---
- 17 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 18 O. --- would have been the person involved with water
- 19 problems at the UBB Mine; is that correct?
- 20 A. Yeah. He deals with all the water system-type
- 21 things.
- Q. Okay. Now, did that include drainage, pumping it
- from the mine? What's your knowledge of his
- involvement with water problems at UBB Mine?
- 25 A. I guess his main involvement would be, you know,

- if you put a new water hole down here, what are you
- 2 going to do with that water, was his main involvement
- 3 in it. As far as I guess providing ideas and such, he
- 4 would do that as well. We would discuss what would be
- 5 potential, I guess.
- 6 Q. Was his primary responsibility how to get the
- 7 water out of the mine or was it to get --- include
- 8 getting the water from one place to the next in the
- 9 mine?
- 10 A. I guess his primary would probably be getting the
- 11 water out of the mine. But getting the water from one
- 12 place in the mine to that place would be involving
- that as well, I guess, too.
- Q. Just to be clear here, when you say you worked for
- 15 Route 3 Engineering, would it be technically correct
- 16 to say you worked for Massey Coal Services? Is that
- 17 correct?
- 18 A. Yes, I quess I'm employed through Massey Coal
- 19 Services. So I'm employed by them, Massey Coal
- 20 Services, yes.
- 21 Q. Okay. And that's just --- Route 3 Engineering is
- 22 what you call yourselves?
- 23 A. Well, that's me. We have people that are paid
- through Marfork. We have people that are paid through
- 25 Elk Run. We have people that are paid through

- 1 Performance as well, so ---. That's why Route 3 ---
- it's everybody on Route 3 there, I guess.
- Q. So engineers from the various companies ---?
- 4 A. They used to have an engineering office near
- 5 Marfork ---.
- 6 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 7 Let him finish his question.
- 8 BY MR. FARLEY:
- 9 Q. Engineers from the various companies at Massey
- 10 Coal Services just sort of function out of the same
- 11 facility. Is that how it works? Is that --- am I
- 12 correct?
- 13 A. They used to have an engineering office at
- 14 Marfork. They used to have an engineering office at
- 15 Elk run. They used to have an engineering office at
- Performance. Back before I started, 2003, 2004, they
- 17 consolidated those offices into one centralized
- 18 location on Route 3 that took care of the same
- 19 business that they did before. That was termed Route
- 20 3 Engineering at that point because they took care of
- 21 the --- all the operations that they had on Route 3
- there. So those people would still --- you know, part
- would be paid through Marfork and so on, but the
- office was --- had become centralized. They weren't
- 25 --- they weren't physically located at the Marfork

- 1 main office. They weren't physically located at the
- 2 Elk Run main office any longer, so they took care of
- 3 all that on Route 3.
- 4 Q. Okay. And this consolidation of sorts came
- 5 together before you arrived on the site?
- 6 A. Yes. I believe it's 2003, 2004, which is before I
- 7 started.
- 8 Q. Did you have any particular problems in dealing
- 9 with the management personnel at the UBB Mine?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 MR. FARLEY:
- 12 Next.
- 13 EXAMINATION
- 14 BY ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 15 Q. Just real quick, when you talked about the work
- that Doctor Wala did in conducting the ventilation
- survey, you said they. Did he have other people
- working with him from the university?
- 19 A. When they did the underground survey, one person
- 20 can't do it at all, so he had --- I quess I wasn't
- involved in it when he did it, but there were multiple
- teams usually --- at least two, maybe three people per
- 23 team, and you would get air readings and such from
- underground and stuff. So that's what I mean by that,
- 25 I guess.

- 1 Q. Well then, let me ask, do you know if he did have
- 2 anybody else from the university working with him,
- 3 perhaps a student?
- 4 A. I don't know.
- 5 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 6 Sorry.
- 7 MR. FARLEY:
- 8 Sorry. I forgot a couple things here.
- 9 RE-EXAMINATION
- 10 BY MR. FARLEY:
- 11 Q. Did the design for the Bandytown fan result in any
- way from the ventilation survey and the computer
- 13 simulation prepared by Doctor Wala?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Okay. Now, was there another fan projected in
- 16 that survey or that simulation ---
- 17 A. I guess.
- Q. --- in addition to that, in addition to ---?
- 19 A. Long term, is that what you mean or ---?
- 20 O. Yes.
- 21 A. On that one, no. On that --- regarding that, no.
- 22 At that time it was just that fan. I guess the plans
- had called once we developed more panels we would put
- another fan in another location further north, but it
- 25 wasn't discussed in that ---.

- 1 Q. Now, was the idea of this additional fan further
- 2 north, was it on the drawing board as of April 5th?
- 3 A. Nothing concrete. I mean, it was ---.
- 4 Q. Would it have involved sinking another shaft?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Okay. All right.
- 7 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 8 Can we take a couple-minute break here?
- 9 MR. FARLEY:
- 10 Sure.
- 11 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 12 Sure.
- 13 SHORT BREAK TAKEN
- 14 EXAMINATION
- 15 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Mr. Walker, you hold a B.S. degree in mechanical
- 17 engineering and a B.S. degree in aerospace
- 18 engineering ---
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. --- from West Virginia University; is that
- 21 correct?
- 22 A. Yes.
- Q. So you have two different degrees?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. How long did it take you to accumulate those two?

- 1 A. Class time, four-and-a-half years. But I worked
- 2 co-op during my time there, too, so that was ---.
- 3 Q. What does that mean?
- 4 A. In place of going to class, you work a job. I was
- 5 a co-op student.
- 6 Q. Where did you work?
- 7 A. RAG Emerald Mine.
- 8 Q. Is that in Waynesburg?
- 9 A. Yes. So I guess five-and-a-half from the time I
- 10 started until I got my degrees.
- 11 Q. What was in the aerospace engineering curriculum
- that directly relates to your work at Route 3
- 13 Engineering?
- 14 A. Mostly fluids, I mean, air, ventilation, that type
- of thing, water, all that. It goes hand in hand. I
- think a lot of the --- a lot of the curriculum at WVU
- with mining, they take a lot of the mechanical and
- aerospace classes as well as part of their degrees.
- 19 Q. Can you speak up a little bit?
- 20 A. Yeah. As part of the mining program at WVU I know
- 21 the mining students take a lot of the mechanical and
- aerospace classes as well, thermodynamics, fluids,
- 23 dynamics, statics, all that stuff.
- Q. What courses did you take in the mining
- engineering curriculum at WVU?

- 1 A. None.
- 2 Q. None?
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. What did you do at RAG?
- 5 A. Well, being a co-op student, kind of introducing
- 6 me to everything. Did a little bit of their water
- 7 sampling program, that type of thing, did a little bit
- 8 of time study for them, their underground work.
- 9 Q. As a student, it wasn't, it was really a little
- 10 bit; right?
- 11 A. Yeah. It was introduction, so yeah.
- 12 Q. When did you decide to go into coal mining
- 13 engineering?
- 14 A. After being a co-op student there, after I
- 15 graduated, I went back there and worked for a while.
- 16 O. At RAG?
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 O. For how long?
- 19 A. I quess about six months. After I graduated, I
- worked there.
- Q. What did you do there?
- 22 A. We did --- I moved from actually Emerald Mine, I
- 23 guess, to their planning and engineering group. And
- 24 part of what I did, I quess, we did a computer program
- 25 to ---.

- 1 O. A what?
- 2 A. A computer program that, you know, dealt with, I
- guess, shuttle car haulage time and that type of
- 4 stuff.
- 5 Q. Time studies?
- 6 A. Yeah. And then some vent survey work, too.
- 7 Q. What did that involve, the vent survey work?
- 8 A. Just basically calculations and everything from
- 9 what --- while I was a student there, we done the
- 10 underground portion of the vent survey and then we
- 11 were doing the, you know, calculations and modeling
- part of it, so I kind of continued on with that after
- 13 I graduated.
- Q. Was that the first experience you had with the
- 15 ventilation survey?
- 16 A. Yes.
- Q. You didn't study ventilation surveys or
- 18 underground ventilation modeling in any of your WVU
- 19 courses?
- 20 A. No.
- 21 Q. What was your job title at RAG?
- 22 A. Co-op student, and then I don't really know what
- it would have been, junior engineer or something along
- those lines for me.
- Q. And you stayed there for six months?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. Why did you leave?
- 3 A. I'm from, I guess, around the Charleston area, so
- 4 I just came back there.
- 5 Q. Where in the Charleston area?
- 6 A. Clay County area. That's where I was raised.
- 7 Q. And did you have a job at the time you left RAG?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. What was the period between the time you left RAG
- 10 and you got your next job?
- 11 A. I don't know.
- 12 Q. A couple months?
- 13 A. A month or so, might have been.
- Q. And was that with Massey?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. Who did you go to work with then?
- 17 A. Well, I worked a couple other jobs and even worked
- 18 --- I had worked at Lowe's for a little while and then
- 19 I worked as a teacher for a little while, too.
- Q. How long was a little while with each of those
- jobs?
- 22 A. Eighteen (18) months and then about six months.
- 23 Q. When did you get your degrees?
- 24 A. 2001.
- Q. Both of them?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And where did you teach?
- 3 A. Clay County High School.
- 4 Q. What did you teach?
- 5 A. Science and math.
- 6 Q. What grade?
- 7 A. Ninth, tenth mostly.
- 8 Q. Okay. So you left RAG, then in a month you got a
- 9 job teaching or --- Lowe's and then teaching?
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. And that took up what, 18 months? That got you up
- 12 to about 2003?
- 13 A. I had worked security, I guess, whenever I first
- 14 came back from RAG. And I didn't work anywhere for a
- 15 little while, and then I worked at Lowe's for about 18
- months. I didn't work for a couple months and then I
- was a teacher for a couple months. And after I was a
- teacher, I started working at Massey after that.
- 19 Q. Were you a substitute teacher?
- 20 A. Yeah.
- Q. And you went to work at Massey in 2006?
- 22 A. Yes.
- Q. So there are basically four years after you left
- 24 RAG that you were doing these different things you
- 25 just described?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And how did you get hired by Massey?
- 3 A. I applied. And I knew one of the engineers down
- 4 there. I went to school with him.
- 5 Q. Who was that?
- 6 A. Mark Morris.
- 7 Q. Mark?
- 8 A. Mark Morris.
- 9 O. Is he still there?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 O. Where did he work?
- 12 A. Where does he work now?
- Q. I mean, where did he work at that time?
- 14 A. He was at Route 3.
- 15 Q. Okay. And he told you there was an opening?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And how did you --- did you take a test? How did
- 18 you get the job?
- 19 A. I sent in a resume and then interviewed and got
- the job.
- 21 Q. And have you had the same job title since you were
- 22 first hired?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. Did you have the same responsibilities since you
- 25 were first hired?

- 1 A. No.
- Q. How have they changed?
- 3 A. I guess kind of from being the entry-level guy to
- 4 more the senior guy. I'm just a regular ---.
- 5 Q. Now you're the senior engineer of the three ---?
- 6 A. Of the three, yeah.
- 7 Q. And how much experience do the other two have?
- 8 A. Two-and-a-half years.
- 9 Q. Both of them have two-and-a-half years?
- 10 A. Yeah. They were hired at the same time.
- 11 Q. It would have been around 2007, 2008?
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. So when you came to Massey as a junior engineer,
- 14 you had never done any mine plans before?
- 15 A. No. Uh-uh (no).
- 16 Q. Never did a ventilation plan?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. Had you ever prepared a mine map using the
- 19 computer ---
- 20 A. Yeah.
- 21 Q. --- software?
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. You have done that? Where did you do that?
- 24 A. At RAG.
- Q. For what? What was the purpose of the map? Was

- it environmental or ---? Don't remember?
- 2 A. A bunch of things. I mean, ---
- Q. Okay.
- 4 A. --- the same as anywhere else.
- 5 Q. But that was all new to you?
- 6 A. Yeah, at the time it was.
- 7 Q. So when you came to Massey, you had done some mine
- 8 mapping?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Had worked on it?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. But not much; is that fair?
- 13 A. Yeah, I guess so.
- Q. So that's why you felt like you were a junior
- 15 engineer?
- A. Well, that's what my title was at RAG.
- 17 O. I see.
- 18 A. At Massey I was --- mine engineer was my title.
- 19 Q. Okay. So how did you learn to do all the things
- that you've been doing the last year or so?
- 21 A. On-the-job training, I guess.
- 22 Q. Who trained you?
- 23 A. No one specifically.
- Q. No one specific?
- 25 A. No.

- 1 Q. You just sort of asked questions of who?
- 2 A. It's the same as any other job. I mean,
- 3 engineering program doesn't teach you to be an
- 4 on-the-job engineer.
- 5 Q. A lawyer ---.
- 6 A. It teaches you how to think. It prepares you for
- 7 what you need to know. It gives you a background. So
- 8 I mean, somebody fresh out of college is not going to
- 9 have any idea what they're going to be doing at the
- 10 job. They just know, --- I mean, statics and dynamics
- aren't going to teach you anything, so ---.
- 12 Q. So you had a lot to learn; right?
- 13 A. I'm not an idiot.
- 14 Q. No, I understand.
- 15 A. I'm kind of getting a little bit insulted by this,
- to be honest, but ---.
- 17 O. Kind of like Mr. Sears, former student of mine.
- he had a lot to learn. He's learned a lot. I'm
- 19 continuing to learn. I'm not trying to insult you.
- 20 I'm just trying to understand what your background is.
- 21 It's part of the investigation. Because this is
- serious, and we're looking at everything. So your
- 23 truthfulness and responsiveness is helpful to us,
- 24 because we've got families who are depending on us
- 25 here today.

- 1 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 2 Q. Did you know anybody that was killed in this ---
- 3 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 4 Q. --- explosion?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. So you know. That's what we're trying to do, is
- 7 to figure out what's the cause of this, what happened.
- 8 That's why we ask a lot of questions. And the
- 9 experience of people who worked there is important.
- 10 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 11 Q. When did you first work on a ventilation plan?
- 12 A. I guess when I first started. I mean, ---.
- Q. So who talked to you about how to do a ventilation
- 14 plan, if you recall?
- 15 A. The other engineers there, Mike Millen, George
- 16 Levo, Tim Tirey, Mark Morris.
- 17 Q. They weren't all there at the same time, though?
- 18 A. Yeah, they were.
- 19 Q. They were?
- 20 A. Yeah.
- Q. So there were four?
- 22 A. When I was first hired there were --- I guess I
- would have been the fifth one hired there. And then
- shortly after I was hired, Ray Brainard was hired to
- 25 be the sixth. And then actually one of the guys that

- 1 was killed in the explosion was hired as the seventh.
- 2 O. Who was that?
- 3 A. Nick McCroskey.
- 4 Q. And at some point they were all gone but you and
- 5 the two fellows you're working with now came in?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. So did those folks have more experience? I mean,
- 8 were they ---?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Ten, 20 years experience?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And at what point did those experienced people
- leave that were working with you?
- 14 A. Mike Millen left in, I believe, October of 2006.
- Tim Tirey left in early 2008. Mark left in early
- 16 2008. George Levo passed away in the middle of '08.
- 17 Q. So pretty quickly you were the senior person?
- 18 A. Yeah.
- 19 Q. Did you feel that responsibility?
- 20 A. Yeah.
- Q. Did you feel like you were up to the --- that
- 22 extent of responsibility with only two-and-a-half
- years of actual on-the-job work?
- 24 A. If I had questions, there were other people I
- could ask. I mean, it's not like I was just, hey, you

- 1 take care of this, I'm going over here, you know.
- Q. Sure.
- 3 A. So it's not like we were thrown into a fire and
- 4 left. I mean, ---
- 5 Q. I understand that.
- 6 A. --- we still have other people if we have
- questions we can ask and everything, so ---.
- 8 Q. So let me ask about ventilation plans and the
- 9 mapping that goes along with it.
- 10 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 11 Q. And I'm not talking about UBB. I'm just talking
- about generally in your office. When a major
- ventilation plan change is contemplated for whatever
- 14 reason, ---
- 15 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 16 Q. --- who makes the decision about how that change
- is going to be carried out, the bigger picture, not as
- 18 you were mentioning, where does this stopping go or
- that stopping go, but the bigger picture?
- 20 A. I guess the ultimate decision would be on ---
- 21 placed on the president, would be the ultimate
- decision. It's discussed from engineering to
- 23 superintendent, mine foreman, you know, at the mine
- 24 personnel to president, vice-president. But I guess
- 25 the ultimate --- the person that would make the final

- decision on it would be the president.
- 2 O. President of each ---
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. --- company?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And there are what, three or four companies
- 7 that ---
- 8 A. Three right now that we deal with.
- 9 Q. --- Route 3 Engineering services?
- 10 A. Yes, three.
- 11 Q. Are there ever people above the company president
- that are involved in the discussion of ventilation
- 13 plans?
- 14 A. In some ventilation plans, yeah. I mean, big ---
- 15 you know, whether to put a longwall into a mine, I
- mean, I'm sure that goes beyond just the president.
- Q. Well, you were involved in a substantial change in
- December of 2009. Do you recall that?
- 19 A. I don't know specifically what one you mean there.
- 20 Q. Well, you submitted to MSHA --- you wrote a letter
- to Robert G. Hardman, who's the head of District 4.
- do you know Mr. Hardman?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. A ventilation plan revision on December 14th,
- 25 2009.

- 1 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 2 Q. Do you remember that?
- 3 A. Not specifically, no.
- 4 Q. It didn't work. Do you remember that one?
- 5 A. No. Can I read it or ---?
- 6 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 7 Could you show him?
- 8 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 9 I'm just wondering if he remembers.
- 10 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 11 Okay. That's fine. If you show him, it
- 12 might refresh his recollection.
- 13 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 14 Well, I will.
- 15 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 16 Okay.
- 17 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 18 I appreciate that.
- 19 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 20 Okay.
- 21 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. I'm going to show you a document. Actually, it's
- a double-sided document, a letter dated December 14th,
- 24 2009, to Mr. Hardman, signed by you, re: Performance
- Coal Company, Upper Big Branch Mine, mine number, ID

- 1 number, ventilation revision. And there are
- 2 attachments to that. There are a couple of maps,
- 3 charts and so forth. And then there's a response to
- 4 your letter. It's a letter dated December 18th, 2009,
- 5 addressed to Chris Blanchard, signed by Mr. Hardman,
- 6 but it's in response to your December 14th, 2009
- 7 letter. Will you take a look at that?
- 8 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 9 Take your time to read it.
- 10 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 11 Q. Take all the time you want.
- 12 WITNESS REVIEWS DOCUMENT
- 13 A. Okay.
- 14 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 15 O. Do you remember those documents?
- 16 A. Yeah, somewhat.
- 17 Q. Did it somewhat refresh your recollection
- 18 generally?
- 19 A. Yeah. There's part of it missing, but yeah.
- Q. But what I'm pointing out to you is a letter that
- 21 you sent and it indicates there was a ventilation plan
- 22 revision ---
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. --- that was attached, and that letter was dated
- December 14th, 2009; correct?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And then that ventilation plan revision was
- approved on December 18th, 2009; is that correct?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Do you remember what the reason was for submitting
- 6 that revision?
- 7 A. To travel one entry from the connection of the
- 8 longwall panel back is what that is for.
- 9 Q. Do you remember that situation?
- 10 A. Somewhat, yeah.
- 11 Q. Is that something MSHA forced ---
- 12 A. This?
- 13 Q. --- UBB to do?
- 14 A. I guess, no, not on this one. They, I guess,
- interpreted the law differently than they had
- previously to force us to travel an entry up there
- that we normally would not have done.
- 18 O. Did you have any disagreement with MSHA over that
- 19 revision or is that a submission of Performance Coal
- and Route 3 Engineering?
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 Do you understand the question?
- 23 A. Yeah. I guess he's saying we were forced to do
- this or were we doing it --- was it our idea from the
- get-go or were we doing it on our own?

- 1 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Right.
- 3 A. If I recall correct, I ---.
- 4 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 5 If you remember.
- 6 A. I mean, there was --- I can't remember the exact
- 7 specific circumstances, but I don't know if it was the
- 8 water or whatever. We couldn't travel the outside
- 9 entry, but we were going to have to make it common
- 10 with it so we could travel the entries were they were
- able to travel instead of traveling one that had water
- 12 in it.
- 13 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Weren't several entries roofed out there?
- 15 A. I don't know ---
- 16 O. You don't know?
- 17 A. --- specifically. No.
- Q. And there were problems with roof, roof problems
- 19 and cribs being built to ---.
- 20 A. Ribs are a common occurrence in the mine, as I
- 21 understand it.
- 22 Q. Well, we've heard some other testimony.
- 23 A. Yeah. I mean, the cribs were built ---.
- Q. Excuse me. Maybe these people that testified
- 25 before, they were inaccurate. But I'm just asking you

- 1 what you recall.
- 2 A. I have no personal knowledge of that, so I mean, I
- 3 can't ---.
- 4 Q. Well, I don't mean personal knowledge because you
- 5 didn't go in the mine to see that; ---
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. --- is that right?
- 8 A. Correct.
- 9 Q. Okay. But personal knowledge in terms of talking
- 10 to people that worked in your office that were in the
- 11 mine.
- 12 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- Q. Were there people that actually went down there
- 14 before that December 14th ventilation revision was
- 15 submitted that came back and talked about the problems
- that gave rise to the revision?
- 17 A. Not to me, no.
- 18 Q. So you didn't know anything about it? Just
- 19 generally, you knew there was some water or ---?
- 20 A. Yes. I mean, I knew there was water in there.
- 21 That doesn't mean whether it would be six inches of
- 22 water or roofed, but ---.
- Q. Would you have liked to have known that?
- 24 A. I mean, I don't ---.
- Q. Does water affect --- can water affect a

- 1 ventilation plan?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. How so?
- 4 A. If it's blocking off, it can block off. I mean,
- 5 it creates restrictions and such.
- 6 Q. So you would want to know if there was an area of
- 7 the mine where the water roofed out in entries?
- 8 A. If it was roofed, I would like to know, yes.
- 9 O. And what if it was a foot from the roof?
- 10 A. Yes. I mean, but if it's, you know, six inches
- deep, it's not going to make any difference.
- 12 Q. Well, obviously.
- 13 A. Right.
- Q. At what point do you get concerned about the
- 15 impact of ---
- 16 A. Generally, ---.
- 17 Q. --- water --- let me finish, the impact of water
- on a ventilation system?
- 19 A. Generally when it becomes untravelable or when you
- 20 can't travel through is normally when it becomes an
- 21 issue.
- Q. So it's people in the mine being able to travel or
- is it air travel, the airflow that is a concern with
- 24 regard to ventilation?
- 25 A. In this case, we would like to send air up all

- 1 three of these entries. And if this one is blocked
- off, it wouldn't matter because it would still go
- 3 through these two entries, which was not the case
- 4 because we had to maintain this outside entry, which
- 5 was enforced by MSHA, which required us to submit a
- 6 revision to make all those common from there out to
- 7 allow us to travel those other entries, which is kind
- 8 of what we wanted to do from the beginning on all
- 9 this. So if you have one entry blocked off, it makes
- 10 a difference in that entry. But you still have two
- others that would be able to handle the airflow. And
- 12 with a fan that pulls as much as it does, then ---.
- 13 MR. SHERER:
- 14 Can I make a question here?
- 15 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 16 Sure, Mr. Sherer.
- 17 MR. SHERER:
- 18 You're indicating the headgate behind the
- 19 current longwall.
- A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 21 MR. SHERER:
- 22 And you say there's three entries
- 23 available. Isn't the Number One entry caved?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 MR. SHERER:

- 1 So you have two entries?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 MR. SHERER:
- 4 Thank you.
- 5 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 6 Q. So Mr. Walker, getting back to my question. The
- 7 revision that was submitted to MSHA by you on December
- 8 14th, 2009, that revision was something that Route 3
- 9 Engineering and Performance Coal, that was their plan,
- is that correct, to deal with the in-mine problems?
- 11 A. Yes, to allow us to travel an entry down a common
- 12 airway as opposed to another airway which was not
- 13 common at that time.
- 14 Q. And then that revision was approved on December
- 15 18th, 2009, according to the document you have before
- 16 you and your recollection; is that correct?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 O. But that revision didn't work? Are you
- 19 remembering this more now?
- 20 A. I --- no, I don't remember it not working.
- Q. Well, let me show you a document, a letter
- submitted by Mr. Blanchard to Mr. Hardman of MSHA on
- December 23rd, 2009, and see if this might refresh
- your recollection about the circumstances at that
- 25 time.

- 1 WITNESS REVIEWS DOCUMENT
- 2 A. From this, it's saying that we couldn't do it
- 3 without using belt air in the face, which has nothing
- 4 to do with making that common on the back end.
- 5 So ---.
- 6 ATTORNEY AKERS:
- 7 Let him ask a question. I don't know, is
- 8 there a question outstanding?
- 9 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 I asked if that letter refreshed his
- 11 recollection with regard to the circumstances at the
- time that related to the December 14th revision
- 13 submitted to MSHA.
- 14 A. If I could see the drawing that would go along
- with this plan, which I said was the missing portion,
- 16 I could know fully whether --- I could note fully how
- 17 to answer your question. Because at some point MSHA
- 18 wanted us to not use belt air on the face, which we
- 19 had done, which was approved in the initial
- ventilation plan and would have been allowed
- 21 throughout the whole panel --- or assumed to be
- allowed throughout the whole panel. At some point
- 23 they decided that they didn't want us to use that any
- longer, and therefore they wanted us to submit plans
- 25 where we showed now using belt air in the case. And

- if that was involved in this plan, which is the part
- 2 that's missing, then that's the part that the Chris
- 3 Blanchard letter is referring to. Once we did that,
- 4 we could not keep the belt air going outby. It was
- 5 going to pull in due to the forces of building the
- 6 pressure on the fan.
- 7 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 8 Q. Of Bandytown fan?
- 9 A. Yes. So as it was originally approved and assumed
- that we would be allowed to do through the whole
- panel, which is how it was approved, we would have
- been able to use belt air throughout the face, which
- the belt laws came out and said it had to be approved
- in the ventilation plan prior to us getting approval
- on this plan.
- Q. I think you're going pretty fast here for the
- 17 court reporter.
- 18 A. Oh, sorry. The initial plan was approved after
- 19 the belt laws had been modified --- or after the
- 20 regulations had been modified to require getting belt
- 21 air to be used in the face approved in your
- ventilation plan. Therefore, it was approved in our
- 23 ventilation plan. And at some point they decided that
- it wasn't good for us to do that, MSHA decided that,
- 25 and ---

- 1 Q. Changed the regulation?
- 2 A. --- they wanted --- they didn't change the
- 3 regulation. They changed their mind. They sent us a
- 4 letter and said that approval was temporary in that
- 5 case. And that was never mentioned anywhere in any
- 6 other writing until afterwards.
- 7 Q. Okay. But ---.
- 8 A. So if I had the map to go with this plan here, the
- 9 December 14th submittal, if it required reversing the
- 10 belt air, that's what the Chris Blanchard letter is
- 11 referencing. So if that is the case, then yes, that
- was MSHA enforced, implemented, designed. Therefore,
- it's not a plan that Performance Coal submitted of
- their own volition, so ---. But I don't have that map
- 15 to verify that point.
- 16 Q. Well, let's assume that that --- the scenario you
- 17 described is true.
- 18 A. Okay.
- 19 Q. When you submitted the December 14th revision, did
- 20 you know that that revision wouldn't work?
- 21 A. We knew all along that if they wanted us to
- reverse the belt air, it would be incredibly
- difficult, if possible to do, due to the fan being
- that --- at the back of the longwall. I mean, air is
- going to want to go to that man, and we would be

- 1 trying to send it opposite that, back around the front
- of this longwall panel. Once we got further up the
- 3 panel, it wouldn't be as hard because the distance
- 4 would be lessened. But at the point in December of
- 5 2009, we would have had to send air outby the belt
- 6 entry and all the way around whenever it could just go
- 7 through here and out the fan. So it would be
- 8 extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do at that
- 9 time.
- 10 Q. So why did you submit that revision if you knew it
- was probably impossible to provide adequate
- 12 ventilation under that plan?
- 13 A. I can't answer that because we're hypothetically
- 14 talking about the --- the drawing even says that, so I
- 15 mean, I don't know.
- 16 Q. Well, let's assume that. Let's assume the
- drawing ---.
- 18 A. I quess because that's what MSHA wanted and
- otherwise we wouldn't be able to run. I mean.
- 20 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 21 Now, you know, with regard to
- 22 hypotheticals, I mean, if you feel comfortable
- answering it under the hypothetical ---. If you can't
- 24 answer ---.
- 25 MR. MCGINLEY:

- 1 It's not really a hypothetical. It's a
- 2 scenario that Mr. Walker has laid out. And I believe
- 3 that it's accurate.
- 4 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 5 Okay. But he doesn't know for sure, and
- 6 you're asking him to testify as to actual knowledge as
- 7 opposed to something that's a hypothetical. And I'm
- 8 just saying that if you need additional documents, ---
- 9 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 I understand.
- 11 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 12 --- then you know, ---
- 13 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 14 That's fine.
- 15 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 16 --- he should be able to look at that
- before actually giving an opinion about something.
- 18 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 19 Well, I'm not asking for an opinion.
- 20 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 21 His opinion about whether or not it was
- 22 viable at that time.
- BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. So why didn't the December 14th revision work?
- 25 ATTORNEY SEARS:

- 1 If you know, based upon ---.
- 2 A. Due to the influence of the longwall bleeder fan,
- 3 it was not possible to make the approved changes. The
- 4 longwall bleeder fan, being the Bandytown fan, would
- 5 not allow belt air to travel outby due to what we just
- 6 discussed, where it would be a longer distance
- 7 traveled instead of just going the shortest route out
- 8 of the mine.
- 9 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 Q. Did you know that, before you submitted the
- 11 December 14th revision, that that revision in the
- ventilation plan as revised would not work?
- 13 A. As I just said earlier, we knew that it would be
- extremely difficult, if not impossible, to force belt
- air outby along this panel, and it would become easier
- 16 as we traveled farther along this panel. But
- initially it would be impossible. That's why we
- 18 submitted the plan as it was and it was approved as it
- 19 was, until we were later forced to try and send it
- 20 outby, which we knew that it would be extremely
- 21 difficult, if not impossible, to do.
- Q. Did you put those concerns about the December 14th
- revision in writing and give them to MSHA?
- 24 A. Other than the Chris Blanchard, I don't know of
- anything that was.

- 1 Q. There's nothing in the Chris Blanchard letter ---
- what's the date of that?
- 3 A. December 23rd.
- 4 Q. Nothing there that talks about the previous plan?
- 5 A. Says the previous plan was attempted to be
- 6 implemented and due to the influence of the longwall
- 7 bleeder fan was not possible to make approved changes.
- 8 I mean, that pretty well says we tried it, it didn't
- 9 work, and here's what we would like to do instead
- 10 because we know that won't work, which was to send
- 11 belt air inby again, which is as it was ---.
- 12 Q. You're talking ---.
- 13 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 14 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 15 O. Internally you would have discussions about the
- viability of the December 14th, 2009 revision; is that
- 17 correct? In other words, you were concerned that it
- 18 wouldn't work and you wouldn't have adequate
- ventilation under the plan you submitted to MSHA; is
- 20 that correct?
- 21 A. We fully intended to be able to use belt air in
- 22 the face the entire length of that panel. Therefore,
- we would have had discussions on any plan that we
- 24 would have said otherwise and said, this is not the
- 25 way we want to do it internally and externally.

- 1 Q. Well, you said we would have had discussions. Do
- 2 you remember having discussions?
- 3 A. I don't remember specific ones. But as I said
- 4 before, we don't submit anything to the agencies
- 5 unless we get the thumbs up. So I mean, we would
- 6 discuss it with ---.
- 7 Q. Do you submit things to MSHA that you think will
- 8 not work?
- 9 A. If they require us to do so.
- 10 Q. Do you have any correspondence, anything in
- 11 writing from MSHA requiring you to submit that
- 12 December 14th, 2009 ventilation plan revision?
- 13 A. Not as --- no, not specifically stating, other
- than the letter where they said it was temporarily
- approved and we need to find a way to make belt air go
- outby, which I think was a November letter from them,
- 17 I think. I don't know. So that would have been ---
- 18 yes. So that would have been a letter in writing from
- them saying that you need to do something to turn belt
- 20 air outby, which they told us that we would not get
- anything approved until we showed it going outby,
- which we tried to do and it didn't work. So yes, it
- would be in writing. Again, it's a November letter.
- I'm not sure.
- Q. Well, it said it's up to you, Performance coal

- 1 Company, to decide how to ventilate this mine?
- 2 A. Not when they tell you how to do it. It's up to
- 3 you as long as you follow what we want.
- 4 Q. You cited some regulations in your December 14th
- 5 letter; is that correct?
- 6 A. Yeah, 215, 334, 364 and 384.
- 7 Q. What are those --- do you know what those ---?
- 8 A. Right off the top of my head, no. 215 would be a
- 9 roof control and 334 would be ---
- 10 MR. SHERER:
- 11 Bleeders.
- 12 A. --- bleeders and escapeways on the ---.
- 13 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 14 Q. So you have a copy of the regulations in your
- 15 office?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. How often do you refer to them?
- 18 A. As needed.
- 19 O. What's that mean?
- 20 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 21 Well, ---.
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 He can answer.
- 24 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 25 Well, I mean, if he can --- I mean, it's

- 1 kind of self-explanatory, but explain as needed, if
- 2 you can.
- 3 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 4 Q. How often is as needed? Frequently? Do you refer
- 5 to the regulations ---
- 6 A. I don't have ---.
- 7 Q. --- every day?
- 8 A. I don't have --- I mean, I don't have the whole
- 9 book memorized, no. But I mean, you have a general
- 10 understanding of all of it, and then if you have any
- 11 questions you refer to it. So that's as needed.
- 12 Q. Did you write the December 14th letter, Mr.
- Walker, or did somebody else write it and you signed
- 14 it?
- 15 A. I wrote it, I guess. I mean, ---.
- 16 O. Well, ---.
- 17 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 18 You need to testify as to any specific
- 19 knowledge you have. Okay. So yes, no, or if you
- 20 don't remember, tell him you don't remember. Don't
- 21 guess. Don't speculate. He wants to know what the
- facts are. And if you can provide the facts, provide
- the facts. And if you can't, just tell him, okay. I
- mean, we're here to help out, but we're here to help
- with the facts, not with speculation.

- 1 A. I was not --- I know for a fact I was not provided
- 2 this letter, and I just signed it. Now, as far as
- 3 every word in this being my own input into it, I can't
- 4 say that, but you know, I would say most of it ---
- 5 definitely most of it would be, I guess, but ---.
- 6 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 7 Q. Is it common for letters that you sign to have
- 8 others draft the letters?
- 9 A. The letters? On some things we do, like pump
- 10 permits and such to the State and that type of thing
- where it's just here you go, three copies of this.
- 12 People draft it for us. But as far as vent revisions,
- no. Or something is explained, no. I guess that's
- 14 what I'm trying to say.
- 15 O. Okay.
- 16 A. If it's just a please find three copies of the
- 17 attached permit, then somebody --- we have a form
- 18 letter that somebody else will print out a lot of
- 19 times and I'll sign it and such.
- Q. So the consequence of the failure of the December
- 21 14th ventilation plan revision was that the mine had
- to shut down for a few days and there was no
- 23 production; do you recall that?
- A. Not specifically, no, but I guess reading from
- what the Chris Blanchard letter says, then it would

- 1 be, yeah, so ---. I mean, I'm not informed daily of
- whether the mine is running or not.
- 3 Q. Did you know that Chris Adkins went to the
- 4 District 4 office hand carrying that December 23rd
- 5 letter?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Chris Adkins, was he involved with ventilation
- 8 plans at UBB a year before the explosion?
- 9 A. I didn't have any dealings with him.
- 10 Q. Did he ever come to your office?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. The December 23rd letter includes another revision
- of the ventilation plan; is that correct?
- 14 A. It appears to, yes.
- 15 O. Do you recall that?
- 16 A. I don't, no.
- 17 Q. Do you know how the problem was solved at that
- time, the problem as explained in Mr. Blanchard's
- 19 December 23rd, 2009 letter?
- 20 A. It appears that we would have done the portions
- listed in here. The below procedures would be
- followed during the time when belt air is being
- 23 utilized in the face. So it would have used belt air
- in the face and followed these procedures, and it was
- approved by them, so that would have been what we

- 1 would have done.
- Q. Did you write that letter, the December 23rd,
- 3 2009 ---?
- 4 A. This one?
- 5 O. Yes.
- 6 A. No.
- 7 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 8 Let the record reflect that he was
- 9 reading from the letter as opposed to, I think,
- 10 testifying from direct knowledge.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 13 We probably should make copies of these
- 14 and put them in the record. Let's cumulatively call
- 15 them what exhibits?
- 16 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 17 Three.
- 18 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 19 Exhibit Three.
- 20 (M. Walker Exhibit Three marked for
- 21 identification.)
- BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Did you work on the revision that was submitted on
- 24 December 23rd to MSHA?
- 25 A. You mean this one? No.

- Q. Who would have worked on that? Do you have any
- 2 idea?
- 3 A. No. Chris Blanchard, I guess, would be the one
- 4 that signed it, so I assume he would ---.
- 5 Q. Is he a mine engineer?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 O. A PE?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. There's something else Mr. Blanchard says there
- 10 about submitting a long-term ventilation plan.
- 11 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 12 Q. Can you read that sentence?
- 13 A. In addition, within 30 days of approval, a
- long-term ventilation plan will be submitted to your
- office, which will show long-term solutions to allow
- belt air to travel outby as well as to open more
- 17 intake air courses. Was that too fast?
- 18 O. Pretty fast.
- 19 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 20 Was that the sentence you were wanting to
- 21 be read?
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 That's it.
- 24 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 25 Q. So when was the long-term ventilation plan

- 1 submitted? When within that 30 days; do you know?
- 2 A. I don't know.
- Q. Do you know if it was ever submitted?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. It wasn't submitted, was it?
- 6 A. I don't know.
- 7 Q. Who would know that, the answer to that?
- 8 A. MSHA, I guess, would be the one that would know.
- 9 I mean, ---.
- 10 Q. Well, who in your office would know when the
- long-term ventilation plan was submitted, or if it
- wasn't, why it was not submitted?
- 13 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 14 If you know.
- 15 A. I don't know, so I mean, ---.
- 16 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Well, there are only a few people. Who typically
- 18 would be involved im such a submission?
- 19 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 20 Are you asking him to speculate as to who
- 21 would know?
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 No. I'm asking him based on his
- 24 experience.
- 25 ATTORNEY SEARS:

- 1 Based on ---.
- A. Based on my experience, ---.
- 3 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 4 Based on his questions.
- 5 A. Based on my experience, the president would
- 6 normally be the one to give the thumbs up or thumbs
- down on who --- I would say Chris Blanchard would be
- 8 the one who would know for certain.
- 9 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 Q. People in your office would --- the engineers, you
- and the other two would draw up that plan and would
- work on it, one or the other or all of you; isn't that
- 13 correct?
- 14 A. Generally, yes.
- 15 Q. So the people that would know would be either you
- or the other two fellows, the engineers that you work
- 17 with, isn't that correct?
- 18 A. One of them, if it was done, would know ---
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. --- generally, but ---.
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 Go ahead and finish what you were going
- to say.
- 24 A. But I mean, Chris Blanchard had done this one as
- well and I didn't do it, so I mean, I can't say for

- 1 certain whether one of us three would have done it.
- 2 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 3 Q. Are you saying Chris ---?
- 4 A. Generally we would have.
- 5 Q. Are you saying Chris Blanchard prepared the
- 6 ventilation plan that was submitted on December 23rd,
- 7 2009 to MSHA?
- 8 A. No. I'm saying Chris Blanchard signed this. I
- 9 didn't prepare it, so I don't know who prepared it.
- 10 Q. So it's likely ---?
- 11 A. I'm assuming that since he signed it, he would
- have been the one that did it, so ---.
- 14 A. Prepared this plan that was submitted.
- 15 Q. Are you saying that none of the three engineers at
- Route 3 Engineering would have been involved with the
- 17 December 23rd, 2009 submission?
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 And Professor, I think his testimony has
- 20 been he just doesn't know.
- 21 A. No, I'm not saying that.
- 22 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 23 Hold on a second. Hold on. You've kind
- of asked the same question in a lot of different ways.
- I think the answer is he doesn't know. You're asking

- 1 him to speculate based on his experience who might
- 2 have been ---. I think he tried to answer that, but
- 3 he just doesn't know who was involved in that. He was
- 4 not involved in that.
- 5 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 6 He can say that, Mr. Sears.
- 7 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 8 I think he has said it, and you keep on
- 9 asking the same question and getting the same
- 10 question, and you don't like the response, and ask it
- 11 a different way, and I understand that.
- 12 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 13 With all due respect, Mr. Sears, I'm
- asking different questions, and I'm entitled to an
- answer to each one.
- 16 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 17 They're different questions but getting
- at the same thing, so you've ---.
- 19 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 20 Well, Mr. Sears, you are also offering
- 21 answers to Mr. Walker.
- 22 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 23 I don't think I'm offering any answers.
- I think I'm stating what his testimony has been.
- 25 MR. MCGINLEY:

- 1 The record will speak for itself.
- 2 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 3 Yes. If you have a different question,
- 4 let him know. If it's the same answer ---.
- 5 A. I did not prepare the ventilation revisions. I
- 6 cannot speak as to anyone else in my office as to
- 7 whether they prepared this ventilation revision. And
- 8 I can't speak as to Chris Blanchard, whether he
- 9 prepared this ventilation revision. Therefore, I can
- only assume, due to the fact that Chris Blanchard
- 11 signed this letter, he prepared it.
- 12 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 13 Q. But you don't know that?
- 14 A. That's why I'm assuming that, due to the fact that
- 15 he signed it.
- 16 Q. I don't want you to assume. The answer is you
- 17 don't know; correct?
- 18 A. That's what I said the first three times. I don't
- 19 who prepared it.
- 20 Q. Let me ask you another question, sir. Did Mr.
- 21 Blanchard ever prepare any other ventilation plan
- revisions, to your knowledge?
- A. Not to my knowledge, no.
- Q. So this is the only one that you're assuming that
- 25 he prepared?

- 1 A. Correct. And I would say ---.
- 2 Q. So over five years of your work there at Route 3
- 3 Engineering?
- 4 A. And I would also say that due to the fact that
- 5 December 23rd would probably be a lot to do with that,
- 6 because that's, you know, right before Christmas,
- 7 normally vacation time and holiday. And to be honest,
- 8 I wasn't even at work December 23rd, so I would say he
- 9 would have had a hard time finding someone other than
- 10 himself to do it at that --- on December 23rd. So I
- 11 mean, --- I generally don't work Christmas. It's not
- common to do a ventilation revision on December 23rd
- in my five years' experience. But that is an
- 14 assumption as well.
- 15 Q. Nobody told you that the mine was shut down for
- 16 several days ---
- 17 A. No.
- 18 O. --- because of the ventilation --- lack of
- 19 ventilation under the December 14th, 2009 submission?
- 20 A. No.
- Q. You never knew that?
- 22 A. No.
- Q. You testified in answer to some questions that you
- learned about violation notices issued by MSHA if they
- 25 had something to do with your work; is that correct?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. What kind of violations in the last year before
- 3 the explosion were you aware of that had to do with
- 4 your work?
- 5 A. I don't know of any specifically. I was referring
- 6 to any mapping-type ones, that sort of thing, anything
- 7 that generally would require a revision other than
- 8 just, you know, maybe something was done wrong and was
- 9 cited, therefore we could correct the problem there.
- 10 so I would say anything that would require, you know,
- the engineering office's output, you know, on a map or
- whatever would be the ones we would be made aware of.
- I don't know of any specifically.
- Q. So you don't know of really anything specifically
- 15 about MSHA's citation of violations related to
- ventilation in the Upper Big Branch Mine in the year
- 17 preceding the explosion?
- 18 A. Not specifically, no.
- 19 Q. You said you got copies of violations; is that
- 20 right?
- 21 A. Yeah.
- Q. And do you have a file of those?
- 23 A. I don't personally. We would have it ---.
- Q. And when I said you, I Meant in the office.
- 25 A. Yeah. Generally, any ones we have, we would

- 1 normally keep, yes.
- 2 Q. Did you look at each MSHA violation that came to
- 3 your office?
- 4 a. Personally, no. No.
- Q. Did you look at any of them?
- 6 A. I don't know of any specific one that I would
- 7 have, no.
- 8 Q. So is your answer you did not look at any of the
- 9 notices of violation issued by MSHA relating to
- 10 ventilation that came into your office?
- 11 A. No. I'm saying I don't recall a specific one that
- 12 I would have looked at.
- Q. Was it your practice of looking at each MSHA
- 14 Notice of Violation that came into your office or was
- it not your practice, as a general rule?
- 16 A. For every mine it's not my practice, no.
- 17 Q. I'm just asking about UBB.
- 18 O. No, not at UBB, no, I wouldn't have looked at
- 19 every one.
- 20 Q. Was it your practice to look at them as they came
- 21 in?
- A. At UBB?
- Q. Right.
- 24 A. No.
- Q. It wasn't your practice to look at MSHA violations

- 1 relating to violation at any of the other mines that
- fell within your responsibility?
- A. Yes, it would have been on that, yes.
- 4 O. It would have ---?
- 5 A. It would have been my practice to look at them on
- 6 the other mines in my responsibility, yes.
- 7 Q. And UBB?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. Because they weren't --- UBB was Eric Lilly's?
- 10 A. Under most circumstances, yes.
- 11 Q. So do you know whether Eric Lilly looked at the
- 12 Notice of Violation?
- 13 A. I don't know. I would assume he did because ---.
- 14 Q. Did he ever --- go ahead.
- 15 A. Like I said before, anything that would require
- our input, somebody would have had to have done it.
- 17 And Eric would have been that person, so I --- I can
- 18 assume that he did because something would have been
- 19 done or would have been required to be done, so ---.
- 20 Q. Well, when you worked on UBB, which you did on
- 21 occasion, ---
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. For example, you submitted a ventilation plan
- revision to MSHA on March 9th, 2010, at a time when
- 25 MSHA issued a closure order and the mine was shut

- down, at least the longwall was shut down. Do you
- 2 remember that?
- 3 A. I believe that was the one I discussed earlier on
- 4 the tailgate side, I think.
- 5 Q. So you remember that?
- 6 A. I believe so. I think that's the one you're
- 7 referencing, yes.
- Q. Did you read the violation that MSHA issued for
- 9 that one?
- 10 A. Probably not at that time, no.
- 11 Q. To what extent are ventilation maps important to a
- 12 ventilation plan?
- 13 A. I'm not sure how to answer that.
- Q. What's the importance of a map that is submitted
- as part of a ventilation plan?
- 16 A. I mean, it describes what you're doing. A picture
- is worth a thousand words, as they say.
- 18 O. Okay.
- 19 A. I mean, it --- it's, I guess, an illustration of
- 20 what will be done. Because if I'm going to change
- something in this entry, it's easier to just, you
- know, make a notation and say, we're going to change
- 23 this, circle a stopping to be removed, as opposed to
- 24 say we'll remove a stopping at Spad 22557 and Spad
- 25 22662. We can just draw a circle on a map and say

- these stoppings will be removed. So I mean, they are
- 2 basically the means to convey what you're planning on
- 3 doing without having a 50-page ---
- 4 Q. Sure.
- 5 A. --- document to show it.
- 6 Q. But you don't always make those changes on a mine
- 7 map? You start with a mine map and you draw changes
- 8 on the map and then it goes to the technician and he
- 9 inputs the changes into the computer, and then a map
- 10 comes out. You print it out; is that right?
- 11 A. Yeah, I think. I'm not really sure what
- 12 you're ---.
- Q. Well, how do you make a mp? You know, if you're
- going to do a ventilation change --- you've got an
- 15 existing map; right?
- 16 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. How do you, in your office, accomplish
- 18 ultimate result of a different map showing ventilation
- 19 changes?
- 20 A. We have a mine map file, which is the most
- 21 up-to-date, most current map of what is in reality at
- that time. We would start from that map and we would
- 23 save it off as another map, so we wouldn't make the
- changes on that map. So it's still what's actually
- 25 there. Do you understand what I'm saying there?

- 1 Q. Yes.
- 2 A. So we would save it off and we would go through
- and, you know, do the notations, draw things.
- 4 Q. By hand?
- 5 A. No, on the digital form of it. We would make the
- 6 notations on that digital form and print that map out,
- 7 and that would be the drawing for that revision. So
- 8 we would start from the mine map, the official mine
- 9 map --- or not the official, but the current,
- 10 up-to-date mine map that we would have on our computer
- 11 system, and then we would make the notations on that
- map, but save it off at another location, too, to keep
- it separate from that so you're not messing up the map
- 14 that you got. You know what I'm saying there? So you
- don't get something that's to be done confused with
- what is actually there, I guess.
- 17 Q. Yeah, I understand. So are you saying that in the
- process of generating a ventilation map that revised a
- 19 previous ventilation plan, that nobody ever writes on
- it handwritten symbols and, you know, this stopping or
- 21 the air goes this way before it's inputted into the
- 22 computer?
- 23 A. It depends on the scope of it. I mean, from a map
- this size, you can't really look on a computer screen
- and get the whole picture. So I mean, oftentimes we

- 1 print out a copy of it, run it through, hand draw it
- on there or something maybe and then add that to it,
- 3 yes.
- 4 Q. Don't management officials have input and make
- 5 changes themselves, draw on these maps where they want
- 6 revisions to take place?
- 7 A. Yeah, they would normally --- they don't have
- 8 access to our digital ones, ---
- 9 Q. Right.
- 10 A. --- but yes, they would have --- we generally
- 11 provide them with maps on a regular basis. They have
- 12 wall maps they keep in their offices and such, and
- then they have section prints and so on as needed, as
- they ask for them. And they oftentimes will draw
- up --- say, you know, want us to look at --- you know,
- 16 put projections over here or something along those
- 17 lines. And then we would take that and put it in the
- 18 CAD and print it out and such. So yes.
- 19 O. So is it a fact that the --- when ventilation
- 20 changes are made, major ventilation changes are made,
- 21 the decisions about those do not come from you, the
- other two engineers, and Route 3, they come from
- 23 management, the president, mine superintendent, mine
- 24 foreman?
- 25 A. The final decision would come from us, but

- oftentimes, you know, as you would --- if you do
- 2 something and say, no, that won't work, do something,
- 3 say that won't work, then you know, --- if we can see
- 4 something that doesn't work, we'll make changes to it
- 5 and give it back to them for their okay again, but the
- 6 final decision would lie into their hands. But as far
- 7 as them coming up with every idea from scratch and
- 8 conveying it to us, it's not like that.
- 9 Q. Well, how much input do they have?
- 10 A. It depends on the president mostly, but a lot of
- times it would be just, you know, if you want
- 12 projections out here you just draw a box, and then you
- would go do the calculations and such, get the center
- sizes and so on. Sometimes it would be actually
- drawing out projections line by line as shown here.
- 16 Q. And they would be drawn not by you but by
- 17 management?
- 18 A. Yeah, take a scale and scale out 50 by 60.
- 19 Q. You said sometimes they'd say, well, that won't
- 20 work. Are you talking about management people would
- 21 look at your proposal and say that won't work or who's
- 22 saying that won't work?
- 23 A. Us or them. I mean, basically you always have
- 24 more than one set of eyes look at something. So I
- 25 mean, if we see something that, you know, may be

- 1 something that they thought would be a good idea
- 2 wouldn't work because you've had to do something,
- 3 build an overcast here or do something in addition to
- 4 what they had, we would say, you know, that's not
- 5 going to work. We'll going to have to build a set of
- 6 overcasts here to get that across here or something
- 7 like that. Or if we would draw something, they'd say,
- 8 no, that won't work, we'll do this. Or the
- 9 superintendent would say, no, we can't do that. You
- 10 know, there's --- the height in this area won't allow
- 11 us to do that, so you know, we should move it over one
- 12 break or something, so ---.
- 13 Q. How often is cost a factor in revising a
- ventilation plan? I mean, the construction of doors
- 15 versus overcasts, I mean, is that discussed?
- 16 A. No. The only time really cost comes into effect
- would be large projects, I mean, as far as just a ---
- 18 you know, an overcasts versus a door, no, it doesn't
- 19 come into effect or something along those lines. But
- as far as, you know, a shaft or something, something
- 21 like that, then cost becomes a fact, you know. A lot
- of times we've done 16-foot shafts versus 14-foot
- 23 shafts because the cost differential is not worth ---
- I mean, it's not worth not doing it.
- Q. So why do you have so many doors at UBB instead of

- 1 overcasts? Whose decision was that?
- 2 A. I don't know.
- Q. From what you were saying, it's engineering's, is
- 4 that right, or it's somebody else's decision?
- 5 A. I don't know that I said that, but ---.
- 6 Q. I'm sorry. I don't want to put words in your
- 7 mouth. Whose decision was it to have so many doors at
- 8 UBB, especially since you've been there. There have
- 9 been a lot of doors constructed; right?
- 10 A. I don't know that I said that either. I mean, I
- 11 don't know what a lot of set of doors are. But as I
- 12 said before, generally it's looked at by all those
- involved and everyone will put their input into it.
- 14 So I can't say as to engineering said build this set
- of doors, the superintendent said build this set, the
- 16 president said build this set, but it would be
- 17 generally one of the three. I mean, it doesn't make
- 18 any difference.
- 19 Q. Well, who has the final say?
- 20 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 21 Final say as to?
- BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 0. On the construction of doors versus --- airlock
- 24 doors versus overcasts?
- 25 A. On that, I would say generally it was the

- 1 superintendent or the president.
- 2 O. So it's not the engineers that make the decision
- 3 in that regard?
- 4 A. As far as the doors versus overcasts, no. I
- 5 mean, --- no.
- 6 Q. No what? I'm sorry.
- 7 A. It's not the engineers' final decision on whether
- 8 doors versus overcasts.
- 9 Q. What decisions are the engineers --- Group 3
- 10 Engineers' final --- your word is the final say?
- 11 Anything?
- 12 A. Not really, no.
- Q. So anything you do in terms of --- let's say
- ventilation, you've got other responsibilities to, but
- in terms of a ventilation plan, the final say is
- somebody in management; is that correct?
- 17 A. More or less, yes. I guess as an example, we had
- 18 previously had sign-off sheets where we would have
- 19 president, vice-president, superintendent, mine
- 20 foreman, safety director and all of those people would
- 21 sign off on ventilation revisions and stuff. So
- generally more than one person looks at it, but as far
- as the actual final call, I guess it would be the
- president's call because, I mean, basically he's my
- 25 boss, so I would do what he would ask me to.

- 1 Q. You'd do whatever the president asked you to do?
- 2 A. Well, ---.
- 3 Q. Essentially. That makes sense.
- 4 A. Not jump of a bridge, you know. I mean, ---.
- 5 Q. No, no. I understand. I wasn't suggesting that.
- 6 A. I wouldn't do anything without getting his
- 7 permission to do it. I wouldn't make a judgment call
- 8 on whether we should do this or do that without
- 9 getting his --- not permission but his ---.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. Okay, yeah.
- 12 Q. So what about these sheets? Are you not doing the
- sheets where there's a lien of authority that signs
- off on ventilation changes?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. You're not doing that anymore?
- 17 A. Not really, no.
- 18 O. When did you stop doing that?
- 19 A. I think since the --- I guess since the explosion
- 20 at UBB, I think they were wanting to go back to doing
- it, but I have never really been forced to do that, I
- mean, as a definite you have to do this type of thing,
- 23 so ---. I mean, we would always get the president's
- approval and we would take it to the superintendent,
- but we wouldn't necessarily get them to sign off the

- 1 sign-off sheet on it, no.
- 2 Q. So even if they didn't sign off on it, they
- 3 approved it?
- 4 A. Yeah. We would at least get verbal approval on
- 5 it.
- 6 Q. And that was just the standard practice that
- 7 you ---
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. --- were engaged in with regard to ventilation
- 10 plans and revised ventilation plans at UBB?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Well, where were these sheets? At some point
- there must have been sheets where people signed off.
- 14 A. It's not --- like on a map or something you would
- 15 have --- people would sign off on.
- Q. But the lack of a signature doesn't mean that ---
- 17 A. No. It was just ---.
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 Let him finish his question.
- 20 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 21 Q. --- doesn't mean that the management people that
- you just mentioned, doesn't mean that they hadn't seen
- it and hadn't approved it, they --- you went through
- the process even if they didn't sign it?
- 25 A. Correct.

- Q. And who all saw it, the superintendent ---?
- 2 A. Just off that, it would --- the president and
- 3 vice-president I think was on it, the safety director
- 4 normally and superintendent and mine foreman I think
- 5 were the ones that were on it.
- 6 Q. Who was the safety director at UBB?
- 7 A. Berman Cornett.
- Q. Did he know anything about ventilation?
- 9 A. Yeah. I mean, he was the superintendent for a
- 10 while before and all of that, so ---.
- 11 Q. Did you know about the MSHA citation for air
- 12 reversal that went on for three weeks --- I think it
- was January 2010?
- 14 A. Not specifically, no.
- 15 Q. Did you know about it generally?
- A. No, not really. I mean, ---.
- 0. You never heard of it before I mentioned it here?
- 18 A. I don't know any details on it. I mean, I ---.
- 19 Q. Well, what do you know about it?
- 20 A. I guess just that there was something about it. I
- 21 mean, ---.
- 22 Q. What do you know?
- 23 A. Nothing about it.
- Q. Okay. You just know ---.
- 25 A. I don't know anything about, I'll say.

- 1 Q. Except that there was an air reversal that went on
- 2 for three weeks at Upper Big Branch in the beginning
- of 2010. You know that?
- 4 A. No, I don't know that. That's --- no, I don't
- 5 know that.
- 6 Q. Do you know anything about any air reversals at
- 7 UBB in 2010 or in the last year from before the
- 8 explosion?
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. Nobody ever talked to you about that?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 13 Do you have much more? Should we take a
- 14 break now?
- 15 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 16 Yeah, let's take a break.
- 17 SHORT BREAK TAKEN
- 18 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 19 Q. Mr. Walker, how long have you had the red hat
- 20 certification?
- 21 A. I guess I took the test the first time --- well,
- I've only taken it one time, but I took the test a
- year-and-a-half ago or so, I think.
- Q. So you were never in Massey mines up until that
- time, while you've been working there as an engineer?

- 1 A. Well, I guess as the white hat or whatever I guess
- 2 you would ---.
- 3 Q. I'm sorry?
- 4 A. As the technical --- I never worked in them, no.
- 5 Q. Did you go in them?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 O. How often?
- 8 A. Not very often, no. Probably every few months, I
- 9 think.
- 10 Q. You basically had seven mines that you were
- 11 primarily in charge of?
- 12 A. Five, I guess.
- Q. Five, okay. And you went in those once every ---
- each of them once every three months?
- 15 A. No, not specifically each of them, but ---.
- Q. So far this year, how many times have you been
- 17 underground at any mine?
- 18 A. Probably twice.
- 19 Q. Twice. How about last year?
- 20 A. I don't recall.
- 21 Q. Just ---.
- 22 A. Four probably.
- 23 O. Four?
- A. I'd say about once every three months or so.
- Q. Okay. So in 2009 and up to this point in 2010,

- 1 you've probably been underground six times. How many
- 2 times at UBB?
- 3 A. None.
- 4 O. None?
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. How many times have you been at UBB since you've
- 7 --- underground at UBB since you've been working for
- 8 Massey as an engineer?
- 9 A. I've never been underground at UBB.
- 10 Q. Never been underground?
- 11 A. Never been underground at UBB.
- 12 Q. Massey has stated publicly that the company has
- 13 requirements that exceed federal and state
- requirements in a number of areas. Are you familiar
- 15 with that?
- 16 A. Somewhat. I mean, I --- I've heard that statement
- made, yes.
- 18 O. Mr. Blankenship said it in testimony before the
- 19 United States Senate in May. He was talking about UBB
- and about Massey.
- 21 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 22 Q. So you've heard that statement. Have you heard
- 23 Mr. Blankenship make that statement?
- 24 A. No.
- Q. Are there any Massey ventilation requirements that

- 1 exceed MSHA ventilation requirements?
- 2 A. I don't really know how to answer that. I mean,
- 3 there are things that we do above and beyond that.
- 4 That is not necessarily a requirement, I guess.
- 5 Q. Above and beyond what?
- 6 A. Above and beyond what the law would require.
- 7 Q. Okay. What are they with regard to ventilation?
- 8 A. One example is 20,000 in the last open break.
- 9 Q. 20,000 cubic feet?
- 10 A. CFM, yes, for each miner section. That's each
- 11 one, so ---.
- 12 Q. What's another one?
- 13 A. I don't know.
- 14 Q. Is that the only one that you know about with
- 15 regard to ventilation?
- 16 A. Well, like I said before, I don't know of any
- 17 requirements necessarily. I mean, we don't have a
- book of ventilation requirements, so there's no way to
- 19 say.
- 20 Q. So how did that --- what does Massey do that ---
- other than the 20,000 at the last open crosscut, that
- is over and above MSHA requirements?
- 23 A. It would be on a case-by-case basis again.
- Q. Give me an example.
- 25 A. Fan citations. A lot of times we would take a fan

- that would only do 100,000 and we would put one on
- 2 that would do twice as much, so you would have more
- 3 air, you know, things like that.
- 4 Q. Did that happen at UBB?
- 5 A. Yeah, that was one of them.
- 6 Q. Which fan?
- 7 A. The Bandytown fan. The size is larger than
- 8 required.
- 9 Q. So you believe that the Bandytown fan size is
- 10 larger than what ---?
- 11 A. The minimum that would be required to pull the
- amount of air across the longwall that would be
- 13 required.
- 14 Q. Okay. But what's another example of Massey going
- 15 beyond ---?
- 16 A. I don't know.
- 17 O. You don't know?
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 Just so we're clear, I mean, he's not the
- 20 corporate rep for Massey to be testifying as to this.
- I mean, you're not asking him in that capacity, just
- on what he knows; right?
- 23 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 24 Of course.
- 25 ATTORNEY SEARS:

- 1 I mean, he's not ---.
- 2 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 3 Wasn't that the point you were making
- 4 earlier, Mr. Sears?
- 5 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 6 What was that?
- 7 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 8 We just want the facts here.
- 9 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 10 Right. Yeah. I mean, but he's not the
- 11 --- you're not expecting him to be the spokesman for
- 12 Massey on this issue.
- 13 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 14 I'm asking him what he knows.
- 15 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 16 Okay. Great.
- 17 A. I'm sure there are other instances, but I mean, it
- 18 would be a case-by-case thing on that. So I
- 19 mean, ---.
- 20 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. You can't remember any cases other than the
- 22 Bandytown fan size; is that correct?
- 23 A. Correct. Right now, yes. That doesn't mean that
- there aren't any, but I don't know of any right off
- 25 the top of my head right now, no.

- 1 Q. Well, how do you learn about these Massey over and
- 2 above government standards? Did you take a course or
- 3 did somebody train you in the Massey --- this Massey
- 4 going beyond what the law requires?
- 5 A. No. That's what I was saying earlier. I mean, on
- 6 a case-by-case basis. We don't have a book of
- 7 ventilation requirements that we would do where it
- 8 says the law required this, Massey requires this above
- 9 and beyond the law, therefore you must do this. There
- 10 exists no such thing. It's just a mental thing and
- 11 practice. If you would be required to do something,
- 12 you would try to do it more safely.
- Q. Well, Mr. Blankenship's testimony under oath
- 14 before the United States Senate in May, he said, today
- 15 Massey Energy's safety program is more than 120 rules
- and equipment enhancements that exceed legal
- 17 requirements. Do you have any idea what he was
- 18 talking about in that statement?
- 19 A. Not specifically. I mean, I don't really deal a
- 20 whole lot with equipment, so I don't know what --- I
- 21 Mean, there are --- I know Massey had worked on
- developing a proximity alarm detection system thing
- for their miners, to keep people out of the red zone
- to prevent miner operators from being injured. I know
- that's one example. I mean, that's a question for Mr.

- 1 Blankenship.
- 2 Q. Well, he says, 120 rules and equipment
- 3 enhancements. Do you know of any of the 120 rules
- 4 that exceed legal requirements?
- 5 A. Not right offhand, no.
- 6 Q. Well, you don't know them at all; right, because
- 7 you never had any training?
- 8 A. Not on the 120 rules and --- or laws and equipment
- 9 things. No, I've never had any training.
- 10 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 11 But there's a couple questions there,
- 12 Professor. One of those was you don't know them at
- all, and I don't think he's testified to that.
- 14 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 15 Okay. Well, let me ask him that
- 16 question.
- 17 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 18 I think his testimony was that he
- doesn't --- he can't remember anything off the top of
- 20 his head right now. Because there were two questions
- there.
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 That wasn't my understanding. I'm glad
- you brought that up, so let me ask.
- 25 BY MR. MCGINLEY:

- Q. Have you had any training --- do you have any
- 2 knowledge of 120 rules and equipment enhancements that
- 3 exceed legal requirements that Massey Energy has
- 4 instituted?
- 5 A. I don't know specifically what ones he would be
- 6 referring to. And there's --- there is a, I guess, a
- 7 P2 handbook which probably would contain some of what
- 8 he is referring to, which deals more with the
- 9 production side of things with the mine foreman,
- section bosses, that type of thing, which would
- include the equipment and all that stuff, which is
- more than likely what he's referring to. I personally
- have had no training in that, but they do conduct P-2
- training for mine foremen and such. I don't know of
- any specific, however he phrased it, rules and
- 16 equipment things that ---.
- Q. 120 rules and equipment enhancements that exceed
- 18 MSHA requirements?
- 19 A. I've never been trained specifically in those 120.
- 20 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 21 Could you say that again?
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 Let's go off the record for a second.
- 24 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 25 MR. MCGINLEY:

- 1 Let me withdraw what question was
- 2 pending.
- 3 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 4 Q. Mr. Blankenship's May testimony before the United
- 5 States Senate, he said, today Massey Energy's safety
- 6 program has more than 120 rules and equipment
- 7 enhancements that exceed legal requirements. Is P-2
- 8 part of Massey Energy's safety program?
- 9 A. Well, S-1 is the actual safety program, I guess,
- 10 but ---.
- 11 Q. So he's talking about S-1, not P-2; is that fair?
- 12 Is that what it sounds like to you?
- 13 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 14 If you know.
- 15 A. That is more a production-oriented question, which
- 16 would be a question for the superintendent, section
- boss, miner operator.
- 18 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 19 Q. You don't know any rules or equipment
- 20 enhancements, other than the Bandytown fan size, that
- 21 go beyond exceeding the legal requirements; is that
- 22 correct?
- 23 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 24 He's already answered that.
- 25 A. No.

- 1 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. What does S-2 mean --- I'm sorry, S-1 mean?
- 3 A. Safety one ---.
- 4 Q. I'm sorry?
- 5 A. Safety is the first, I guess, priority on that.
- 6 Q. What else does S-1 mean, do you know, other than
- 7 sort of the same safety first?
- 8 A. I don't know what you ---.
- 9 Q. I can't hear you.
- 10 A. I don't know.
- 11 O. You don't know what S-1 means other than it means
- 12 safety first?
- 13 A. No.
- Q. How do you know if revisions on a ventilation map,
- for example putting in airlock doors, overcasts,
- 16 actually are constructed? Is there any system of
- 17 verification?
- 18 A. The mine foreman or superintendent ---
- 19 Q. What do they do?
- 20 A. --- verify. They verify that it's done.
- 21 Q. They verify to you?
- 22 A. Yeah, or whoever would do the --- you mean, how?
- They would either mark up a map or say it's built here
- or however.
- 25 Q. So -- go ahead.

- 1 A. We built two overcasts at Break 22. You say,
- okay, I've got two overcasts built there.
- Q. You've already got a map that shows there's doors
- 4 there, right, or do they build them first and then
- 5 they say, put them on the map?
- 6 A. Going back to what the --- I guess the steps in
- 7 preparing a ventilation revision, we would have a
- 8 ventilation revision saved off separately that would
- 9 show proposed controls or whatever overcasts to be
- 10 built in certain locations. Once they're verified,
- they would go from that to the mine drawing, which is
- the current up-to-date digital copy of the mine.
- 13 Q. When you say verified, you mean constructed or
- verified in the sense of this is the way we're going
- 15 to do it?
- 16 A. Verified in construction.
- 17 Q. Have you ever --- are you aware of any instances
- where construction has been verified in terms of
- 19 ventilation plan, doors, stoppings, overcasts and that
- 20 verification was erroneous, that what had been
- verified actually had not taken place?
- 22 A. That what they told us was done?
- Q. (Indicates yes).
- A. I don't know of any instances.
- Q. Never?

- 1 A. No.
- Q. Did Chris Blanchard --- did he come in and talk to
- 3 Eric Lilly to interchange about ventilation plans, to
- 4 your knowledge?
- 5 A. Eric was, I guess, stationed at the mine, so he
- 6 was not in the office.
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 A. Once he was assigned to UBB, I guess he was at the
- 9 actual mine office.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. So I don't know of any ---.
- 12 Q. Did he only have UBB as his responsibility?
- 13 A. At certain times, yes. I mean, he had worked on
- stuff prior to and then he kind of just started doing
- 15 UBB by itself.
- Q. What period, the last year or last two years?
- 17 A. Within the last year-and-a-half, I would say,
- 18 roughly.
- 19 Q. How was it that you got involved in doing work on
- 20 UBB, for example, the December 14th submittal, the
- 21 March 9th, 2010 submittal?
- 22 A. It's kind of like I said earlier. We kind of help
- each other out. If Eric was unavailable, on vacation,
- 24 sick or off doing something else, I mean, wherever he
- would be and he wasn't available to do it, we would

- 1 help out and do other things.
- 2 Q. Did you ever work with Eric when he was available
- 3 on UBB ventilation issues?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Why would that be?
- 6 A. Just like I said earlier, to having a second set
- of eyes looking at something. I mean, would kind of
- 8 just, can you check --- I mean, we do it between, I
- guess, the three of us. We would say, you know, hey,
- 10 take a look at this ventilation revision, I'll look at
- the one you're working on, and we'll just look through
- it and see if you've got any ideas or whatever.
- 13 Q. Did you ever strenuously disagree with MSHA
- officials about ventilation at UBB?
- 15 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 16 Do you need an explanation what he means
- 17 by strenuously?
- 18 A. Yeah, I think I do. What do you mean by
- 19 strenuously disagree?
- 20 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Do you know the word strenuous?
- 22 A. I do, but I don't know what you consider ---
- whether I, you know, just didn't agree with him and
- kept it to myself or if I physically had a fight with
- 25 him, if I met him out in the parking lot. I mean,

- 1 there's different degrees to that.
- Q. I don't know. This is something that Mr.
- 3 Blankenship said. At Upper Big Branch we complied
- 4 with MSHA's safety orders, even when we strenuously
- 5 disagreed with them and believed them to be
- 6 detrimental to the health and safety of the mine. You
- 7 can't read Mr. Blankenship's mind.
- 8 A. That's correct.
- 9 Q. Are you saying you don't understand that sentence?
- 10 A. I'm saying that I can see why he would say that
- 11 statement, I guess.
- 12 Q. Why?
- 13 A. Because there were things, I guess, that they
- wanted us to do, such as what we discussed in these
- 15 previous revisions, that we didn't agree with. We
- tried and they didn't work, and therefore, we
- disagreed with what they wanted us to. Now, as far as
- strenuously, it's up to him or not, but ---.
- 19 Q. Well, you know what strenuously disagree means,
- 20 don't you?
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 Do you know what Mr. Blankenship meant?
- 23 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 24 Let him --- if he doesn't know what
- 25 strenuously disagreed, he can say no.

- 1 A. Please define strenuously disagreed.
- 2 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 3 He's not using the word, though.
- 4 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 5 I understand that. But he speaks
- 6 English. We've verified that.
- 7 A. No, I don't. Please define it for me.
- 8 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 9 Q. Vigorously disagreed. People in your office,
- 10 Performance Coal, Route 3 Engineering vigorously
- 11 disagreed with the revision that you submitted on
- 12 September 14th. Do you agree with that statement?
- 13 A. Not the entire revision but portions of it if it
- involved sending belt air outby, yes, we would have.
- 15 Q. What other examples are there of vigorous
- 16 disagreement between the engineers at Route 3
- 17 Engineering and MSHA with regard to ventilation, are
- you aware of, other than the December 14th, 2009
- 19 submittal?
- 20 A. The --- putting the stopping line back in here. I
- 21 guess the March, whatever it was, 9th or whatever,
- revision, I would disagree with it because we were
- 23 following the plan as it was approved, and they wanted
- us to --- they were shut down at the time to make us
- build that stopping line back in. And that, as a

- 1 result, lessened the air going across the face of the
- 2 longwall.
- 3 Q. What was the violation that was issued on March
- 4 9th that shut down UBB? You're talking about that
- 5 situation.
- 6 A. I don't know specifically. It was for sending the
- 7 belt air --- sending the air at the tailgate out more
- 8 than one break.
- 9 O. Is that what it was?
- 10 A. As I remember it, it was. That was what the
- 11 revision I believe that we were talking about earlier
- dealt with, so I think it's the March 9th one.
- 13 Q. Was there some ventilation disruption that
- occurred that --- on March 9th the inspector found
- 15 that caused the issuance of a closure order?
- 16 A. No, there wasn't a disruption. It was just, I
- guess, the fact that it was traveling more than one
- 18 break outby like they wanted, which in our plan said
- it would be at least one, which would allow more.
- Q. Is that the same situation you're talking about
- 21 that occurred in December of 2009?
- 22 A. No. No. This is on the tailgate. The other one
- was on the headgate, on the belt air.
- Q. So explaining the vigorous disagreement that the
- 25 engineers at Route 3 Engineering had over MSHA's

- 1 actions on March 9th, 2010, ---?
- 2 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 3 A. I would just say that what we felt was not as good
- 4 as what we thought could be was putting that
- 5 ventilation revision into place, because it lessened
- 6 the air going across the longwall face. As far as
- 7 vigorously disagreeing or strenuously disagreeing,
- 8 that was Mr. Blankenship's statement, so ---.
- 9 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 Q. You don't know anything about that, any kind of
- 11 strenuous or vigorous disagreement with MSHA among the
- engineers at Route 3 Engineering; is that correct?
- 13 A. I disagree with the fact that you should lessen
- 14 your longwall air, the air going across your longwall
- face just for no other reason than to make it just go
- one break whenever going multiple breaks was approved
- and that was the way it had been worked with ho
- 18 problems in that area. So I disagree with that. And
- 19 I guess that could be an example of that, but I
- 20 haven't used that term. I quess so. Once again, it's
- 21 not like I was, you know, raving mad about it, but I
- don't agree with it, and I think it lessened the
- 23 effectiveness of the ventilation system. So I do
- 24 disagree with that process.
- Q. So you think it would have been appropriate to

- leave the ventilation system as it was on March 9th?
- 2 A. In that case, yes.
- Q. And you believed that what MSHA's position with
- 4 regard to ventilation system on March 9th, 2010
- 5 resulted in changes that were detrimental to the
- 6 health and safety of the mine; is that correct?
- 7 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 8 Is that your testimony?
- 9 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 10 That's my question. And if he disagrees
- 11 with it, he can say yes or no.
- 12 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 13 That's fine.
- 14 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 15 So if --- we'll get out of here quicker
- if you don't translate my questions.
- 17 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 18 I'm not translating.
- 19 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 20 But I appreciate it.
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 I'm wanting to make sure he understands.
- I mean, you know, ---.
- 24 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 25 Well, he can say that.

- 1 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 2 I understand. There's a problem with
- 3 leading questions. And most of the questions you ask
- 4 are leading, and I want to make sure that he
- 5 understands that just because you're saying it,
- 6 doesn't mean he necessarily has to agree with it. He
- 7 needs to --- he needs to have the confidence to state
- 8 his statement and his testimony as to what it is and
- 9 not merely just adopt what you're saying to him. And
- 10 so I just want him to reinforce the fact that he can
- either agree with it or disagree. That's what I'm
- 12 here for, to counsel my client.
- 13 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Do you understand what Mr. Sears said?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. So let me reinforce Mr. Sears, okay. If you don't
- 17 understand my question, you say I don't understand the
- 18 question. If I'm asking you a question that calls for
- 19 a yes or no answer, you think about it, if you can't
- answer it yes or no, say I can't answer it yes or no,
- 21 and I'm going to explain. If you don't know the
- 22 answer, say I don't know the answer. That's a given,
- and Mr. Sears won't have to interrupt.
- A. Then according to your last question, I can't
- answer yes or no.

- Q. Mr. Blankenship, in the same Senate testimony, May
- of 2010, speaking of ventilation changes, said, we
- 3 oppose the changes because our own engineers believe
- 4 they made the mine less safe. Did you and the two
- 5 engineers at Route 3 Engineering believe that the
- 6 changes made in December 2009 to March 9th through
- 7 11th, 2010, made the mine less safe?
- 8 A. I can't answer that one yes or no because I can't
- 9 speak for the other two. As far as the ones that I've
- 10 worked on being the December and the March, I feel
- 11 that any time that you would decrease the amount of
- 12 air going across the longwall face, then it would
- 13 lessen the effectiveness of the ventilation system in
- this case.
- Q. But that wasn't a question. Did you think that it
- 16 made the mine less safe? The changes that Massey made
- and proposed in their ventilation plan revisions, did
- 18 that make the mine less safe?
- 19 A. Any time that you would lessen the air going a
- 20 cross your longwall face and decrease the
- 21 effectiveness of your bleeder system, then I would
- think that mine would be less safe, yes.
- 23 Q. So you submitted --- Route 3 engineers submitted
- 24 --- some body put the P.E. stamp on a plan revision,
- 25 several plan revisions, that made the mine less safe?

- 1 A. You don't P.E. stamp mine revisions, but ---
- Q. Okay.
- 3 A. --- you ---.
- 4 Q. Well, there are engineers that drew up the plans.
- 5 A. Less safe doesn't necessarily mean unsafe, though,
- 6 as another --- once again, you're leading questions.
- 7 Therefore, I mean, we could put a fan on the back end
- 8 of this that would pull two million CFM, and that
- 9 would be more safe because you would have more air
- 10 going through there. But by putting a small one, does
- 11 that make it less safe, yes, but it doesn't make it
- 12 unsafe.
- Q. Oh, so --- I didn't use the word unsafe.
- 14 A. Yes, you did.
- 15 Q. Yes, I did, quoting --- please, please, let's just
- one of us talk at a time. I quoted from the CEO of
- 17 Massey Energy who said, we oppose the changes because
- 18 our own engineers believes they made the mine less
- 19 safe. Not my words, ---
- A. Exactly.
- 21 Q. --- Mr. Blankenship's.
- 22 A. That's my point. Less safe is not the same as
- unsafe.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. When you asked me the question, I think you did

- 1 the use the unsafe question.
- Q. Okay.
- 3 A. It makes it less safe. It doesn't necessarily
- 4 make it unsafe. We're not proposing plans to make a
- 5 mine unsafe.
- 6 O. That's fine.
- 7 A. It's less safe.
- 8 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 9 And Professor, if I can make ---.
- 10 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 11 Q. That's a good --- I appreciate that clarification.
- 12 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 13 And if I can make a statement. I'm not
- going to go as far as what Mr. Hardy had suggested in
- the last testimony with regard to the adversarial
- 16 Cross Examination, because I think it's fair
- 17 questioning to ask what his opinions were and his
- beliefs are, but I do believe that it gets into kind
- of an unfair territory to ask him to explain Mr.
- 20 Blankenship's thoughts, which I think a lot of the
- 21 questions, if not outright asking, kind of borders on.
- 22 And to that extent, I would only request that, you
- know, if you make reference, you know, make reference,
- this is what he said, do you agree with that or
- something, as opposed to asking him to adopt or

- 1 explain Mr. Blankenship's uses of words or his
- position statements. Because, obviously, I don't
- 3 think he's in a position to do that. So that's my
- 4 little comment, so ---.
- 5 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 6 Well, I appreciate that. I appreciate
- 7 that. And you're absolutely right, we don't want the
- 8 witness to read Mr. Blankenship's mind. That wasn't
- 9 my intention. Mr. Blankenship said, one would assume
- 10 from his sworn statement before the Senate that he had
- information that Massey engineers believes that the
- ventilation changes made the mine less safe. And I'm
- 13 --- and I've asked the witness, and he's indicated
- that he believed that at least two ventilation changes
- 15 made the mine less safe.
- 16 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- 17 Q. Is that correct, sir?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 O. How much less safe?
- 20 A. How do you quantify less safe?
- Q. I don't know. I'm asking you. You said it made
- the mine less safe.
- 23 A. There's no way to quantify something like that. I
- 24 mean, we don't have a five-star rating on cars to say,
- 25 you know, this is only a four star where this is a

- 1 five star.
- Q. So when you said that these changes made the mine
- 3 less safe, you absolutely were not saying that these
- 4 changes put any miners' lives at risk; is that
- 5 correct?
- 6 A. Not directly, no.
- 7 Q. Well, what do you mean by that?
- 8 A. Going back, if you decrease air going through an
- 9 area, if you were to have something happen in that
- area, less air would increase the risk involved in it.
- 11 You would have less dilution. You would have less
- movement, such as that. So any time you would lessen
- the amount of air going across the longwall face, you
- would increase the risk. There might not be a direct
- relationship between that two. Doing that
- specifically doesn't cause something unsafe. But if
- something were to happen, it would be less effective
- in not recovering but in taking care or sweeping out
- 19 that air or whatever would occur. So that would be
- less safe in that manner.
- Q. To what extent was the risk increased by these
- ventilation changes in December and March?
- 23 A. There's no way to quantify it. I don't know of
- any way to quantify it, sir.
- Q. So you just have this general feeling there's less

- 1 air, it's less safe?
- 2 A. Yes. If you're crossing a street and you look one
- 3 way instead of both ways, how much less safe are you?
- 4 Would you say 50 percent because you only looked
- 5 halfway? I mean, there's no ---.
- 6 Q. So would you agree that ---?
- 7 A. It would matter how much traffic is going along
- 8 that road as well. So I mean, there's no way to
- 9 quantify a statement like that.
- 10 Q. So would you agree that the use of the term less
- 11 safe with regard to these ventilation plans really
- doesn't have any meaning?
- 13 A. No, I wouldn't say that.
- 14 O. Well, what ---?
- 15 A. It would definitely be less safe to look one way
- than to look both ways, but you can't quantify that
- amount, which you're asking me to quantify.
- Q. Well, you would never submit a plan, a ventilation
- 19 plan, to MSHA that would put miners' lives at risk,
- would you?
- 21 A. Correct.
- Q. So the revisions that you believe MSHA forced on
- 23 Performance did not put miners' lives at risk; is that
- 24 correct?
- 25 A. Not directly, no.

- 1 Q. Well, you wouldn't knowingly submit ---
- 2 A. Correct.
- Q. --- ventilation plan revision that indirectly put
- 4 miners' lives at risk; is that correct?
- 5 A. I think so. Repeat ---.
- 6 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 7 Let the record reflect that I don't
- 8 believe that last answer, I don't think so, wasn't
- 9 necessarily in direct response to the question as to
- 10 perhaps your understanding of what he was asking.
- 11 A. Yes, because there was a lot of direct and
- indirectlies and assumptions and all that.
- 13 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 14 I mean, you weren't trying to suggest
- that there might be a circumstance when you would
- 16 submit such a plan?
- 17 A. Correct, I'm not suggesting that.
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 All right.
- 20 BY MR. MCGINLEY:
- Q. Well, let's be clear about this. You didn't
- 22 believe that either the December or the March
- ventilation revisions that were submitted would either
- 24 directly or indirectly place miners' lives at risk; is
- 25 that correct?

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 O. Thank you. What do you know --- strike that.
- 3 Was there ever inadequate airflow in either the
- 4 headgate or the 22 Headgate or 22 Tailgate production
- 5 areas?
- 6 A. No, I don't know of any.
- 7 Q. Did anybody ever tell you there were ventilation
- 8 problems in the working places at 22 Tailgate or
- 9 Headgate?
- 10 A. No one told me that, no.
- 11 Q. Would you have liked to have known that, if that
- 12 were true?
- 13 A. Me, personally --- I mean, it wouldn't be my
- 14 responsibility, I guess is what I'm saying, since it's
- 15 not --- I didn't have directly daily dealings with
- this mine, so I mean, it's ---.
- 17 Q. Okay. But you ---?
- 18 A. I would like to have known insomuch as if there
- 19 was a problem, we would like to do what we can to
- 20 correct the problem. But as far as should I have been
- 21 told or, you know, do I think I should have been told?
- Not necessarily because it's not my --- it wouldn't be
- 23 my place to be told, I guess is what I'm trying to
- 24 say.
- Q. For any mine service ---?

- 1 A. One of the mines under my responsibility, yes, I
- 2 would want to know.
- Q. Okay. That's my question. So if there was
- 4 inadequate airflow at the Headgate 22 or Tailgate 22,
- 5 whoever the engineer was with the responsibility at a
- 6 particular point in time would definitely want to know
- 7 about that?
- 8 A. I can't speak for him, but I would say yes.
- 9 Q. Well, as a professional ---?
- 10 A. Knowing Eric and it being his, I would say yes.
- 11 But that's me speaking for someone else, so I can't
- 12 guarantee that, but I would think so, yes. Just as a
- general human being, I would think so as well, too.
- 14 Q. Anyone in the profession of mining engineering
- 15 working on ventilation plans would want that
- 16 information; correct?
- 17 A. Yes, I would think so.
- 18 O. How would leaving airlock doors open affect
- 19 ventilation, let's say for an extended period, four
- 20 hours, in an underground mine?
- 21 A. Depending on the situation. I mean, the reason
- 22 you have airlock doors is basically so when you open
- one you don't short circuit air. So depending on the
- 24 situation, it could short circuit your air, not allow
- it to flow where it needed to.

- 1 O. And that would be bad, I take it?
- 2 A. Yeah. If the doors were required to be in that
- 3 place, yes.
- 4 Q. Is that a problem with having doors rather than
- 5 overcasts, that the doors may be left open?
- 6 A. I wouldn't say it's a problem, no.
- 7 Q. Well, is it a problem if doors are left open?
- 8 A. It could be a problem if doors were left open and
- 9 they needed to be closed in that area. I mean, they
- 10 serve a purpose being closed ---
- 11 Q. Right.
- 12 A. --- in situations. And if that's a requirement,
- 13 yes, it would cause a problem if they were left open,
- 14 yes.
- 15 O. And your ventilation plan, would it anticipate
- 16 that doors were --- airlock doors were closed in order
- 17 to prevent short circuiting airflow?
- 18 A. If they were needed to be, yes. I mean, ---.
- 19 Q. That's why you would have them?
- 20 A. Yes. There may be doors that were used at another
- 21 time period, and they would be left in there and they
- 22 would be required to be closed once, you know, an area
- is made common or something like that. But if they
- were intended to be there and they serve a purpose
- being there, then yes, we would anticipate them being

- 1 closed in our ventilation design.
- 2 Q. To what extent did the two people at Route 3
- 3 Engineering who put their P.E. stamps on ventilation
- 4 plans, were they involved in the actual development of
- 5 ventilation plans, if you know?
- 6 A. As far as --- the P.E. stamping it doesn't really
- 7 ---. He's just saying that what is there is what is
- 8 there, I guess, is what ---. So the design of the
- 9 ventilation system really has no bearing on what he's
- 10 certifying.
- 11 Q. So basically what you did as a standard practice
- 12 at Route 3 Engineering was go through all the things
- that you've learned to make sure a ventilation plan
- 14 was appropriate and that the mine would ventilate?
- 15 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- 16 Q. And then you gave them to Mr. Brainard or Mr.
- McCombs and they'd stamp it? Was that the process?
- 18 A. I think you're confusing revisions with an annual
- 19 ventilation map.
- Q. Well, whatever they stamped.
- 21 A. Now, there's a difference.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. That's what I'm saying. You're getting it ---
- 0. That's fine.
- 25 A. --- confused. The ventilation revisions don't

- 1 require the BPE stamp. That's saying we're going to
- 2 change the ventilation. This scheme that we're
- 3 proposing we anticipate will work. It will do what we
- 4 show it to do, and they don't certify that. They
- 5 certify an annual map, which basically just says what
- 6 is there is there. These are their air readings that
- 7 we had at these locations. These controls are in
- 8 place, that type of thing. That's what they certify.
- 9 They don't certify any proposed thing.
- 10 Q. Okay. So whatever they certify and put their P.E.
- stamp on is something that you give them and they
- trust you and they stamp? Is that the way it works or
- 13 not?
- 14 A. They look over them and you follow through and you
- know, make sure that there aren't any errors or
- 16 inconsistencies or whatever in it. So I mean it's not
- 17 like close your eyes and stamp a map just because
- somebody hands it to you, so that ---.
- 19 Q. Well, ---
- 20 A. I mean ---.
- 21 Q. --- I'm just asking you what they --- what those
- 22 P.E.'s that put their stamps on documents that relate
- to ventilation, what do they do other than put their
- stamp on it? How much do they know about what they're
- stamping, other than the engineers that work for them

- 1 are competent?
- A. They basically take other people's words for it,
- 3 which is what this certification says. You know, it
- 4 has Section Four, information not obtained by the
- 5 professional engineer is obtained by a certain person.
- 6 The person, the mine foreman, superintendent,
- 7 whoever is responsible for getting the air readings,
- 8 things such as that. The surveyor is responsible for
- 9 getting the take-up. You know, we check over it and
- 10 put it in and make sure that everything's right, and
- we go through and make sure that, you know, there's no
- short circuits in the mine and that the air's flowing
- 13 like it should be and all that stuff.
- 14 But as far as him personally going in and
- verifying that this stopping is here, no, he doesn't
- 16 do that. He has to take someone else's word for it,
- 17 so ---.
- 18 O. Well, is it your experience that Mr. Brainard and
- 19 Mr. McCombs rarely, if ever, ask you questions after
- you've prepared, competently prepared whatever
- 21 documents they have to stamp?
- 22 A. I wouldn't necessarily say that, either. I mean
- it's not that they were rarely asking questions.
- 24 They'd look over the map, and if they had any
- 25 questions, they would ask them.

- 1 Q. How often did they ask questions?
- 2 A. I don't know. Twice. I mean ---.
- Q. Once a year? Did they every time you'd give
- 4 them ---?
- 5 A. Not every time, no, but ---
- 6 Q. Uh-huh (yes).
- 7 A. --- whenever they would see something --- it might
- 8 not even be anything wrong. They might just have a
- 9 question about it, so I mean ---.
- 10 Q. Okay. Well, what do you know about the 2003 and
- 11 2004 methane inundations at Upper Big Branch?
- 12 A. Very little. I wasn't there around 2003, 2004, so
- 13 I wasn't involved then.
- 14 Q. When did you learn about them? Was it after ---
- 15 A. After.
- 16 Q. --- the explosion?
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. So nobody ever talked to you about the fact that
- 19 the mine had to be evacuated because there was a
- 20 methane inundation ---
- 21 A. No, no one talked to me.
- 22 Q. --- back in 2004?
- 23 A. No one talked to me about it.
- Q. Would you have liked to have known that?
- 25 A. It goes back to what I said earlier. Same thing

- 1 with the ventilation plan. It wouldn't necessarily
- 2 have been my place to have known, but if --- you know,
- 3 if you knew something, if it was my place to know,
- 4 then yes, I would've liked to have known, but yeah.
- Q. Well, let's say it's your place. I mean, not UBB;
- one of the mines --- one of the mines that you were
- 7 directly responsible for. Now, I understand Mr. Lilly
- 8 had the primary responsibility for UBB. He had a
- 9 methane inundation that caused the mine to be cleared
- out and the people didn't work for a day or two, would
- 11 you have wanted to know that with regard to those
- 12 mines?
- 13 A. I guess it would depend on the circumstances, but
- if it could potentially be a future problem, then yes,
- 15 I would like to know.
- 16 Q. Fair enough. With regard to the two ventilation
- 17 plan revisions that you were involved in regarding UBB
- that we've discussed here today, December 2009, March
- 19 2010, did Bill Ross play any role in the development
- of those plans?
- 21 A. In those two specifically, no, I don't remember
- 22 him being involved in those two.
- 23 Q. Is he the most experienced person, to your
- 24 knowledge, that works for Massey or any of its
- 25 subsidiaries with regard to ventilation, if you know?

- 1 A. I would say he would be the one I would go to, I
- 2 quess, is what I would say. I mean, he would be the
- 3 most experienced that I would deal with. There may be
- 4 someone else that is more experienced, but yes, he
- 5 would be ---.
- 6 Q. As far as you know, he's the most experienced
- 7 ventilation man that works for Massey?
- 8 A. Yes, I would say. Yes.
- 9 Q. So --- but he wasn't involved in these two changes
- 10 that --- in December 2009 and March 2010 that you
- 11 thought made the mine less safe?
- 12 A. As far as the preparation of the two things as I
- 13 prepared them, no.
- 14 Q. Why didn't you talk to him about a revision that
- 15 you believe made the mine less safe if he was the most
- 16 experienced ventilation person that worked for Massey?
- 17 A. I can't say that he wasn't aware of them. I'm not
- going to say that, but ---.
- 0. You don't know whether he was aware of them or
- 20 not?
- A. No, I don't know.
- 22 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 23 All right. I don't have any other
- 24 questions.
- 25 MR. SHERER:

- 1 Do you need to take a break?
- 2 A. I'm okay.
- 3 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 4 Do you need to take a vacation?
- 5 MR. SHERER:
- 6 No comment, Counsel.
- 7 RE-EXAMINATION
- 8 BY MR. SHERER:
- 9 Q. Okay. You discussed a lot of issues with Mr.
- 10 McGinley. One of them had to do with the belt air on
- the longwall. Were you aware of the 2006 Miner Act?
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. Are you aware of the Technical Study Panel created
- 14 by the Miner Act?
- 15 A. Not specifically, no.
- 16 Q. Okay. Did you attend any of the --- I think there
- was four or five public hearings on the Technical
- 18 Study Panel.
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. Did you provide any comments to the Technical
- 21 Study Panel?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. Do you know if anyone else at Massey ---
- A. I don't know if anyone ---.
- 25 Q. --- participated in that?

- 1 A. No.
- Q. Were you aware of the December the 30th, 2008
- 3 regulation that MSHA passed, dealing with the results
- 4 of the Technical Study Panel as required by the Miner
- 5 Act? Sometimes it's referred to as the Belt Air Rule.
- 6 A. Yes, I'm familiar with it.
- 7 Q. Okay. When did the longwall --- when was the
- 8 longwall installed at UBB?
- 9 A. I guess it would be started September, I think, of
- 10 '09.
- 11 Q. Okay. So approximately, nine months or so after
- the passage of the Belt Air Act?
- 13 A. Yes.
- Q. Why did you guys not design a system that complied
- 15 with the Belt Air Act?
- 16 A. The Belt Air Act requires that if you use belt air
- in the face that you have to get it approved in your
- ventilation plan, does it not? Is that ---
- 19 O. It sure does.
- 20 A. --- part of it? Then that's what we did. It says
- it can be approved in your ventilation plan, but you
- 22 have to show that it is ---. I don't know how it's
- worded exactly, so I won't ---.
- Q. Just that. You have to show that it's necessary
- 25 for the ---

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. --- health and safety of the miners.
- A. So that's what we did. We designed it and we
- 4 applied for that and it was approved that way, so
- 5 therefore, it was approved in our ventilation plan,
- 6 so ---
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 A. --- that's how we complied with the Miner Act ---
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. --- the Belt Air Act, whatever.
- 11 Q. How did you justify the use of belt air in the
- face or on the longwall?
- 13 A. I don't know, I don't know.
- 14 Q. Okay. In general how long --- how deep does the
- 15 water have to be before it's unsafe to travel?
- 16 A. I don't know. Generally I'd say 18 inches or
- 17 so ---
- 18 O. Okay.
- 19 A. --- is what I'd say.
- 20 Q. Thank you. Are you familiar with the ALPS system
- 21 for longwall pillar stability?
- 22 A. Yes.
- Q. Have you run that?
- 24 A. I have.
- Q. Have you been trained in the use of that?

- 1 A. I don't know. No, I've never been officially
- 2 trained in the use of it. No.
- 3 Q. Okay. Did you or anybody else you're aware of use
- 4 ALPS to design the pillars for the gate rows of the
- 5 current longwall panel at UBB?
- 6 A. I'd run some initially, using it, and I believe
- 7 Eric did, as well.
- Q. Do you recall what sort of stability factors
- 9 you ---?
- 10 A. Not right off the top of my head, no.
- 11 Q. Okay. Are you aware of the P2 engineering
- 12 standards for pillar stability factor?
- 13 A. No, not right offhand.
- 14 Q. Okay. Did Doctor Wala with the University of
- 15 Kentucky provide engineering consulting services in
- relationship to the ventilation system at Upper Big
- 17 Branch?
- 18 A. He performed the ventilation survey. In addition
- 19 to that I don't know of anything with him.
- 20 Q. Was he acting as a consultant when he did that?
- 21 A. I would say yes, he was. I mean I don't know.
- 22 Q. Thank you. Who's responsible for entering the
- actual mined areas onto the mine maps?
- A. Putting --- as we develop, putting that
- 25 information into a computer file?

- 1 Q. Yeah, uh-huh (yes).
- 2 A. We have, I guess, two gentlemen, a survey
- 3 coordinator and AutoCAD technicians that do that
- 4 generally.
- 5 Q. Okay. Do you know who made the decision to use
- 6 airlock doors instead of an overcast at Break 78?
- 7 A. I don't know that.
- 8 Q. Okay. You were talking about the Massey
- 9 improvements on MSHA requirements, and one of the
- things I recall you talking about was a 20,000 cubic
- 11 feet requirement in the last open break.
- 12 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- Q. And the MSHA regulatory minimum requirement was
- 9,000 cubic feet per minute. Do you know if Massey
- always requires 20,000 cubic feet per minute before
- 16 they mine on a section?
- 17 A. Have they always or do they now?
- 18 Q. Do they now?
- 19 A. They are supposed to, yes.
- 20 Q. Okay. Do you know that 22 Headgate rarely had the
- 21 legal minimum ---
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. --- to mine?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Okay.

- 1 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 2 BY MR. SHERER:
- 3 Q. Thank you. You also spoke about the Bandytown fan
- 4 having twice the required air quantity or air
- 5 capacity, I guess. Do you want to say something?
- 6 A. I don't know that I --- I didn't necessarily mean
- 7 that it had twice of what was required. I think that
- 8 was just using an example, saying --- say we'd make a
- 9 fan twice as much as what would be required.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. I wasn't saying specifically that Bandytown did
- 12 have twice as much as what we ---
- Q. Okay, okay.
- 14 A. --- required necessary, so ---.
- 15 Q. Thank you.
- 16 A. That was just a ---
- 17 Q. Thank you.
- 18 A. --- hypothetical or example of that, so ---.
- 19 Q. Okay, okay. I misunderstood you. Excuse me.
- 20 A. If I did say that, I didn't mean to, so ---.
- Q. Okay. Thank you. Who decided to locate this
- longwall in the middle of what was effectively the
- 23 main return of this mine?
- A. I don't know. I mean who would ---?
- Q. Well, you said you were involved in the planning

- when this panel was laid out. Who decided to stick it
- 2 in there without any protection for those returns?
- 3 A. I guess the ultimate call would've been --- Chris
- 4 Blanchard would've been the one that would've made the
- 5 ---
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. --- decision to do that, I guess.
- 8 Q. Thank you. Were you aware that both the headgate
- 9 and the tailgate were failing?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. Okay. Have you been back in this mine since the
- 12 explosion?
- 13 A. I've never been in the mine.
- 14 Q. Oh, okay. That's right. Excuse me, excuse me.
- Would it surprise you to know that the investigators
- can't get past the 38 Break on the headgate and I
- think it's the 74th Break on the tailgate because of
- 18 water, roof and floor heave.
- 19 A. Now? No, it wouldn't really surprise me, because
- the mine basically hasn't been up-kept ---.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. --- since the thing so ---
- 23 Q. Okay.
- 24 A. --- I mean ---.
- Q. Okay. Would it surprise you to know that those

- 1 areas were failing prior to the explosion?
- 2 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 3 What do you mean by failing?
- 4 BY MR. SHERER:
- 5 Q. The headgate was un-travelable, the tailgate was
- 6 subject to extensive roof failure and floor heave.
- 7 A. I don't know. It wouldn't surprise me, I guess.
- I mean, surprise, I don't know if that would be a word
- 9 I would use, I guess I would say.
- 10 Q. Okay. Thank you. Okay. Okay. Were you aware of
- any of those problems in the headgate or tailgate?
- 12 A. No, not really.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 OFF RECORD DISCUSSION
- 15 A. No, not really.
- 16 MR. SHERER:
- 17 Okay.
- 18 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 19 Were you aware of them or not?
- 20 A. No.
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 It's a yes or no. You said no, not
- 23 really.
- 24 A. No.
- 25 ATTORNEY SEARS:

- 1 Okay.
- 2 MR. SHERER:
- 3 Okay.
- 4 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 5 I just wanted to make sure.
- 6 MR. SHERER:
- 7 Okay.
- 8 RE-EXAMINATION
- 9 BY ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 10 Q. I have a couple questions for you. You mentioned
- 11 George Levo.
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. He's somebody who works for Route 3 Engineering;
- is that right?
- 15 A. He passed away. He doesn't work there any longer.
- 16 O. Oh.
- 17 A. He used to, yeah.
- 18 O. He used to?
- 19 A. Yeah.
- 20 Q. Okay. Do you know at what point he stopped
- 21 working for Route 3?
- 22 A. The day that he died.
- Q. Well, okay. Well, that was one question. Do you
- know, was it --- how long ago that was?
- 25 A. June 2008, something around in there, I'd say.

- 1 Q. Okay. And do you know what his role was at Route
- 2 3 or maybe his title?
- 3 A. He was the UBB --- he had been at Performance
- 4 Engineering from before they consolidated and
- 5 everything, so he was the engineer for UBB.
- 6 Q. Did Eric Lilly take over his duties?
- 7 A. Not to start with. I guess Eric started shortly
- 8 after George passed away, and at that point it was
- 9 collaboration. We had another engineer that was in
- 10 there for a short amount of time, and he helped out
- 11 with it, as well, and ---.
- 12 Q. Who was the other engineer?
- 13 A. Mutombo Nombe, but he worked there for --- I don't
- even remember now. I would say maybe a month, if
- 15 that.
- Q. Do you know where Mutombo is now?
- 17 A. No. I think he left and went to Texas somewhere,
- is where he took a job after he left there, but I
- 19 don't know where he's at now, no. But he was only
- 20 there for a ---
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. --- short amount of time.
- Q. Do you know an Ed Thompson?
- A. Ed Thompson? No.
- 25 Q. No?

- 1 A. No.
- Q. Okay. How about a Raghuveer Thadisina?
- 3 A. Yeah. That was the Reddy guy ---
- 4 Q. That's Reddy?
- 5 A. --- I was talking about earlier, yes.
- 6 Q. Okay. And you mentioned Reddy earlier, and I'm
- 7 sorry. Where did you say he worked?
- 8 A. He works at Independence.
- 9 Q. Independence?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And do you know his title or what his duties are?
- 12 A. He is an engineer with Independence, but I don't
- 13 know what his full duties are, no.
- Q. But he's never worked for Route 3?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. Has he worked with the engineers at Route 3?
- 17 A. After the explosion, he did come over and help and
- 18 stuff afterwards, but that was --- prior to that, no,
- 19 not really. No, he didn't.
- 20 Q. Do you know if he had any involvement in the
- 21 ventilation survey that you told us about earlier that
- 22 Doctor Wala performed?
- 23 A. He came over and helped with the underground
- 24 portion of it. Beyond that I don't know what his
- 25 involvement would've been. He was familiar with the

- 1 program that Wala used, as well, so he kind of ---
- 2 that's kind of how he got involved with it, I guess,
- 3 when he helped out with the UBB vent survey.
- 4 Q. Okay. And he still works for Independence now?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Okay. Do you know --- same question for George
- 7 Levo. Did he work with Doctor Wala or did he have any
- 8 involvement on that ventilation survey?
- 9 A. Yeah, yeah, he did.
- 10 Q. Do you know what his involvement was?
- 11 A. Not specifically. I don't know if he went
- 12 underground and helped with him or not, but he, I
- think, was kind of the point of contact with Wala
- initially, at least, so ----.
- 15 Q. Okay. And did Mutombo Nombe have any involvement
- 16 with that survey?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 19 Okay. Thanks. That's all. Nothing?
- 20 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 21 I have a couple more if nobody else does.
- 22 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 23 Okay.
- 24 RE-EXAMINATION
- 25 BY MR. MCGINLEY:

- 1 Q. The Massey's 20,000 rule that we've talked about
- 2 here --
- 3 A. Uh-huh (yes).
- Q. --- what does that mean? What's the consequences
- 5 if you don't have 20,000 in the last open break? I
- 6 mean, what's the purpose of the rule?
- 7 A. To ensure that you have sufficient air on your
- 8 section.
- 9 Q. So if I don't, if the section foreman takes a
- anemometer reading and they don't have 20,000, they
- 11 shut the section down?
- 12 A. They're not supposed to run without 20,000,
- 13 so ---.
- 14 Q. Is that written down somewhere?
- 15 A. I don't know that it is.
- 16 Q. Why do you think that?
- 17 A. Why do I think what?
- 18 A. Why do you think that they're supposed to shut
- down the section if they don't have 20,000?
- 20 A. I guess that was the way it was conveyed to me.
- Q. By whom?
- 22 A. I don't know at this point.
- 23 Q. You don't know? So you don't know if it's a rule
- 24 or not?
- 25 A. I don't take air readings on the sections, so I

- 1 mean no.
- 2 O. Do you take the 20,000 rule into consideration in
- 3 a ventilation plan?
- 4 A. Not really, no. I mean it's not in most
- 5 ventilation revisions or what it doesn't necessarily
- 6 have any bearing on it, I guess.
- 7 Q. Well ---.
- 8 A. I mean, I guess in the grand scheme of things with
- 9 the design, it doesn't really have a bearing on it.
- 10 So no. I mean, we don't ---. No, I don't take that
- into account when ---.
- 12 Q. When a ventilation plan, a revision is designed,
- you don't model it, you don't pay any attention to the
- 20,000, for lack of a better word, rule? That plays
- no role in your ventilation plans; is that true?
- 16 A. I won't say that. We don't do designs or
- 17 revisions with the aim of getting that, I guess, is
- what I'm trying to say. I mean it's not the be all,
- 19 end all of a design, no.
- 20 Q. Well, you don't factor it in ---
- 21 A. I mean ---.
- 22 Q. --- at all; is that correct? In the ventilation
- 23 designs?
- A. No. No, not specifically.
- Q. Not factored?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. And with regard to the application of this Massey
- 3 20,000 rule, someone that you can't remember told you
- 4 that the section should shut down, but otherwise you
- 5 don't know anything about it; is that correct?
- 6 A. More or less, yes. I mean yeah.
- 7 Q. You said that a ventilation survey has been made
- 8 after the explosion with regard to UBB; is that ---
- 9 did I understand that correctly?
- 10 A. I don't know specifics about it, but we had a copy
- of the VnetPC and it was barred from us with the
- 12 assumption that the people involved with the
- investigation of UBB would do the --- were working on
- 14 a computer simulation of it, yes.
- 15 Q. The internal Massey people ---
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. --- investigating on it?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- Q. So you haven't seen it?
- 21 A. No, other than them borrowing my copy of the
- 22 program, I have no knowledge of it.
- Q. And what program is that?
- A. VnetPC.
- 25 Q. Is that the same one that Doctor Wala used?

- 1 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know how to use that program?
- A. Not extensively, but a little bit, yes.
- 4 Q. Have you ever used it with regard to UBB?
- 5 A. No, not UBB.
- 6 Q. Have you ever used it with regard to any mine
- 7 under your responsibility?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. For what purpose did you do it?
- 10 A. Design the --- sizing a shaft.
- 11 Q. That's the only thing?
- 12 A. We haven't had it for that long, so yeah.
- 13 Q. How long have you had it?
- 14 A. Probably, oh, six, eight months I'd say, probably.
- Q. So you got it ---? You got that software is
- 16 it ---?
- 17 A. Yes.
- Q. You got that a year and a half after --- or more.
- 19 No, it's three years after Doctor Wala did the
- 20 original UBB survey?
- 21 A. Well, he did the underground portion of it at that
- 22 point, but he still did the computer simulations up
- through last year, 2009, I think is when.
- 24 Q. At the end of 2009?
- 25 A. Yeah. It was about the time we were putting the

- 1 shaft in, the Bandytown in.
- Q. Okay. Leading up to that Bandytown shaft?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 MR. MCGINLEY:
- 5 That's all the questions I have.
- 6 RE-EXAMINATION
- 7 BY MR. SHERER:
- 8 Q. I have one additional question. Who's involved in
- 9 the Massey accident investigation?
- 10 A. I guess Charlie Burse, Chris Prater. Danny
- 11 Acord's doing some CAD work for them. I know that.
- 12 Those are the only ones, really, that I know.
- 13 MR. MCGILEY:
- 14 Danny ---?
- 15 A. Acord. I quess ---.
- 16 BY MR. SHERER:
- 17 Q. Do you know if Pete Hendrick is involved in that?
- 18 A. I don't know.
- 19 MR. SHERER:
- 20 Okay. Thank you. That's all I've got.
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- We're done.
- 23 ATTORNEY HAMPTON:
- 24 Okay. On behalf of MSHA and the Office
- of Miners' Health, Safety and Training we'd like to

- 1 thank you for appearing and answering questions today.
- 2 Your cooperation is very important to the
- 3 investigation as we work to determine the cause of the
- 4 accident.
- 5 And as we mentioned earlier, we do
- 6 request that you not discuss your testimony with any
- 7 person other than your attorney. And after asking ---
- 8 questioning other witnesses, we might have some
- 9 follow-up questions for you, so we might call you back
- 10 here.
- 11 If at any time after you leave here today
- 12 you have additional information you'd like to provide
- to the team, please don't hesitate to contact us at
- the information that was provided to you in the
- letter. Now, as I mentioned earlier, at this point
- 16 you may now go over any answer that you've given if
- 17 you have anything you'd like to clarify, or you may
- 18 make a statement if there's anything additionally that
- 19 you would like to say to us.
- 20 A. No.
- 21 ATTORNEY SEARS:
- 22 Do you want to reconsider your appearance
- fee issue?
- A. That's what I was going to say.
- 25 ATTORNEY SEARS:

Page 160 He will like to maintain confidentiality to the extent permissible and have an opportunity to read. ATTORNEY HAMPTON: Okay. Thank you very much. Off the record. STATEMENT UNDER OATH CONCLUDED AT 7:09 P.M.

Page 161 1 STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA) 2 3 4 CERTIFICATE 5 I, Alison Salyards, 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 14 That I am neither attorney nor counsel for, 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 alicon Salyards 23 24

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