

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ANDREW J. BARBERI
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

Docket No.: DCA-10-MM-017

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Interview of: ALDEAN CODLING

Staten Island Ferry Facility
Staten Island, New York

Monday,
May 10, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,
at 10:00 a.m.

BEFORE: LARRY BOWLING
Marine Investigator

APPEARANCES:

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JAMES J. GILLETTE, Chief Warrant Officer
United States Coast Guard

DAVID ORAVETS, Senior Port Captain
New York City Department of Transportation
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I N T E R V I E W

(10:00 a.m.)

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2
3 MR. BOWLING: Okay, we are recording, gentlemen.

4 This is Larry Bowling with the National Transportation
5 Safety Board. We are here at the New York City facility to
6 interview Mr. Dean Codling.

7 MR. CODLING: Yes.

8 MR. BOWLING: Correct pronunciation? And today is the
9 11th --

10 MR. CODLING: 10th.

11 MR. BOWLING: 10th. I've been up here too long. Today
12 is May the 10th. It's around 10:00. And with me and
13 participating in the interview to my left?

14 MR. FURUKAWA: Jon Furukawa, National Transportation
15 Safety Board, Marine Investigator, and I'm the group chairman for
16 Deck Operations.

17 MR. MEEHAN: Wayne Meehan from Freehill, Hogan and Mahar
18 representing Mr. Codling.

19 MR. WALSH: Brian Walsh, Safety Management, Staten
20 Island Ferry.

21 CWO GILLETTE: Chief Warrant Officer Jim Gillette with
22 the United States Coast Guard.

23 MR. ORAVETS: Dave Oravets, Senior Port Captain, Staten
24 Island Ferry.

25 MR. BOWLING: Okay. Thank you.

1 INTERVIEW OF ALDEAN CODLING

2 BY MR. BOWLING:

3 Q. Mr. Codling, can I call you Dean? Am I pronouncing your
4 last name okay? Thank you.

5 You're aware you're being recorded, correct? If you
6 want a copy of this later, by all means e-mail Mr. Furukawa or
7 myself, and I'll give you a business card. I don't think Jon has
8 one. I'll give you mine. We'll get you a copy of it, but --

9 A. Thank you.

10 Q. And I can give you an electronic copy here in the next
11 couple of days.

12 But we talked a little offline about the purpose of the
13 NTSB, why we're here. I don't want to waste too much more time
14 going back into it, but I do want to point out that if we ask you
15 a question and you don't understand it, let me know and I'll
16 rephrase it. And also if you don't know the answer, feel free, "I
17 don't know". We want to know the facts and the facts only, so if
18 you don't have an answer please just tell us that. With that
19 said, can you give me the correct spelling of your name and a
20 preferred mailing address?

21 A. It's Aldean Codling, A-L-D-E-A-N, C-O-D-L-I-N-G.

22 Q. Okay. So it's Aldean?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Alden [sic]?

25 A. Aldean, yeah.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. One word, two names. Mailing address, [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED] Westbury, New York 11590.

4 Q. Okay. And, again, your first name is Al?

5 A. Aldean.

6 Q. Aldean?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. All right. Aldean, can you tell me a little bit
9 your nautical background starting with any formalized training you
10 may have had?

11 A. I spent four years at the Merchant Marine Academy, had
12 cadet sailing for about a total of a year covering summer 2005
13 till the fall of 2006. After graduation in June of '08, I had a
14 job as mate with Rigdon/GulfMark Offshore down in the Gulf of
15 Mexico, and I started there in August 2008 until January of 2010
16 when I took a position here at the Ferry.

17 Q. Okay. Now, what license do you currently hold?

18 A. Third mate unlimited.

19 Q. Third mate unlimited. And what issuance are you in for
20 your third mate's license, is it your original license?

21 A. Yes. Yes.

22 Q. Where was that license issued out of?

23 A. New York, New York City.

24 Q. Here?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Right uptown.

3 Q. All right. And what is your age?

4 A. Twenty-three, turning 24 August 16th.

5 Q. When did you enter the Merchant Marine Academy?

6 A. 2004, July 2004.

7 Q. Do you hold any other Merchant Mariner credentials
8 besides the Coast Guard third mate's license?

9 A. Does that include sweat (ph.) cards and things -- yeah,
10 TWIC, STCW, tankerman assist for liquid natural gas and dangerous
11 liquid. I also have a dynam positioning. I took that class, so I
12 have that certification and some helicopter escape training.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And everything else included in STCW.

15 Q. So outside your academy experience how many years do you
16 have in the Merchant Marine, in the field itself, actually
17 working?

18 A. Just a little bit under two years.

19 Q. Okay. All right. Just a brief summarization of your
20 background in the Gulf, what were you doing down there?

21 A. I was a mate on a vessel so I stood navigational watch,
22 drove the vessel, docking, oversaw the ADs, ashore and out at the
23 rig. So it was a 12-hour watch. We did 12-hour watches there.

24 Q. Okay. What size vessel was it?

25 A. It was a 190-foot vessel, ranging from 190-feet to -- we

1 had some 210s. So it was more of a tonnage. That one was
2 underneath the tonnage and the other ones were over the tonnage
3 for as far as unlimited; Z-drives and twin valve thrusters.

4 Q. And when did you hire in with the New York City
5 Department of Transportation?

6 A. My hire date when I started here, January 4th. First
7 day --

8 Q. All right. Once you hired in here, walk me through
9 various positions you've held with the company?

10 A. Well, I started off as a deckhand and I was a deckhand
11 for almost three months to the date, and then I began my mate
12 training.

13 Q. And when did you begin your mate training?

14 A. That would be March 30th, March 30th.

15 Q. All right. And as part of the training program can you
16 walk me through what that entailed?

17 A. It starts off with your first weeks in the port office
18 and you do a lot of reading through the manuals and going through
19 what the guys in the port office do. Then after that you start
20 your training on the different vessels. You have to get signed
21 off on different vessels and you -- you know, you do your drills,
22 you do your startups, your shut-downs, and that's the process.
23 And at the end of it, you know, it's up to you to make sure you
24 have an understanding of what your job is and you move on.

25 Q. Okay. And so basically that process begins in the port

1 office?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. What's the next step in that process?

4 A. On the boats. You go on whatever class vessel they
5 assign you on. For us it was the JFK. You spend a few days there
6 and then you keep going through the process. Now you have to get
7 signed up on a different class of boat, so JFK.

8 Q. You say JFK. What --

9 A. John F. Kennedy.

10 Q. What size ferry is that roughly?

11 A. The size of the ferry?

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. Say about 300, 310 feet long.

14 Q. Okay. And displacement approximately, tonnage?

15 A. 3,300 about. I'm not sure.

16 Q. All right.

17 A. I'm not sure exactly.

18 Q. Okay. That's fine. So you left -- you went from the
19 port office to the JFK?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. All right. And what functions are you performing on the
22 JFK?

23 A. You go through your everyday shut-downs and startups as
24 a mate. You walk around with a mate and he's going through, you
25 know, what your job duty is, walking the deck, patrolling the

1 deck, making sure the deck's clean, checking on the deckhands,
2 making sure they're doing what they're doing, or if you're coming
3 in on the main deck you're hooking up the hooks. If you're on the
4 saloon deck you're overseeing the passengers getting off and that
5 everything else is going smoothly. And then once you're up in the
6 wheelhouse you're standing the navigation lookout essentially.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Extra eyes in the wheelhouse.

9 Q. And are you performing this on your own or are you --

10 A. No. You're with someone -- under supervision of
11 somebody else, and they're talking to you, going through it, you
12 know, making sure you know what you need to be looking for.

13 Q. Okay. So how long were you on the JFK?

14 A. Three days on the JFK.

15 Q. All right. What was the next step in that training
16 process?

17 A. Next I had the Barberi class, and the same thing, and
18 that was four days.

19 Q. Okay. So we're still somewhere around March, correct?

20 A. No, this is April.

21 Q. April.

22 A. Yes. I started at the port office. It was March 30th,
23 so that week. March 30th was a Tuesday and so I was done Friday,
24 came in -- it was Tuesday to Friday every week. We did two --
25 once you were on the boat you did two morning shifts, so that's

1 Tuesday, Wednesday, and then Thursday, Friday were the afternoon
2 shifts.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. So you get that -- that's how you get a feel for the
5 different type of crowd and atmosphere you're going to get with
6 the rush hours and whatnot.

7 Q. Okay. So what's the next step in this training process?

8 A. After I get to the Barberi?

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. Same thing. You just -- the Barberi's a little bit
11 different. You know, you have different lifeboats on there than
12 some of the other boats, so, you know, you see that and you go
13 through that. Following that is the Molinari class the next week,
14 and then lastly the night boat. The night boat, the Austen --
15 John Noble, Austen class.

16 Q. Okay. So when did you complete this training process?

17 A. Towards the end of April. I don't have an exact date.

18 Q. That's fine, the end of April. All through the process
19 you were under tutelage --

20 A. Tutelage, yes.

21 Q. -- of someone?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So once you got off the John Noble --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- which was the last leg of this process, at least as

1 you described, what happens? Was that the end of the training
2 process or do you go to another phase?

3 A. That was the end of the training process as far as
4 getting signed off. And actually the first boat I worked was the
5 next night I worked the night boat again on the Noble. That was
6 my first time by myself, so --

7 Q. Okay. So then you run under the authority of your
8 license --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- on your own?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. I want to just -- I wanted to go through that
13 while we were talking about the training phase, but what I'd like
14 to do is I want to take a step back real quick and just leading up
15 to the accident Saturday. I kind of wanted to look into what was
16 going on in your life Wednesday from the standpoint -- what I'm
17 looking at is just rest cycles.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. So can you tell me kind of what you were doing, let's
20 say, Wednesday and work me on up to the weekend?

21 A. Wednesday, I worked -- I was an extra on the dock, 5:00
22 to 1:00.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, 05- to 1300. Then went home. I got the call that
25 I'd be working the weekend, so I had off Thursday. Thursday, just

1 took care of whatever I needed to take care off, nothing off the
2 top of my head that I can remember; went to sleep -- worked out,
3 went to sleep, and then I was in Friday morning, yeah.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Friday morning for 6:30.

6 Q. All right.

7 A. Worked the day Friday, then went to sleep. Then I was
8 up and came in for startup on Saturday at 4:30.

9 Q. Okay. What hours did you work Friday?

10 A. Friday, 6:30 to 3:30.

11 Q. 6:30 to 3:30, all right. And then you were off or
12 you --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- was it shift work?

15 A. That was -- yeah, I was off. I was clocked out at 3:30
16 and out of here.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So just kind of walk me through Friday evening. What
20 were your plans? What did you do Friday?

21 A. Friday, left here, went straight to the gym. I worked
22 out at the gym and went home. I cooked dinner for the family and
23 went to sleep shortly after, so that was --

24 Q. Okay. What time did you go to sleep, do you know
25 roughly?

1 A. I was asleep by somewhere between 9:30 and 10:00.

2 Q. Okay. And what time did you wake Saturday?

3 A. 3:00, 3:15.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah, 3:00.

6 Q. All right. Those couple days leading up to Friday were
7 your sleep habits the same, were they different?

8 A. Yeah, everything -- yeah.

9 Q. Okay. All right. And you said you were taking care of
10 the family. You're a family person?

11 A. No. Just my parents were at work and my mom just called
12 me up and said, hey --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- you got dinner today. I was like okay, fine.

15 Q. Were there anything unusual in your routine, your
16 personal routine, from Wednesday up to the time of the incident:
17 any stress related activities, any falls, slips or --

18 A. Uh-uh.

19 Q. Okay. What about medications, do you take any regular
20 medications?

21 A. No, just I might take Claritin for allergies, but non-
22 drowsy.

23 Q. Okay. What about workout supplements?

24 A. It honestly depends on my mood. I'm not really
25 consistent with it.

1 Q. No --

2 A. Like post- or pre-workout.

3 Q. -- accelerants or caffeine-type stuff, you know, that --

4 A. Oh, no, no, no, no.

5 Q. -- just to get a workout going. All right.

6 What I want to do is I want to start Saturday morning.
7 You went to sleep Friday night, got up Saturday. Walk me through
8 that period of time to the time you actually got into uniform and
9 got on the vessel.

10 A. I got in my uniform at home. I left my house. I got
11 gas. I put in oil real quick, needed oil change. On the way here
12 I stopped off at Knapp Street and picked up Deckhand Kenny
13 Mitchell because he's on the way, just off the belt.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Got here by 4:15, clocked in, had a coffee -- 7-Eleven,
16 that Kenny picked me up -- and Kate and I walked on the boat.
17 Nobody was on board yet, so we just started our startup. We had a
18 drill that morning, so we started our startup and we did it
19 together, started up top and worked our way down. Startup is just
20 checking all the, you know, the specific lifesaving equipment,
21 make sure the deck's clear, checking spaces to make sure there's
22 nothing, you know, there.

23 Q. Okay. And you said -- you used the term, said, "K and I
24 walked on board." Are you talking about -- that's Kenny's
25 nickname, K?

1 A. No, no, Kate, Kate Mulgrew, the mate.

2 Q. Oh, Kate. Okay, I'm sorry. I heard K and I connected
3 Kenny. All right. Now, so Kate and you walked on and went
4 through these series of startup procedures?

5 A. Yes, check 10.

6 Q. Just in general terms, what were those procedures again?

7 A. You're checking the lifesaving equipment. You're also
8 checking all open spaces and making sure there's nothing there,
9 making sure the area's clean. Then just check and see if there's
10 anything out of the ordinary, really, you know.

11 Q. Did you find anything out of the ordinary?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was check 10, you said?

15 MR. CODLING: Yeah, check 10.

16 MR. BOWLING: Okay.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's a specific list.

18 BY MR. BOWLING:

19 Q. Right. And that check 10, that specific list, comes
20 from what company documents?

21 A. That comes from the SMS manual, I believe, and the Ferry
22 Operating Procedures.

23 Q. All right. So when you completed that checklist, what
24 did you do with the document once you'd completed the checklist?

25 A. The check 10 is actually a laminated sheet --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- that's in the wheelhouse. Once we're done, we come
3 up to the wheelhouse and you sign off in the logbook that you've
4 done it with the time.

5 Q. All right. So you made an entry in the vessel log?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. All right.

8 A. 0500 we both put down.

9 Q. Walk me through the rest of the day leading up to the
10 incident. Anything unusual, anything usual that caught your
11 attention, how was the day?

12 A. Normal standard day, just waiting on the rain to come
13 which, thankfully, did come. That was really it, you know,
14 nothing out of the ordinary. Started off on main deck first trip,
15 moved up to saloon deck next trip, and then I was up in the
16 pilothouse.

17 Q. Working through the cycles on -- the rotation cycles?

18 A. Yes, rotation cycles. We do it trip, trip with this
19 crew.

20 Q. What are the rotation cycles for the mates?

21 A. It varies. It depends on the crew. You know, some guys
22 like to do two trips in each position. Like I said, for us, they
23 like to do one trip per deck, so --

24 Q. Okay. What were you doing on -- what were you doing
25 this past Saturday, what was the preferred --

1 A. I started on main deck.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. So walked through the main deck. So I unhooked -- well,
4 we come around, get on the hooks, reload passengers, unhook, wave
5 off the vessel, patrol the decks, get over to New York, hook up on
6 the New York side. Same process, you know, hook up, un-hook, wave
7 off, back.

8 Once I hooked up on the -- back here on the Staten
9 Island side, Pedro came down and I went up to the saloon deck.
10 And then in the saloon deck you're just overseeing really
11 everything that's going on, making sure everybody's all right,
12 coming on okay, especially with the kids on shoulders. You know,
13 you got to watch that. But it's early morning. It's just regular
14 people going to their jobs back and forth, pretty quiet.

15 So the same thing there and back, just overseeing,
16 watching. And then once we got back to the Staten Island I made
17 my way up to the offshore pilothouse to start up the radars and
18 everything.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. You say offshore pilothouse --

22 A. The New York end.

23 Q. New York end?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. On that Saturday when was the first time you interacted

1 with the master?

2 A. When he walked on board.

3 Q. About what time was that?

4 A. 0500.

5 Q. What was the nature of your interaction with him?

6 A. Hello, how are you? What's going on? I haven't seen
7 you in a little while.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Anything else?

11 A. No.

12 Q. All right. How was that conversation, was it a normal
13 exchange?

14 A. Oh, yeah, normal exchange. Great. You know, I saw him
15 a couple of days before, so most of my time down here working as a
16 deckhand was with him as my AC, so I know him, you know.

17 Q. How long have you known him?

18 A. Since the end of January.

19 Q. Okay. And you've worked with him how long?

20 A. Since the end of January, I think. Just about every
21 boat I was on I usually had him as AC, almost every boat, so --

22 Q. Okay. Now, do you have a -- your friendship, can you
23 categorize that? Is it a work only --

24 A. Work only.

25 Q. -- or getting together after work?

1 A. No, work only right now, yeah.

2 Q. Okay. What about the assistant captain?

3 A. I just met him a couple of weeks ago when I started
4 working with this shift.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah. You know, normal everyday (indiscernible) --

7 Q. Do you recall Saturday your first interaction with him?

8 A. Same thing. They walked on together.

9 Q. Oh, they walked on together?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay. And I asked it with the master, but I'll ask with
12 the assistant captain, did you notice anything unusual with the
13 conversation with him?

14 A. No.

15 Q. All right. So on the trip, the particular trip where we
16 had the accident Saturday, you were in the wheelhouse. What role
17 were you performing in the wheelhouse?

18 A. Just really an extra lookout. I make the radio calls if
19 when we're calling St. George and whatnot. If the guys want me to
20 make the calls for them when we're talking on the vessels I'll
21 help out, but that's usually up to them. You know, they'll ask if
22 they need me to. But I'm just really just extra eyes up there, a
23 set of eyes. You have your regular lookout and then you have
24 your -- this guy.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Walk me through from the point the vessel got
3 underway on the accident journey --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. -- up to the accident in your own words. I want to
6 hear -- I keep hearing Kill Van Kull Buoy. I want to -- I'm not
7 quite sure in my mind what there's -- that buoy's significant to
8 the mariners.

9 A. Oh, yes.

10 Q. It signals slow downs and some other things maybe, I
11 think.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. In your own words just kind of start me out and get me
14 to the end and tell me what happened that day.

15 A. I got up to the offshore (indiscernible) and I leave --
16 Donnie's on the other side. I come over with Maq and a deckhand,
17 and once we're all clear they transfer power. Everything was
18 normal. We made the turn, started heading out. Not really much
19 traffic at all. Nobody really -- nothing in the anchorage. Maybe
20 there's one vessel in the anchorage on the way down, nothing
21 really moving around.

22 Q. Once we were about at the number 1 buoy for the MOT
23 Channel, I called St. George requesting -- letting them know that
24 we were approaching the KV and finding of what slip we were going
25 into. They told us slip number 5. Okay, copy that. Called the

1 engine room, told them to stand by for slip number 5.

2 The deckhand who was on his watch, Keith, he makes his
3 announcement for the crewmembers to stand by for docking. At this
4 place it was just at the KV. Danny is up at the KV. Maq pulled
5 it back to 75 percent and knocked down the RPMs, which is --
6 that's why the KV's significant. The KV's about a quarter-mile
7 away from the racks, so that's when we begin the slowdown process
8 and that's when you start lining up. You start checking the tide
9 and you start figuring out your -- how you're going to make your
10 approach.

11 Just about -- almost immediately after he passed the KV,
12 Donnie said to Maq, "Hey, Maq, don't you think you need to slow
13 down; you're going a little fast." Maq acknowledged him and says
14 yes, slow down. About a boat length and a half away from the rack
15 Donnie -- well, right before a boat length and a half Donnie said
16 Maq, you need to -- he said, "Maq, you're going too fast; you need
17 to sling it back, sling it back."

18 We were about a boat length and a half from the rack
19 when I looked up at that point, and he had it at a 100 percent
20 pitch astern, and at that point the vessel was unresponsive. Maq
21 managed to maneuver the vessel away from the knuckle, because
22 you're actually on the knuckle, and he drove the vessel into the
23 slip. And once we were coming into the slip, Donnie hit the RPMs,
24 floored those to give it some more juice, nothing. Donnie sounded
25 the danger signal and I got on the PA and told everyone -- said

1 everyone, brace, brace, brace, until we hit.

2 Q. What I want to do, I want to narrow down -- you've got
3 me dialed in. I want to pick up from the KV buoy and I'm going to
4 ask you some specific questions here. You mentioned some radio
5 calls.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What exactly is the St. George radio call and the engine
8 room radio call? Can you tell me what you're doing here?

9 A. Did I dial up or what am I doing? Oh. Like before the
10 KV you call St. George to get your slip. What you're doing is
11 you're helping the captain out so he knows what slip he's going
12 to. For example, if we're going into slip number 3, that actually
13 in an epping situation, which we were in, you would actually
14 probably split the KV buoy and the 29, and you'd come up high and
15 you'd come in.

16 So basically once you get the slip number, now the
17 captain knows, all right, what approach he's going to make. You
18 call the engine room so they're standing by, they're ready,
19 they're there in the control room, they're watching everything,
20 you know, ready if, God forbid, anything happens. And you're also
21 helping -- you're letting the deckhand up there that's on watch
22 now so he can call down to the -- make the PA announcement for the
23 deck crew for everyone to standby for docking.

24 At that point once everyone is on station. The mate on
25 the main deck, which was Kate, she calls up and says crew members

1 standing by for docking. And that's -- when she does that I relay
2 to her what slip we're going to, and that's the process.

3 Q. Okay. When you were describing this you also mentioned
4 the deckhand that was -- you said, that you were sharing the
5 lookout duties or --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What in that -- with that particular scenario, what
8 lookout duties do you pick up and what lookout duties do you
9 understand the deckhand to be acting upon?

10 A. Once the -- when the next guy comes up -- once the next
11 guy comes up, he immediately picks up his lookout duties for the
12 final approach. At that point really I'm fully aware of what's
13 going on. He's standing by the PA system to make his
14 announcements for disembarking, and also he makes a -- well, the
15 docking announcement for the passengers for docking safety, and
16 then he makes a disembarking announcement verbally through the
17 sheet or as close to the sheet as possible.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So at that point he's more of facilitating the docking
20 process as far as that is concerned.

21 Q. Okay. From your perspective, do you have the role of
22 lookout or does the deckhand actually have the role of lookout.

23 A. We -- I believe we share the role of lookout.

24 Q. So you share the role?

25 A. Yes. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. You mentioned that the -- you saw the master --
2 you noticed him somewhere around the Kill -- KV buoy a 75
3 percent --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- knockdown?

6 A. That's the assistant captain. He is --

7 Q. Okay. This is the captain?

8 A. Yeah, he's driving on the way to Staten Island.

9 Q. He's driving all the way to Staten Island? Okay. How
10 did you -- did you see that? Did you notice the gauge?

11 A. See it and hear it.

12 Q. Okay. Now, do you have time under someone's guidance
13 operating the boat?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. So you would know -- if I had a position to 60
16 percent and 80 percent you would know the difference?

17 A. Yeah. Well, it's when you're shifting through --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Yes, you can hear it. You can hear the vessel.

20 Q. Is it the tense you hear or the RPMs or --

21 A. You would hear the RPMs and the Voith system. The boat
22 will actually kind of vibrate and --

23 Q. You'll get a vibration?

24 A. Yeah, depending which way you're going, yeah.

25 Q. Okay. Now, from the KV buoy to the actual time of

1 impact, what was going on with the bridge team up there? Just
2 walk me through the communications you -- when you were telling me
3 the story, you mentioned you heard some exchanges between the
4 alternate captain or the assistant captain and the master or the
5 captain. What were you hearing there?

6 A. Donnie was just telling him to "slow down, slow down,
7 what are you" -- you know, "do you have it back?"

8 "Yes, I have it back."

9 "Slow down, slow down, slow down. Knock it back."

10 "I have it 100 percent. It's not responding."

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Then that was -- you know, that's really it.

13 Q. Okay. Were you --

14 A. And the -- yeah, that was really it, that was really it.

15 Q. No, go ahead.

16 A. No. I'm just -- yeah, that was really it.

17 Q. Were you interacting with either the assistant captain
18 or the master at all?

19 A. No, at that point I did not put in my two cents. You
20 know, I'm letting them handle it. I'm just watching them --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- you know, to see what they do.

23 Q. All right. Responsibility for making emergency
24 announcements, does that fall upon your position or the lookout
25 position?

1 A. To be honest, I'm not really sure.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I just did it, just reaction.

4 Q. And that's fine.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. It was just reaction?

7 A. Yeah, it was just --

8 Q. Okay. At what point did that reaction -- in your mind
9 did that reaction occur? Was it inevitable you were going to --
10 the ferry was going to strike the dock?

11 A. No, it wasn't inevitable. Just -- the boat can stop at
12 425 feet from full -- you know, full sea speed, so I was hoping
13 for a -- we were going to be backing right before we, you know,
14 touched the racks. And once -- I would say once we were about
15 halfway in, that's when we were, you know, danger signal and
16 everything. At that point I knew we weren't -- no way we were
17 going to do this safely.

18 Q. Okay. Immediately after the crash --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- and when I say immediately I'm referring to as soon
21 as impact, walk me through what happened there on the bridge from
22 that point to the next five minutes.

23 A. Crash. "Is everyone okay? Is everyone okay? Donnie,
24 you okay?"

25 "Got it."

1 And I -- after everything was okay I asked him, I was
2 like, "Donnie, is it okay if I go down? I want to make sure we
3 got everybody." So he said yes. He said let me know.

4 So I immediately went down, and I knew Kate and Tuan
5 Cassim were on the main deck, so -- and just the passengers.
6 That's why I immediately went down to assess if we had any
7 casualties. And after, you know, I found Kate and we found Tuan,
8 I went back up, gave Pedro the first-aid kit, and then I went back
9 up to talk to Donnie, see if there was anything else he wanted me
10 to do. As third mate -- well, as mate number 3, you're
11 actually -- your duty is to report to the pilothouse, so -- and
12 you basically assist as directed, so --

13 Q. Okay. And Pedro is who?

14 A. Pedro, he's a mate, mate number 1 for the day.

15 Q. Okay. And then so Kate was mate number 2?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. All right. What were the -- what were the instructions
18 were coming from the master?

19 A. The instructions were, you know, make sure everyone's
20 okay, help FDNY and NYPD as far as -- and EMS as far as taking
21 care of any injured passengers. Next, for me, the -- he was, you
22 know, just trying to figure out a way -- once I explained to him
23 how we were sitting in the slip, trying to find a way to get
24 everyone off, can we safely get everyone off without --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And that was really it. He made his calls that he
2 needed to make and we kind of just -- we made sure lines were out,
3 which the guys were great about. The lines were immediately put
4 out, you know, once I got up -- you know, minutes. You know, two
5 minutes maybe I was down there, the lines were already up. So
6 that was really it.

7 Q. Okay. When you departed the wheelhouse --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- to make the assessment, you said you had to make
10 sure you had everybody.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Who were you looking for?

13 A. The first thing is I got on the radio immediately and
14 started calling Kate and getting her to answer me, see if she
15 would answer, and she answered. Next, Kate informed me that she
16 couldn't get in touch with Tuan, and the last time she saw him he
17 was outside. So we had a little scare there trying to find him
18 because he wasn't answering his radio. He finally answered.

19 Next, was any passenger outside? Just -- or, you know,
20 the woman and her kid that Kate brought in. Went to the saloon
21 deck, anybody outside or anybody fall over? Nothing. One of the
22 police officers on board -- I don't know his name -- he was on the
23 offshore end coming in from outside, so I ran back. "Did you see
24 anybody in the water?" Nothing. "Okay, cool."

25 I went back up. Anybody seriously injured? Anybody --

1 you know, anybody dead, broken, near death, you know? Nothing,
2 nothing, so --

3 Q. What are the company's passenger accountability
4 procedures or are there company procedures for -- that you're
5 aware of?

6 A. As far as what, as passenger count?

7 Q. For a crisis situation like this, abandon ship.

8 A. I mean, yeah, I think there basically is, you know, just
9 your normal crowd control and assessing the situation. You know,
10 the mate number 1 usually is the on scene leader and he assesses
11 the situation. So when I -- as soon as I got to Pedro, you know,
12 I went to him and asked him is there anything -- anybody missing,
13 you know, so he -- that is the initial, as far as passenger
14 assessment. If there was a man overboard, whoever saw the person
15 go overboard, he's -- you know, standard procedure, you're the guy
16 keeping -- you stay there and keep your eye on the person in the
17 water, so --

18 Q. So is it a visual system or is there -- are we
19 counting -- we're counting personnel as they come onto the ship?

20 A. As a visual system, and if we want an actual passenger
21 count, the terminal has a passenger count, which we found out as
22 soon as we could from Whitehall, and then you go from there, you
23 know, just to make sure we have everybody.

24 Q. Whitehall is on the other -- the New York side?

25 A. Yeah, the New York end, yes.

1 Q. Okay. So when you say, we found out through Whitehall,
2 walk me through that. How did you assure that all passengers were
3 accounted for?

4 A. That's just -- you know, it really is as they're leaving
5 -- I wasn't really involved with the actual passenger count as
6 everyone was getting off the boat. I think we were more worried
7 about how many were injured. They wanted to know how many people
8 were on the boat and how many were injured. That was the -- those
9 were the main numbers.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And we have the injured and we had called Whitehall and
12 they gave us the master count, which was 286 or about.

13 Q. What were the number of injuries you submitted to
14 Whitehall?

15 A. Initially we had 12.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. There are various reports elsewhere, but we had 12
18 initially.

19 Q. Okay. Again, if you don't know the answer --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- you don't know the answer. I wanted to explore this
22 confirmation on passenger accountability with regard to were there
23 any confirmations made that the number of passengers reported to
24 Whitehall were accounted for on the vessel at either --

25 A. I'm not sure.

1 Q. No?

2 A. No, not sure.

3 Q. Okay. Who would be the person that I would ask that
4 question to?

5 A. Not really sure on that either. I mean at this point
6 I'm not sure who would have gotten the call saying yes, we have
7 everybody accounted for. That's -- I guess that -- in reality
8 that would be somewhere between EMS and us, you know.

9 Q. Well, you mentioned Pedro. You said you went to Pedro.

10 A. Yes. That was just -- that was an initial -- like the
11 visual initial look for did anybody go overboard, did we lose
12 anybody.

13 Q. So from a visual standpoint --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- that's what he was --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. All right. Are you aware of any established
18 procedures that basically have directions to any of the three
19 mates on passenger accountability?

20 A. Besides like the on-scene -- besides the on-scene
21 leader?

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Besides that, not that I am aware of.

24 Q. Okay. So walk me through the EMS portion where you
25 started -- the shore-side emergency medical services teams started

1 showing up. What were you doing during those events?

2 A. After they were on -- after I gave the first-aid kit to
3 Pedro I was trying to figure out a way to get everyone off, so
4 went down on the main deck first. You know, we were trying
5 anything. I brought out the gangway ladder that we hook up to our
6 gangway. That wasn't high enough. We thought about just seeing
7 if somehow the people that could walk off, getting them off by
8 letting them walk on the trashcans from the salt bin. That didn't
9 work. And then I went down with Tuan to the engine room because
10 they had a ladder, and by the time we got up with that ladder they
11 were already had the gangway, had everyone -- solved the problem,
12 from the dock side on board.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And then once we did that we just told everybody that
15 can walk off under their own power to walk off. Once that process
16 started moving I went back up to the wheelhouse.

17 Q. Okay. What was going on in the wheelhouse when you went
18 back up?

19 A. Just calls were being made. At that point there were
20 already NYPD up there and the Coast Guard, the Harbor Police.
21 Everybody was up there already asking questions, you know, wanting
22 to know who was in our team, about house team names, you know, DOT
23 numbers, whatever else they wanted. But yeah, all the calls were
24 being made at that point.

25 Q. And were you involved in any of the first responder

1 functions on the vessel? In other words, did you provide any
2 triage to any of the patients or --

3 A. No. I gave the first-aid kit to Pedro and let him know
4 we had one woman that was bleeding right there on the bridge deck,
5 so I ran up and got the first-aid kit. And then we had the woman
6 that was on the deck that was hurt. I'm not really sure what
7 ended up being wrong with her, but that was really the main
8 injuries. You know, at that point I was kind of trying to figure
9 out if there was anything really, you know, life threatening at
10 that point, you know.

11 Q. Do you have first-aid/CPR training?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Are you current?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. I've asked a lot of questions about the scenario,
16 and at the end of the interview we'll ask you, hey, have we've
17 missed anything, but strictly related to the scenario, say the KV
18 buoy up to the time of impact, anything else that's coming to your
19 mind as we're kind of drawing this back out of you that you want
20 to --

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay.

23 MR. BOWLING: Jon, I think that will wrap it up for me.
24 I'll turn it over to you.

25 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

1 Q. Okay. It's Jon Furukawa, NTSB. So, Dean, you're mate
2 number 3?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- or you were --

5 A. Yeah, I'm mate number 3.

6 Q. And the mates are -- is that by seniority?

7 A. Yeah, so that can be by seniority for the most part.

8 Q. Okay. Because you and Kate are classmates?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I guess she got hired a little earlier?

11 A. Yeah. She got hired back in August.

12 Q. Okay. You mentioned about a knuckle.

13 A. Oh, the knuckle is the -- basically they just call it
14 the point of the racks. We call it the knuckle. That's what it
15 is.

16 Q. And the racks are the piers?

17 A. The -- yeah.

18 Q. Okay. And how shallow are the knuckles?

19 A. I'm not sure of the exact depth. I know we're in deep
20 water until just right there before I reach the knuckle. That's
21 shallow, so --

22 Q. Okay. Let's see, for the lookout duties, you're saying
23 that the mate and the deckhand that's lookout, you both share
24 lookout duties. Do you have assigned areas?

25 A. I think it just goes whichever side you sit on really,

1 you know, and you're kind of -- you're looking -- you're really
2 looking at everything. You know, like you're not just going to
3 say this is my half and this is your half, you know. You're
4 looking all around just in case I miss something, he misses
5 something, you know, backing each other up along with the person
6 who's actually -- you know, everyone else that's up there,
7 everybody --

8 Q. But you do kind of have -- let's see, the lookout was on
9 the --

10 A. On the --

11 Q. -- the Jersey side?

12 A. Yes, and I was on the Brooklyn side.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So yes, I'm paying more attention to my -- the Brooklyn
15 side to make sure I catch anything first, but I'm also checking
16 his side to make sure he didn't miss anything.

17 Q. Okay. And going through the approach to the racks and
18 going into the racks and all that, did you feel any vibration, any
19 change of speed or --

20 A. No. There was -- the speed never changed. There was
21 no -- you know, it didn't respond. Usually at that point
22 you're -- you know, it would vibrate a lot if we were getting any
23 sort of response, but --

24 Q. So you would have noticed?

25 A. Oh, yes.

1 Q. Okay. And how many New York Police Department officers
2 were on --

3 A. Two.

4 Q. -- the ferry? Two. And do you know where their
5 stations are?

6 A. Not sure, they can anywhere on the boat. I'm not sure
7 exactly what their exact locations were at the time. They patrol
8 the vessel.

9 Q. And do you keep in touch with them by communications or
10 radio or --

11 A. We keep in touch with them through the PA system and by,
12 you know, the deckhand that's near them, yes.

13 Q. So you can always get a hold of them?

14 A. Yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay. And who rigged up the gangway?

16 A. Oh, in the aftermath?

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. I am not sure. When I got outside it was there and I
19 was, okay, great. So I'm sure it was with a combination of
20 everyone that was there, from, you know, our crew riggers to NYPD,
21 FDNY.

22 Q. Thank you.

23 MR. FURUKAWA: And, go ahead.

24 BY CWO GILLETTE:

25 Q. Yes. This is Chief Warrant Office Jim Gillette. Hello,

1 Dean, how are you?

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. Just going back on the KV buoy, when you hit the KV
4 buoy. You said you made the announcements prior?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What's the -- when you got to the KV buoy where was the
7 physical location of all the other individuals?

8 A. The AC deckhand is --

9 Q. Can you tell me where it is?

10 A. Oh, sorry. The AC is at the helm of the boat, at the
11 wheel.

12 Q. So at the KV buoy the AC was at the helm?

13 A. Yeah. I am standing next to the Brooklyn side radar.
14 Donnie is standing to my --

15 Q. Who is Donnie?

16 A. The captain. The captain is standing to my right, a
17 little bit behind me. And the deckhand is -- he's -- I believe
18 they were at that point right at the -- just about right at the
19 KV. They were actually switching, or I can't really recall if
20 Danny was actually up there or it was a little before or after,
21 you know, or right there at the KV, whether he was.

22 Q. Say that again.

23 A. I can't really recall if at the KV if they were in the
24 process of switching or if Danny was actually standing like right
25 there next to his --

1 Q. Danny is the --

2 A. Is the deckhand.

3 Q. Deckhand. Okay. Prior to the KV buoy was the captain
4 sitting down or --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Yes?

7 A. We were all sitting, correct.

8 Q. You were all sitting? Where were you guys sitting prior
9 to the --

10 A. Pretty much the same locations that we were standing for
11 the most part.

12 Q. There's a bench seat there?

13 A. Yes. There's a settee and then there's a, like a stool.
14 On my side where I'm sitting there's a stool for the deckhand and
15 there's a stool for the person operating the helm.

16 Q. Okay. But at the KV buoy --

17 A. Yeah, everyone was standing.

18 Q. -- everyone was standing up?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And you were saying -- at the KV buoy, was it, where the
21 captain said that --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- we need to slow down?

24 A. Yeah, immediately. He said it's pretty rough, chief.
25 Tell Maq he can slow down.

1 Q. Did he or yourself -- did yourself notice the speed
2 other than -- I know you keep saying vibration.

3 A. No, I didn't notice.

4 Q. Did you use any of your meters or indicators up there --

5 A. I didn't notice --

6 Q. -- that gave speed?

7 A. I'm not sure if he did. I know I didn't actually look
8 at the speed.

9 Q. You didn't?

10 A. Yeah, no.

11 Q. When he -- when the captain had told the AC to slow
12 down --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- what was his response?

15 A. He said yes, I'm backing.

16 Q. Okay. And did he physically pull both handles back?

17 A. I'm not sure.

18 Q. Is that what you mean by backing?

19 A. Yeah. Yeah. If he's backing he's got both handles
20 back, but I'm not --

21 Q. Which handles are those?

22 A. For the Voith system, the pitch.

23 Q. For the pitch?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. So did you see him pull them back?

1 A. No, I wasn't actually looking up at him at that point,
2 no.

3 Q. Okay. Now, you mentioned something about 75 percent,
4 though.

5 A. Yeah. That was at the KV. We were back 75 percent.

6 Q. So you did see him --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- at the KV pull it back to 75 percent?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. There's indicators for those throttles, correct,
11 for those pitches, pitch controls?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Is there --

14 A. Yeah. I could not see them from exactly where I was
15 standing or I didn't, you know --

16 Q. Was there any communications about the pitch indicator
17 being different from the handles?

18 A. No, not at all.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Once we had them at 100 percent back, you know, I mean
21 Maq just said everything's back.

22 Q. And Maq is the --

23 A. The AC.

24 Q. -- AC?

25 A. Yeah, he's the AC and he said that everything is back,

1 so yeah.

2 Q. Okay. So you were at 75 on the KV?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. The captain had asked him to bring it back, we're going
5 too fast?

6 A. Um-hum, yeah. Like I said, I'm not sure what he brought
7 it back to.

8 Q. Did you actually see him physically move the handles,
9 though?

10 A. No. I was looking at the -- I was turning off the AIS
11 at that point.

12 Q. You were turning off the AIS?

13 A. Yeah. I looked up when the -- once he raised his voice
14 and told him you need to slow down.

15 Q. Okay. Did he say anything, hey, I did bring them back,
16 or any conversation about saying that he did bring them back?

17 A. No, I don't recall. I'm not sure.

18 Q. Okay. And then do you remember when that -- when he
19 told him to bring it back? Were you guys in the slip yet?

20 A. Oh, no. This was all outside of the slip, yeah.

21 Q. About how far?

22 A. What are you talking about, like as far as all the way
23 back like when he raised his voice, or just the initial?

24 Q. How about the initial.

25 A. The initial was right after the KV --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- so as we were -- you know, maybe a boat length past
3 the KV. The next was when I looked up -- when we were 100 percent
4 back. I believe we were approximately like a boat length and a
5 half.

6 Q. How do you know you were 100 percent back?

7 A. That's when I looked up.

8 Q. You did?

9 A. Yeah. When he raised his voice I was okay, something
10 must be --

11 Q. Now 100 percent back, does that mean zero or does that
12 mean all astern?

13 A. All astern, all astern, yeah.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. All astern.

16 Q. And where was that at?

17 A. About a boat length and a half or so when I looked up.
18 We were still outside the racks when I looked up.

19 Q. So about a boat and a half before the rack?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. That's when you got -- that's when you mentioned about
22 the knuckle?

23 A. Yes. Yeah.

24 Q. That's when you said you guys were afraid to go, you
25 were going to go into the --

1 A. Yeah. He backed it up. That AC did a good job and
2 steered it clear.

3 Q. Into the slip?

4 A. Yeah, into the slip.

5 Q. Now, you said something about the throttles.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And the throttles are different from the pitch?

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. You said something about the mate, oh, I'm sorry the
10 captain --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- messing with the throttles and giving it all --

13 A. Yeah. He -- once we were -- right before we entered the
14 slip, the last ditch effort is to, you know, floor the RPMs to get
15 some juice out of it because at that point, you know, we're not
16 really sure if it's just not catching because -- you know, for
17 whatever reason, it needs more juice because they wasn't at, so --

18 Q. So he raised the throttle --

19 A. Yeah. He practically -- he floored it.

20 Q. Okay. Is there an RPM --

21 A. Gauge right there, yes.

22 Q. All right. Were you able to see the RPM gauge?

23 A. When I looked -- when he floored it I saw it somewhere
24 in the 900s, getting chronic.

25 Q. Do you know --

1 A. How high it goes?

2 Q. -- how high they go? Did you see them at 900?

3 A. Yes, 900 pitch.

4 Q. Were all -- there's four of them, right?

5 A. Yes. Yeah, the numbers --

6 Q. Could you see all four of them?

7 A. Yeah. The numbers were going up, so --

8 Q. And that -- like you said, that was right before going
9 into the slip?

10 A. Yeah, right before -- right at the edge of the slip.

11 Q. Was there any attempt to make communications with the
12 engine room?

13 A. Negative.

14 Q. None? Okay. And, once again, you didn't -- I know you
15 recognized it was going fast and I know that --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- everything was looking fast as you guys were looking
18 up there. At no time did you notice the speed --

19 A. No. I didn't actually look at the speed, yeah.

20 Q. -- the actual speed? Okay.

21 A. I will say that we did call the engine room as soon as,
22 you know, obviously, as soon as we hit. That was the first place
23 we called.

24 Q. After you hit.

25 A. Yeah, to make sure.

1 Q. Do you do training up on the bridge?

2 A. As far as?

3 Q. As far as casualty controls?

4 A. Like bridge --

5 Q. As part of your safety management --

6 A. Bridge resource management?

7 Q. Well, as far as, let's say, do you do drills like loss
8 of power --

9 A. Oh, yes.

10 Q. -- loss of engine power?

11 A. Yes, yes.

12 Q. Loss of steering?

13 A. Loss of steering, loss of -- yeah.

14 Q. Stuff like that?

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. You guys do that? Do you know when the last time you've
17 done it? Let's say -- no idea?

18 A. Uh-uh.

19 Q. Like loss of steering or --

20 A. No. I'm not sure of the last time. I know -- well, the
21 last time I did it that I know for sure -- yeah, not on that
22 class. It was on the Noble class, so -- and that was, say, two
23 weeks prior.

24 Q. If you had loss of -- and had no control, is that what
25 it was?

1 A. Yeah, no response.

2 Q. As far as your safety management, what would you
3 classify that under, that casualty?

4 A. That's loss of propulsion.

5 Q. Loss of propulsion?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And you don't when the last time you've had that
8 training?

9 A. Yeah. I'm not sure. I'm not completely sure.

10 Q. But that's all recorded, though, right?

11 A. Yeah, that's all, yeah, recordable, yeah. It's all
12 logged.

13 Q. So that's something --

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. -- to look at. Okay. So just to make sure I got that,
16 right before you guys went into the slip is when they went all
17 astern. The AC maneuvered you guys into the slip so you wouldn't
18 hit the knuckle.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You went in the -- right before you got in the slip the
21 captain had put the throttles up just to make sure that you guys
22 have -- you said, so it was in gear --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- so you guys could maneuver, and then you guys hit.
25 Okay. All right. Thank you.

1 MR. BOWLING: Well, we're almost through here, Aldean.
2 We're going to cycle through and we'll get you out of here quick.

3 MR. CODLING: Yeah.

4 MR. BOWLING: Bear with us.

5 BY MR. ORAVETS:

6 Q. Dave Oravets, Staten Island Ferry. Dean, how many trips
7 during your watch do you make going back and forth from St. George
8 to Whitehall and back again?

9 A. On a Saturday we make seven trips.

10 Q. Seven trips?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So that's basically 14 times back and forth?

13 A. Yes, back and forth, yes.

14 Q. Typical speed, have you ever noticed about how fast the
15 boat --

16 A. With the -- thing we're moving about 15 knots.

17 Q. Fifteen knots. All right. And you talked about this
18 process of signing off to take on the duties of the mate.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you recall that form that --

21 A. Form 17.

22 Q. Form 17. Okay. Thank you.

23 BY MR. WALSH:

24 Q. Brian Walsh from Staten Island Ferry. As far as the
25 Form 17 you just spoke to, the Training Authorization Form, when

1 you complete your signoff on each of the vessels --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- what is the -- is there a verification process, do
4 you speak with somebody or are you assigned to a vessel?

5 A. Once you're signed off, you deal with Frank Rhoda (ph.)
6 and Frank Rhoda -- you know, and you -- I met with Dave when Dave
7 was in the port office and he, you know, he talked with us. And
8 also with SMS, Mr. Walsh, he is the last signature to make sure
9 that we go, or we've gone over everything. So they send -- once
10 we go up to personnel, to Frank Rhoda, they sent us to Brian Walsh
11 in his trailer, the safety trailer, to get the final signatures to
12 make sure we are comfortable.

13 Q. Just a few questions about the event. At the KV buoy
14 when the assistant captain reduced the pitch and reduced RPMs, was
15 there any indication through water holes or some visuals that
16 indicated the speed was actually being reduced?

17 A. If, yeah, I remember correctly, the speed actually -- we
18 did slow down at the initial pullback. You can hear the RPMs and
19 the vessel, you know --

20 Q. How about as the vessel entered the rack --

21 A. Nothing.

22 Q. -- was there was any indications?

23 A. No, nothing.

24 Q. At any time between when the captain backed down and you
25 said there was indications and the vessel entered the slip, was

1 there any other change of speed, in acceleration or reduction of
2 speed?

3 A. No. I think that whatever speed we were at at that
4 point, you know, if we slowed at all it was just by, sure, you
5 know, advance and transfer, you know, the vessel was going down
6 south.

7 Q. Thank you.

8 BY MR. BOWLING:

9 Q. Okay. I want to get -- and this will be the last round
10 we'll go through. You're doing great. As we've gone around the
11 table and asked questions, the -- we've asked you to tell us what
12 you saw with a lot of control, the master and the alternate or the
13 assistant captain controls and so forth. I want to get your
14 perspective on the speed. From the KV buoy, you said 15 knots.
15 What are you basing that on?

16 A. I was basing it off of the fact that we had an ebb, and
17 just the normal speeds, you know, from past experiences looking up
18 when we're going with the tide what speed we're at. So on the
19 average, say, 15 knots, you know. And once we pull it back that's
20 somewhere between 7 and 10.

21 Q. Okay. And when you say once you pull it back --

22 A. Once you pull it back at the KV, the 75 percent.

23 Q. To start reducing the vessel?

24 A. Yeah, and also back the RPMs, you know.

25 Q. On a normal approach when you're passing a KV what would

1 you in your estimate -- again, I realize you're the mate.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. But what would you estimate the speeds to be?

4 A. Seven to 10 knots. And then you pull, there you will
5 pull back again. You will -- you can -- multiple ways of doing
6 it, but you'll zero one foot, one hitch, and you'll keep the other
7 one operating and you'll slow down to about five knots or a little
8 bit slower coming into the slip, and once you're in the slip
9 you're -- really just you're gauging it by, you know, sight and
10 speed and you slow down accordingly until you're there, you're
11 home.

12 Q. All right. So -- and, again, I am not trying to put
13 words in your mouth.

14 A. Oh, yeah.

15 Q. You correct me where I'm wrong. I understood from
16 earlier testimony you said 15 knots.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Generally speaking, an average speed.

19 A. With the tide.

20 Q. With the tide. And then the KV buoy, your first
21 pullback --

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. -- I think you said 7 to 10, right?

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. And then once you're closer into getting into the

1 notch --

2 A. Yeah, halfway between the KV and the rack.

3 Q. Okay. Your third pullback --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- to five knots?

6 A. Yeah, five knots or slower.

7 Q. And then, of course, the rest of it is just finesse
8 approach to the rack?

9 A. Yeah, finesse, yeah.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Constantly -- you know, continually slowing the entire
12 process, yeah.

13 Q. Okay. That particular run with these speeds you've
14 talked about, was there any -- where did you first start feeling
15 uncomfortable, that things were not operating normally with either
16 the vessel or within the wheelhouse? When did you first start
17 being concerned yourself?

18 A. When we were 100 percent pitch astern and there was no
19 response.

20 Q. All right. And within the sequences of these speed
21 reductions, what area did that fall in?

22 A. What do you mean?

23 Q. In other words, when they went -- when you noticed they
24 were back at 100 percent, what would have been the normal hull
25 speed at that time?

1 A. At that point we would have been somewhere just about
2 five knots.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. If we were going normal speed, everything was smooth and
5 calm, that would be the normal area where the AC, or captain if it
6 was going the other way, or whoever was driving, would have pulled
7 it back to slow down a little bit more.

8 Q. But the hull speed was not at five knots?

9 A. Yeah. I'd say it's somewhere between five and seven
10 knots we were going. You know, once you're -- when you have no --
11 it's just -- I don't know if you've ever driven a stick. When you
12 take your car out of gear when you're driving a stick and it kind
13 of -- there's nothing going and you just -- it felt like that.

14 Q. Okay. All right. How many prior crossings have you
15 made with this bridge team, not necessarily the lookout, but just
16 the master and the assistant captain?

17 A. Together?

18 Q. Together.

19 A. This is the first one I've worked with them together.

20 Q. Together.

21 A. I've worked with them, like I said, separate many times,
22 especially -- well, more so with the captain.

23 Q. Okay. And you say -- how many times have you worked
24 previously with the master since you've completed the training
25 process?

1 A. There was -- I worked 4 -- a total of 6 weeks, say, with
2 him. So that's about 24 days with him, and he was in the
3 assistant captain's position at that time. This is my first time
4 working with him as captain.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So as far as him knowing the approach, yes. He's done
7 it, you know, millions of times, especially the Staten Island
8 side.

9 Q. Okay. Did -- do you recall any crew briefs that morning
10 held by either the master or the assistant captain?

11 A. Oh, we had a drill. Yes, we had a drill that morning.

12 Q. What drill did you perform?

13 A. We did a fire drill. That was a fire drill in the
14 camera room.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And we also had a -- the abandon ship. The abandon
17 ship, we discussed it, and we had the crew go down and check the
18 boat just to make sure everything was in there, if there was
19 anything we need to write up.

20 Q. What time were those drills performed?

21 A. The drill started at 5:15 or so, 5:30.

22 Q. Okay. Aldean, I don't have any more questions.

23 MR. BOWLING: Jon?

24 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

25 Q. Yes. Aldean?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. What's a good contact for your phone number?

3 A. [REDACTED]

4 Q. [REDACTED] And your hometown?

5 A. Westbury, W-E-S-T-B-U-R-Y.

6 Q. Okay, that's New York.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. So you said initially that the KV buoy, the first
9 pullback, when you first -- you could feel that one?

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. -- that it slowed? Okay. Oh, and when you were coming
12 into the racks, prior to coming into the racks you turn off the
13 AIS?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. Is that standard procedure?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You don't just keep it on?

18 A. No. You put it in its silent mode as we're coming in.
19 That's pretty standard.

20 Q. Okay. And for standard terminology, the racks are
21 the -- like the piers, right?

22 A. Yeah, the piers, yeah.

23 Q. And the slip is the --

24 A. Well, the entrance, the water, you know.

25 Q. Okay. And the bridge is the -- from shore side?

1 A. Yeah, the lower level.

2 Q. Okay. And what's the --

3 A. The other --

4 Q. -- part where the --

5 A. The aprons yeah.

6 Q. Right, but where the ferry comes into, where she rests?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you asking the witness, or --

8 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

9 Q. Oh, I'm sorry, yes.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Where the ferry comes into?

12 A. So we come into the slip and we come up to the bridge
13 and we are in the -- those are also called knuckles. The line,
14 called -- toggles. The toggles go down onto the boat and then the
15 hooks come --

16 Q. Okay. And where the ferry -- where the Staten Island
17 end is --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- against the --

20 A. Bridge.

21 Q. -- you know, the apron --

22 A. Oh.

23 Q. -- is there like a -- is it form-fitted or --

24 A. Yes. Well, I mean the vessels are different. They vary
25 in size, but it's made, let's say, in the shape of a U where we

1 come into.

2 Q. Is there a term for that, that you --

3 A. I'm not sure. And there's also an indicator that lines
4 us up at the center. There's an indicator on the bridge, in the
5 center of the bridge, and there's one on the boat, and the captain
6 or whoever's operating the vessel uses that to line us up. It
7 tells them they're in the center of the slip.

8 Q. It's kind of like a range or --

9 A. Yeah. I guess you could liken it to a range, yeah.
10 It's just a -- for us, the yellow line or a black line just right
11 in the center of the boat and the one right in the center of the
12 bridge.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So that's how they know when they're centered up.

15 Q. Okay. You said the last drill you had was two weeks
16 prior on the Noble class. Was that --

17 A. That's as far as to my recollection of the steering
18 drill.

19 Q. The steering?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. We have drills every week, so --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, get fire-on-boat drill every week and --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- something special.

2 Q. And you mentioned Frank Rhoda. What's his position?

3 A. He's one of the -- I guess, the crew managers would be
4 his correct title. I'm not sure on his exact title, but one of
5 the guys in personnel, yeah.

6 Q. Okay. And -- let's see, we were talking about speeds
7 with the tide, with an ebb tide. Do you know what the speeds are
8 at flood tide?

9 A. Going against it, it's about -- I've seen 12 -- 11, 12
10 knots, you know, depending on the strength of the tide.

11 Q. Okay. Okay. So like 3, 4 knots less?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

14 MR. BOWLING: Coast Guard?

15 CWO GILLETTE: I have no further questions.

16 BY MR. ORAVETS:

17 Q. New York City DOT. Dean, you mentioned the boat can
18 stop within 25 feet.

19 A. 425 feet.

20 Q. 425 feet.

21 A. Yeah. For a full head crash stop it's 425 feet, so a
22 little bit -- you know, say about 100 feet over the boat length of
23 the boat, the boat length and a little bit, one and a half?

24 A. Yeah, just about.

25 Q. All right. That's all. Thanks.

1 BY MR. WALSH:

2 Q. Brian Walsh, Staten Island Ferry. You said you were up
3 in the pilothouse in the capacity of a secondary or assistant
4 lookout. Was there any person with the primary role as lookout?

5 A. Again, in reality I guess that would be the deckhand.
6 The deckhand, he's -- when he comes up to stand his watch he's
7 standing the lookout watch. You know, we're really extra eyes in
8 the wheelhouse.

9 Q. Okay, that's all.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 BY MR. BOWLING:

13 Q. All right. What I normally do before I close out my
14 interviews, I'd like to ask the interviewee do you have any
15 questions for us that we could answer for you? Do you have any
16 concerns, questions, about the interview process or anything like
17 that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. What about -- we've hit you very good with the
20 questions, a lot of questions. We've been here almost an hour and
21 a half now. But have we missed anything? Is there anything you
22 want to convey to us that we should hear that we may have failed
23 to ask you?

24 A. Nope.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Just I think everyone did what they were supposed to do
2 and they did a good job. Donnie reacted in the way he was
3 supposed to and so did Maq and they did everything they could,
4 so --

5 Q. Okay. Well, thank you for your time. We'll close the
6 interview out and --

7 (Whereupon, at 11:08 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ANDREW J. BARBERI
 STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK
 Interview of Aldean Codling

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MM-017

PLACE: Staten Island, New York

DATE: May 10, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

Cheryl Phipps
Transcriber