

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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IN RE: :

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THE EL FARO INCIDENT OFF THE: NTSB Accident No.

COAST OF THE BAHAMAS ON : DCA16MM001

OCTOBER 1, 2015 :

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INTERVIEW OF: SIMO TERVO, VICE PRESIDENT,

IMTEC MARITIME OFFSHORE SERVICES

Monday,

October 12, 2015

Via teleconference

BEFORE:

CARRIE BELL, NTSB

BRIAN YOUNG, NTSB

JIM FISHER-ANDERSEN, TOTE Services

TIM NEESON, TOTE Services

LOUIS O'DONNELL, ABS

[REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard

This transcript was produced from audio

provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (No time provided.)

3 MR. YOUNG: I just wanted to give you a
4 little background and let you know who's in the room
5 and why we're here. Just going to let you know a few
6 of the basics about our investigation, and then we have
7 just a few quick questions for you. I don't think
8 it'll take that long.

9 MR. TERVO: Yes.

10 MR. YOUNG: In the room here, my name is
11 Brian Young. I'm the Engineering Group chairman for
12 this investigation. We are investigating the sinking
13 of the El Faro. The NTSB is in charge of this
14 investigation, and we are having technical experts from
15 various companies assisting us. Assisting our
16 investigation are the United States Coast Guard, TOTE,
17 and the American Bureau of Shipping.

18 MR. TERVO: Sure.

19 MR. YOUNG: They are here in the room with
20 us. We'll go around the room, and everyone's going to
21 introduce themselves and tell you who they're with and
22 what their role is in this investigation, okay?

23 MR. TERVO: Okay.

24 MR. YOUNG: We'll start with TOTE.

25 MR. NEESON: I'm Tim Neeson. I'm a board

1 engineer.

2 MR. O'DONNELL: Louis O'Donnell, assistant
3 chief surveyor, Americas ABS.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm with the
5 U.S. Coast Guard and here assisting NTSB with the
6 engineering group.

7 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Jim Fisher-Andersen
8 with TOTE Services, acting as part of the NTSB
9 engineering group.

10 MS. BELL: I'm Carrie Bell with NTSB, and
11 I'm working in the Human Performance group.

12 MR. YOUNG: That's it in the room. We have
13 the six of us, and the NTSB has a bunch of different
14 groups. We have a Nautical group, Human Performance,
15 Survival Factors, and Engineering. The purpose of our
16 investigation is to increase safety. We are not here
17 to assign fault, blame, or liability. We're going to
18 record this interview for factual evidence.

19 It will be available to yourself and the
20 public in a transcript. So we'll have it transcribed,
21 and it will be available to you. You can have someone
22 as a representative to assist you. We are an
23 independent federal agency. We are charged with
24 determining the probable cause of transportation
25 accidents and promoting safety. We are not a part of

1 the Coast Guard or the Department of Transportation.
2 The NTSB has no regulatory or enforcement powers. We
3 are solely here to conduct a safety investigation. Is
4 it okay with you if we do record this conversation?

5 MR. TERVO: Absolutely.

6 MR. YOUNG: Great. Thank you for your help.
7 Just for the record and for the start of this, could
8 you please tell us your name and spell that out?

9 MR. TERVO: Yes, my name is Simo Tervo,
10 S-I-M-O T-E-R-V, like Victor, O.

11 MR. YOUNG: What's your position?

12 MR. TERVO: My position is vice president
13 for IMTEC Maritime Offshore Services.

14 MR. YOUNG: IMTEC Maritime Offshore
15 Services, the vice president?

16 MR. TERVO: Yes.

17 MR. YOUNG: Can you just give us a very
18 brief description what IMTEC Maritime Services provides
19 as a business?

20 MR. TERVO: We do a lot of maintenance on
21 oceangoing vessels, installation of new equipment,
22 piping, steel plates, whatever is -- and electrical,
23 also. Lately, we're doing a lot of electrical, also --
24 electrical installations. We do that worldwide,
25 actually, with the various vessels on the globe,

1 itself.

2 MR. YOUNG: Would you consider the crews you
3 have and you're putting on ship, is that what's
4 considered a riding crew?

5 MR. TERVO: Yes.

6 MR. YOUNG: Let's talk particularly about
7 the crew that was aboard the El Faro. What was the
8 scope of work that was to be undertaken while they were
9 on board the El Faro?

10 MR. TERVO: We were supposed to be a support
11 team for the vessel, itself, to help them bring the
12 vessel back. There were some new winches that were
13 supposed to be installed for (Inaudible) apparently it
14 had it before. That's the information we received,
15 that we were supplying both welders and electricians to
16 help out with pulling out the cables and putting up
17 whatever cable trays and penetration, whatever is
18 needed for this installation.

19 MR. YOUNG: We understand there were five
20 IMTEC employees aboard the El Faro, is that correct?

21 MR. TERVO: Yes, that's correct.

22 MR. YOUNG: Do you know the breakdown of
23 their job responsibilities, how many welders and how
24 many electricians were aboard?

25 MR. TERVO: Actually, the electricians, they

1 went off on that Tuesday before the vessel left
2 Jacksonville. There was only fitters, the mechanical
3 guys that was left, the welders, actually.

4 MR. YOUNG: So there were five
5 welders/fitters aboard, no electricians?

6 MR. TERVO: Yes, no electricians.

7 MR. YOUNG: The welders and fitters, how
8 were they trained or certified as welders or fitters?

9 MR. TERVO: They go through, actually,
10 training they done in (Inaudible). Then there is a
11 class society that heads them, so then they pass these
12 welding certificates. This is then renewed every two
13 years. In between that, it's every six months they
14 need to have a stamp that they were approved welders in
15 their field (Inaudible).

16 MR. YOUNG: Okay, very good. While these
17 fitters and welders have been aboard, do you receive
18 weekly progress reports or worksheets or overtime
19 sheets from --

20 MR. TERVO: I did not see any reports. I
21 saw some emails that they did a good job on board. The
22 progress was going well, so not in detail anymore from
23 the vessel, itself.

24 MR. YOUNG: Would the workers email you
25 directly?

1 MR. TERVO: It actually came from the TOTE.
2 I got the information from TOTE, not from our guys,
3 itself.

4 MR. YOUNG: The emails you received from
5 TOTE, is that -- your workers were -- I didn't
6 understand that part.

7 MR. TERVO: That the work progress was going
8 well. They did very good work. They're ongoing.
9 There was not, in detail, what they exactly were doing
10 and where they were in it because I didn't have a
11 knowledge on the process, itself, on board the vessel.

12 MR. YOUNG: Just to confirm, you don't get a
13 daily report or a weekly report or anything as to
14 exactly what the workers are doing aboard the ship?

15 MR. TERVO: No.

16 MR. YOUNG: Are you aware of any safety
17 training for your workers, in terms of maybe abandoning
18 ship or firefighting, that your workers have
19 experienced prior to joining?

20 MR. TERVO: These men have been on -- what
21 they do, they have been on an awful lot of cruise
22 ships, so they're involved -- not involved directly
23 with the firefighting on board the vessel because
24 they're outside contractors. They are not regular
25 crew, itself, but they know about lifeboats and that

1 kind of -- because they have to do the drills with the
2 vessel every time they join a vessel.

3 MR. YOUNG: Understood. If any of your men
4 had any sort of safety concerns or complaints about the
5 way they were being treated on board the ship, would
6 they have a way to communicate that to you?

7 MR. TERVO: It would have come up to me, but
8 I did not have any knowledge of that.

9 MR. YOUNG: For about how long has IMTEC
10 been supplying workers to the El Faro -- not
11 necessarily just to TOTE, but El Faro?

12 MR. TERVO: (Inaudible) this was a request
13 to join on 18th of August.

14 MR. YOUNG: That's the first time you've
15 supplied a crew to that vessel?

16 MR. TERVO: The El Faro.

17 MR. YOUNG: Okay, to the El Faro?

18 MR. TERVO: Yes.

19 MR. YOUNG: At any time since August 18th,
20 have any of your workers done any work on the main
21 propulsion machinery, such as the boilers or the main
22 engines or the emergency generator?

23 MR. TERVO: Not on my knowledge.

24 MR. YOUNG: I'm going to pass you around the
25 room for other people in the room to ask some

1 questions, but thank you for answering my questions and
2 go around to -- you got anything?

3 PARTICIPANT: I have no questions.

4 MR. YOUNG: Tim, from TOTE, has nothing.
5 Lou, from the ABS, has no further questions. [REDACTED]
6 form the United States Coast Guard.

7 [REDACTED] Good afternoon. [REDACTED], from the
8 U.S. Coast Guard. Is there anybody else, outside of
9 yourself, within the company, that these gentlemen
10 would have communicated with or provided any
11 information to with regards to the vessel or what they
12 were doing?

13 MR. TERVO: The only way -- it might have
14 been in the email if there was anything. Then it would
15 have gone to the Polish office, but Polish office
16 always sends me any information that comes back from
17 any other projects.

18 [REDACTED]: Can you explain that to us?
19 Who's the Polish office? What (Simultaneous speaking)?

20 MR. TERVO: Our Polish office in Gdansk,
21 where our guys were hired through.

22 [REDACTED] So there could have been
23 somebody there that they were communicating with?

24 MR. TERVO: Yes, but then I would -- if
25 there was any issues on board, itself, then they always

1 communicate back to our office, and then we know if
2 there's an issue and we address that one.

3 [REDACTED] Okay, thank you very much for
4 that. Did you have any type of written orders from
5 TOTE on the scope of the work that was to be done on
6 board the vessel or any type of written contract?

7 MR. TERVO: No written contract. It was on
8 an email that they needed a support team for the work
9 on board.

10 [REDACTED] So just an email request to you
11 guys for support, and that's it?

12 MR. TERVO: Yes.

13 [REDACTED]: Okay. How does the agreement
14 for what type of work they'll perform and stuff, how is
15 that worked out? Is it just between the members in
16 TOTE?

17 MR. TERVO: On board the vessel, itself,
18 what they instructed is what I understand.

19 [REDACTED] All right, thank you very much.
20 Just to be clear, these guys have never been sent to
21 any third-party survival-type training, water survival
22 training or anything like that through the company?

23 MR. TERVO: No, not that I know about.

24 [REDACTED] Okay, thank you. I'm done.

25 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: No questions from Jim.

1 MS. BELL: This is Carrie Bell, NTSB. Just
2 a couple of questions. You mentioned that the two
3 electricians had left the ship a couple of days before.
4 Was there any conversation with them about any concerns
5 they had?

6 MR. TERVO: No. Actually, we received an
7 email back from that. They were very pleased with the
8 work that they had done, very professional way. They
9 were looking forward to get them back when the next
10 phase was coming up, so no concerns at all from the
11 men.

12 MS. BELL: You said that the first time they
13 joined was 18 August?

14 MR. TERVO: Yes.

15 MS. BELL: This is the first time they've
16 worked on any TOTE vessels?

17 MR. TERVO: These men, yes.

18 MS. BELL: Okay. That's all the questions I
19 have right now.

20 MR. YOUNG: This is Brian Young, again, with
21 the NTSB. In the five men that were aboard, was there
22 a group leader or a team leader?

23 MR. TERVO: Yes, there was one man, Neeta
24 (Phonetic). He went off, and then he came back. He
25 went off one week, and then he came back. We had

1 actually four men that joined on the 18th, and then two
2 additional men. Out of the four men that was on the
3 18th was two welders and two electricians. Then on the
4 25th, we have the two additional welders that joined.

5 MR. YOUNG: Do you know how well the workers
6 were understanding and able to speak English?

7 MR. TERVO: They were not fluent in English.
8 Neeta was the one that was -- if there was any issue
9 with the language barrier, he would've been the one
10 that explained down the line.

11 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Do you know what their
12 daily work schedule was? Were they working around the
13 clock or had set hours?

14 MR. TERVO: No more than 12 hours per day,
15 for sure not. That's on the timesheets, itself.

16 MR. YOUNG: Do you receive their timesheets?

17 MR. TERVO: Yes, we do.

18 MR. YOUNG: Does it just show hours worked,
19 but no description as to where they working, correct?

20 MR. TERVO: Yes, that's correct.

21 MR. YOUNG: Do you know if they had the
22 ability to communicate with their families from the
23 ship?

24 MR. TERVO: From when they were in port,
25 most likely, but out in the sea, I don't know if they

1 had communication.

2 MR. YOUNG: Okay. We were wondering if they
3 were set up with an email account while they were
4 aboard the ship?

5 MR. TERVO: Not what I know about because we
6 didn't receive any emails from the vessel, itself, from
7 any of the guys, that I know about.

8 MR. YOUNG: I'm just going to pass it around
9 one more time before close. Can I provide you with my
10 contact number and email address, should there be
11 anything you hear, any concerns, or any future
12 communication from any of their families or anything,
13 we're interested to hear if anyone had been in
14 communication with your men, okay?

15 MR. TERVO: Absolutely.

16 MR. YOUNG: My name is Brian Young, and my
17 email is brian.young@ntsb.gov. That's spelled
18 B-R-I-A-N dot Y-O-U-N-G at N-T-S-B dot gov.

19 MR. TERVO: N-T-S-B dot gov.

20 MR. YOUNG: My phone number is 202 --

21 MR. TERVO: 202 --

22 MR. YOUNG: -- 314 --

23 MR. TERVO: -- 314 --

24 MR. YOUNG: -- 6454.

25 MR. TERVO: -- 6454.

1 MR. YOUNG: We have one more question from
2 one of our NTSB investigators.

3 MS. BELL: This is Carrie Bell again. We
4 talked a little bit about the training. Do you know if
5 they had any kind of familiarization training while
6 they were on board?

7 MR. TERVO: This is just from my knowledge.
8 I assume so. This vessel, if you compare it to a
9 cruise ship (Inaudible) they have been on many times
10 before. It's more weight. This is a bigger vessel.
11 There's more open area. You normally learn a ship
12 quite quickly, this kind of ship, which way to go. But
13 I don't know if they had a training. That I cannot
14 answer.

15 MS. BELL: You mentioned their schedules,
16 they worked on a 12-hour schedule. Were those just day
17 shifts, or did they rotate, some worked days, some
18 worked night? Are you familiar with that schedule?

19 MR. TERVO: No, they should be only day
20 shift there with related breaks during the day.

21 MR. YOUNG: Great. Do you have any
22 questions for us, Simo?

23 MR. TERVO: No. This is a tough one. I'm
24 (Inaudible) what happened. I've been with the company
25 for 27 years, and we never had this kind of incident

1 before. This is new for us. It's sad for everyone,
2 all the families.

3 MR. YOUNG: Yes, we understand, and we
4 really do appreciate you giving us the time out of your
5 schedule. We're working the best we can to try to
6 figure out what happened and ensure that things like
7 this don't happen again.

8 MR. TERVO: (Simultaneous speaking).

9 MR. YOUNG: Thanks to people like you for
10 enlightening us with what you know, and please
11 continue. If you do hear anything, just let us know
12 via my contact info.

13 MR. TERVO: Absolutely. I will, Brian.

14 MR. YOUNG: Okay, thank you very much, Simo.

15 (Whereupon, the above-entitled interview was
16 concluded. No time provided.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: El Faro Incident
Accident No. DCA16MM001
Interview of Simo Tervo
Jacksonville, FL

DATE: 10-12-15

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 19 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

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