



## National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594  
Office of Marine Safety

### Interview Summary – DCA16PM008

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**Interview of:** Travis Lane, crew member on board Orin C

**Date/Time:** December 11, 2015

**Location:** Coast Guard sector Boston (Mr. Laine by phone from Gloucester, MA)

**Interviewed by:** [REDACTED] – NTSB, [REDACTED]

**Case:** Sinking of fishing vessel Orin C

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Interview of Travis Lane, crew member on board F/V Orin C.

Travis stated the crew were hauling gear, consisting of 55 gallon barrels (there were 20 barrels of one string) when they started to have engine problems. They were hauling away and had 15 more barrels to go when the captain got engine overheat alarm. The temperature was about 240°F which was higher than the normal 180°F. He shut the engine down and checked the dipstick and found water in the oil. Dave told the crew they had to get a tow. He knew the wind was coming and called for a tow from the Foxy Lady who he knew was in the area. The Foxy Lady fishes close to them and Dave was buddies with one of the crew members on the Foxy Lady.

The Foxy Lady came over after a few hours. He estimated that the Orin C. broke down between 8 and 9 AM. Once the Foxy Lady got on scene the tow began. He estimated the wind to be about 40 knots and the seas to be between eight and 10 feet. The seas built up really quick and it got really rough building to an estimated 8 to 12 feet with winds between 40 and 50 knots. He recalled the tow line parting about four times. The waves were big and remembered seeing one 4-inch polypropylene rope that exploded. The last time that the tow broke was when they were hit by an extra big wave that he estimated was about 15 feet in height. After that they did not have much tow rope left. It would've been more ideal to have more tow rope between both vessels. He estimated the speed of the tow was around 5 knots. They tried to tell the Foxy Lady to slow down. They should have been going two knots. With the speed of 5 knots the Foxy Lady was on top of the wave while the Orin C was being pulled down.

Travis was sitting in the wheelhouse with the captain when the wave hit. The windows exploded and the roof peeled back about 4 feet. They pumped down the water that came in and then they tied up with the Foxy Lady again. This time the tow was around two knots. There was water in the bilge and he thought it was coming from bow. He thought some planking got damaged. The US Coast Guard was monitoring the situation but he did not know who called Coast Guard or how they were notified that they were taking on water.

The Coast Guard arrived on scene they sent over a gas pump with a 6-foot hose. The crew could not get it to pump -- they had no suction. Eventually the pump did work for about 10 seconds. He remembered having to prime impeller and it must've been primed 2000 times. He said there were no clogs and that the hose was clear of debris. The Coast Guard was issuing troubleshooting instructions and they kept repeating that there was no clog. The troubleshooting instructions were useless. He stated he did have previous experience operating pumps similar to that. It just didn't work and there is no debris.

They then made up the tow with the coast guard so that they could be towed home. The water was still in the bilge and was slowly coming in. They were hoping to get to Thatcher's island where they could get a better lee so they can continue to troubleshoot the pump. They continued to take on water slowly and he estimated the depth was increasing at about 1 foot in a minute or two.

The Coast Guard then asked them to start bailing out with 5 gallon buckets. They knew that would not work. Travis and Rick got about 20 buckets of water out. By then the water was up to a foot and coming over the floor in the fore peak.

Dave then called the Coast Guard and asked them to come get us off and that there was not much time left. The Coast Guard was about 600 feet ahead of us so they cut the tow line and made their way back to us. The boat was already going under with about 6 inches of water on deck. We were hopping around trying to get our survival suits on. There was nothing fucked up with the suits. All three of the suits were in the wheel house. The first guy went overboard after he got out in the wheel house. Dave and Travis went to the stern and were sitting there. Rick was the first guy in the water. The Coast Guard was down wind and picked up Rick in about one minute. Both Travis and Dave didn't have a chance to jump in the water since the waves picked them up and both of them started swimming. Both were swimming on their backs. Travis went to the Coast Guard boat and got picked up. He saw Dave swimming but after three strokes he stopped. He thought it might have been a heart attack. The Coast Guard was doing CPR for about one hour on the way back. Travis said that he was personally only in the water for about two minutes before being picked up.

When on the 47, they were waiting down in the [survivors] compartment and they saw the coast guard pulling Dave in.

Travis was soaked all day long and he was cold. He remembers seeing his breath.

He estimated that Dave smoked 2 to 3 packs per day. He was super calm. Previous to the vessel sinking, Dave seemed a little lethargic but that could be because they were soaked all day. It didn't look like a drowned. There was no debris in the water that he saw.

When they are onboard and 47, he remembered seeing Dave floating in the water on his back with his head under the water. He then remembered seeing the crew doing CPR. The helicopter arrived and the paramedic got smashed into the stern. The Coast Guard was doing CPR all the way to the Coast Guard station. In his opinion, no one did anything wrong.

This was his first time fishing with Dave. He knew him for about five years. Travis has been fishing for about 20 years.

When asked to recall the sinking, he stated he did not see where the water was coming in. It looked like it was coming in from under the floor. They were sitting there on our bunks and heard water sloshing under the floor in the fore peak. They didn't know if it was coming from -- the engine room or not. It seemed like it was going from before peak to the engine room. There were no problems before they got hit by the wave.

Travis used to work on draggers as an engineer so he knew about problems with water in the oil. The engine was acting funny and they checked the temperatures which were up to about 240°F the normal temperature should be around 180°F. It was an old Detroit engine.

When asked about the rate of flooding, he stated it was slow at first until the end when it got quick. When we got off the water was at the top of the engine. The winds were from the west and the waves were building going from east to west.

When asked about debris on the water, he said they didn't have much on deck that only the vats were there. They were big and light blue color.

When asked about the waves that hit them, he said it was a big force. The flooding was not coming from the damage to the house.

The boat still had power when it sank under the water. He remembered seeing the lights still on. With respect to the pump provided to them by Coast Guard, it had a 2-inch hose that they put over the side. They kept on trying to get the pump working and it was not clogged. He stated that he worked on the pump the most. Richard was also there to help work on the problem. The engine was working all the time; there was just no suction. The hose was under the water in the engine room and estimated to be about 4 feet of water. They pulled it up [the end of the suction hose] about half a dozen times and checked the screen cover but there were no clogs.

They kept the pump on deck with the hose into the engine room. There was plenty of slack on the hose. It kept sucking air. The pump only had suction for 10 seconds he thought. He has knowledge of the operation of pumps and said that the crew followed all directions step-by-step.

When asked to recall his initial observation that they were flooding, he stated he heard sloshing from before peak. He didn't see it until it came over the floor. There were a few inches in the engine room. He thought the curve of the boat at the bottom was up about 1.5 feet.

When asked about the tow between the Foxy Lady and the Orin C, he said the crew did all that they could but the tow was too short and the speed was too fast. The line parted about four times. After each time it parted, they used hoses and the bow and stern springs to replace the broken line. He estimated they added about 100 to 120 feet of line --the Foxy Lady should not have been going 5 kn.

The other crew member took lots of pictures.

There were about 6500 pounds of eels on board. 5000 pounds were in the center tank. Then there was about 1500 pounds evenly split into two vats. 750 pounds in the port side and 750 pounds on the starboard side. The height of the vats was roughly to a person's chest and there were two on either side of the boat. There were no issues with the load. There was also ice on each side-about three barrels each and they were double tied. The bait that they were using was herring.

The day of the accident was their third day of fishing and they were headed home with only two trawls left. They were going to haul only 3 to 4 more barrels. They knew the weather was going to get rough; that is why they were going to head home.

When asked about why there was water in the oil, he did not know and stated that it was his opinion the most common source would be from a cracked piston or a leaky head gasket. Prior to the detection of water in the oil, the engine worked good-it was solid. He recalled hearing that Dave had a lot of work done recently on the engine. This was Travis first time working on that boat.

When asked about his comment regarding a damaged plank, he stated that he did not physically see the damage. He was aware that there was previous damaged to the stem and that Dave fixed that and the repairs were better than the initial build--the guys did a good job. This was done at Gloucester Marine Railways. He recalled seeing pictures of the boat in dry dock and the repairs that were made on the port bow and that it looked like a nice repair.

Travis had no concern about the condition of the boat prior to the start of the fishing trip.

The tow bit was stainless steel and was about 8 inches around and 4 inches on the horizontal pieces. It was located overhead the forepeak-the bow roofing. During their tow, their main concern was if the bit was going to hold. He estimated it was about 1 1/2 to 2 feet back from the bow stem. They had to wrap the tow line with the rubber to prevent it from chafing. In order to access the bow, you had to go through the wheelhouse.

With respect to the damage to the wheelhouse, they did all they could do to seal the openings. They took a bench seat off from the galley and screwed it over the broken windows. It fit perfect. The water did not come from there. It was just a bit of spray and small drops. He recalled after the damage standing in the wheelhouse with a T-shirt on and not being bothered. To bridge electronics were on the starboard side near the captain's chair. They were all off since there was no power and no generator. They only had lights. Dave turned the GPS on a few times to check the position and speed. The computers and radars were off. The batteries were up high and it would've taken a lot of water to get up to them.

The boat was not taking on water initially. That came after being hit by the waves. The pump supplied to them by the Coast Guard did not work. They worked on it for three hours. He stated there was no alcohol on board and no one had been drinking since it lets Gloucester.