

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FIRE ON BOARD THE *ISLAND LADY*
PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA
JANUARY 14, 2018

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA18FM010

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Interview of: CWO4 [REDACTED]
Marine Inspector

U.S. Coast Guard Facilities
Tampa, Florida

Tuesday,
May 1, 2018

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN YOUNG, Senior Marine Engineer
National Transportation Safety Board

NANCY McATEE, Fire and Explosion Specialist
National Transportation Safety Board

[REDACTED], Investigating Officer
U.S. Coast Guard (Civilian)

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of CWO4 [REDACTED] :

By Mr. Young

4

I N T E R V I E W

(2:41 p.m.)

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3 MR. YOUNG: Recorder is on and recording. Okay. Good
4 afternoon. This is Brian Young with the NTSB. It's May 1st,
5 2018, at 2:41 in the afternoon. We're in Tampa at the United
6 States Coast Guard. With me today is Nancy McAtee from NTSB;
7 [REDACTED], the IO of the *Island Lady* investigation, and we're
8 interviewing CWO4 [REDACTED]

9 MR. [REDACTED]: You got it.

10 MR. YOUNG: [REDACTED]

11 INTERVIEW OF CWO4 [REDACTED]

12 BY MR. YOUNG:

13 Q. Thank you for coming in today for the interview and joining
14 us and answering our questions.

15 If we could just please start with your Coast Guard
16 experience. Just tell us when you started the Coast Guard, what
17 positions you've held, and how you progressed on to where you are
18 today.

19 A. Came into the Coast Guard in August of 1990. Prior to that I
20 worked for 6 years in the small passenger vessel fleet. I have a
21 100-ton master's license prior to the Coast Guard. And then when
22 I entered the Coast Guard, I was a bosun mate. Enlisted, went
23 through boot camp, Cape May; seaman, bosun mate, up to chief
24 bosun, mostly on small boat station, Coast Guard tug,
25 (indiscernible) training team; Coast Guard Cutter *Dallas* and Coast

1 Guard Cutter *Marlin*. I came over to the marine inspection field
2 in '02 at MSO Miami at the time, now Sector Miami. So I've been
3 with the Coast Guard for 28, going on 28 years.

4 Q. And currently what is your position here at --

5 A. I'm a senior marine inspector with Coast Guard Tampa, Sector
6 St. Petersburg.

7 Q. And how long have you been an inspector?

8 A. As a marine inspector, since '07. Prior to that I was a port
9 state control officer doing foreign vessel inspections. And now I
10 do the U.S. flag, mostly small passenger vessels.

11 Q. So do you have your T-boat qualifications?

12 A. I do.

13 Q. And how long have you had those quals?

14 A. T-boat since, I believe since '07, '07/'08 time frame. I can
15 look at the letter and get the exact date if you need it.

16 Q. So, more than 10 years or so?

17 A. More than 10 years, yes.

18 Q. And can you estimate about how many T-boats you have
19 inspected in those 10 or so year -- ballpark.

20 A. Thousands.

21 Q. Thousands. Okay.

22 A. Yeah. That's about right.

23 Q. Okay. Have you ever been the lead inspector on a T-boat
24 inspection?

25 A. I have.

1 Q. And, again, is it several times or --

2 A. On most of those exams, yes. Ever since I received my
3 initial qualification, I've been a lead inspector on T-boats and K
4 vessels.

5 Q. Okay. And in your career, how many times have you been
6 aboard the *Island Lady*?

7 A. Once.

8 Q. Once. And do you recall the reason for that attendance?

9 A. It was a deficiency check on April 4th of 2017. I was
10 actually doing another vessel that day. I was on the
11 *Princess Annie* in Cedar Key, and Mr. Esteves and I left that exam
12 to do a deficiency follow-up from a previous -- from an exam the
13 next day by other inspectors.

14 Q. And I understand we have the activity summary report, but
15 could you just share with us the deficiency report -- the
16 deficiency that you went out to inspect?

17 A. Correct. Mr. [REDACTED] and I attended the vessel for a
18 deficiency check. We met with the shipyard representative. His
19 name was Kevin. He was present during the visit. And we
20 inspected the exposed wood for dryness found on the bottom
21 plating. So they ground back the FRP, the fiberglass, and then on
22 the other side of the fiberglass, of course, is the wood, the wood
23 hull. And the fiberglass was delaminating, coming apart from the
24 wood. So we went there to have them grind back the area further
25 to assess any damage to the hull.

1 We found worm holes, marine borers were getting into the wood
2 and eating the fibers of the wood. So plan was, when we spoke to
3 Kevin, to burn the area to kill any of the worms that were inside,
4 which is a common practice; let it dry out and then reapply the
5 FRP with a secondary bond onto the existing FRP.

6 So we looked at the exposed area just to make sure that they
7 ground back far enough to prevent any further delamination, and
8 that was their plan. Took a look at it, seemed like a good solid
9 plan at the time, and then we departed the vessel.

10 Q. What area of the vessel was this? Do you remember was it the
11 bow or the stern, or --

12 A. No. It was the stern. In way of -- I believe the port side
13 above the keel, in way of the keel. So the keel comes up, and
14 then if you're looking at it from the stern of the vessel, as it
15 turns into -- on the garboard strake, just outboard of that was
16 where the delamination was that I remember.

17 Q. And were you there before the repair was effected or after
18 the repair was complete?

19 A. This was as they were preparing the area and submitting their
20 proposal for their repairs, just to make sure that the repairs
21 made sense and they were conducted in accordance with our
22 regulations.

23 Q. Okay. Do you have any qualifications as a T-boat inspector
24 of a wood vessel?

25 A. I do.

1 Q. You do. And throughout your 10 or so years as a T-boat
2 inspector, could you estimate about how many wooden boats you have
3 looked at over your career for inspections?

4 A. Not as many wood hull vessel. Dozens, I would say.

5 Q. So this is not the only wooden vessel you've ever seen down
6 here?

7 A. No. No. I've probably done two or three within our zone
8 here in the Sector St. Petersburg. And then prior to that, when I
9 was in the Miami zone.

10 Q. And throughout your inspection career, would you say the
11 condition of this wooden hull was comparable to others, better or
12 worse, or see any issues that you were concerned with?

13 A. No. The condition of the hull itself, just generally
14 speaking, because I didn't look at the internal structure of the
15 vessel -- I was there since I was in the area doing a follow-up.
16 So, generally speaking, it looked in comparable condition to other
17 vessels that I've seen. I didn't see anything noteworthy while I
18 was there, except the specific damage that I was looking at.

19 Q. Right. And that had already been identified as an issue?

20 A. It was. It was a deficiency that was issued the previous
21 day, the 3rd of April.

22 Q. And while you were there did you go aboard the vessel?

23 A. Not that I remember. No.

24 Q. So all your inspections were external to the hull?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. And after the proposal for this repair, did you revisit to
2 see the completion, completed project?

3 A. I did not. There was -- I guess the lead inspector at the
4 time went back on board, looks like he was available the following
5 day, which would be April 5th. He attended the vessel for a
6 deficiency check. So another -- a follow-on inspection.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But just looking at the activity summary, and plus our
9 calendar also, I never went back on board the vessel.

10 Q. And that's the scope of this interview was to see your
11 interaction with the vessel and all, and we just wanted to see if
12 you had been aboard internally at some sort of inspections of
13 anything. But since you haven't, I don't have any other further
14 questions.

15 MR. YOUNG: Any questions? No.

16 Thank you very much for your time. We appreciate it.

17 MR. [REDACTED]: Great. Thank you.

18 MR. YOUNG: Recording is going off.

19 (Whereupon, 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: FIRE ON BOARD THE *ISLAND LADY*
PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA
JANUARY 14, 2018
Interview of CWO4 [REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA18FM010

PLACE: Tampa, Florida

DATE: May 1, 2018

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Karen Brooks
Transcriber