

# Voicemail warned about bridge cracks

**MIAMI (AP)** — An engineer left a voicemail two days before a catastrophic bridge failure in Miami to say some cracking had been found at one end of the concrete span, but the voicemail wasn't picked up until after the collapse, Florida Department of Transportation officials said Friday.

The voicemail left on a landline wasn't heard by a state DOT employee until Friday because the employee was out of the office on an assignment, the agency said in an email.

In a transcript released Friday night, Denney Pate with FIGG Bridge Group says the cracking would need repairs "but from a safety perspective we don't see that there's any issue there so we're not concerned about it from that perspective."

The bridge collapsed Thursday, killing at least six

people. Authorities are slowly removing the debris, looking for more victims.

At a news conference Friday night, officials from the National Transportation Safety Board said they have just begun their investigation, and cannot yet say whether any cracking contributed to the collapse. They also said workers were trying to strengthen a diagonal member on the pedestrian bridge at Florida International University when it collapsed.

A college student who narrowly escaped from a car that got smashed in the collapse said he watched helplessly as the structure tumbled down atop the vehicle and killed his friend Alexa Duran, who was sitting next to him in the driver's seat.

Richie Humble, who studies at FIU, was riding in a car under the pedestrian bridge when he heard a long creaking noise coming from the

structure that spanned a busy Miami-area highway.

"I looked up, and in an instant, the bridge was collapsing on us completely. It was too quick to do any-

thing about it," Humble said Friday in a phone interview with The Associated Press.

Once Humble realized he was alive, he also realized that he could not get to

Duran. He called to her but got no response. A group of men outside the car started yelling at him to try crawling through the rear window.

He couldn't squeeze

through because the window was crushed. The men outside grabbed a wooden plank and pried open the rear door to pull him free, he said.



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