

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

----- :
IN RE: :
 :
THE EL FARO INCIDENT OFF : NTSB Accident No.
THE COAST OF THE BAHAMAS ON : DCA16MM001
OCTOBER 1, 2015 :
 :
----- :

Interview of: JOHN RINGLEIN

Tuesday,
November 3, 2015

BEFORE:

BRIAN YOUNG, NTSB
BRIAN CURTIS, NTSB

This transcript was produced from
audio provided by the National Transportation
Safety Board.

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard:

██████████ ██████████ U.S. Coast Guard

On Behalf of Maine Maritime Academy:

CAPT NATHAN GANDY
Commandant of Midshipmen
Maine Maritime Academy
1 Pleasant Street
Castine, Maine 04420
207-326-2250
commandantsdivision@mma.edu

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

2 MR. CURTIS: And, as far as
3 recordings go, just so you know, they are placed
4 in the public dockets. They will be publically
5 released. However, any personal information,
6 names, addresses, personal information will be
7 redacted prior to public release.

8 I just want to run through a few
9 things about who we are, what we do so you'll
10 have a better appreciation for us before we get
11 going.

12 The NTSB Office of Marine Safety, we
13 investigate major marine casualties which are
14 comprised of damage in excess of a half a
15 million dollars, a loss of vessel over a 100
16 gross tons or six or more deaths. So, it meets
17 all three of those criteria, so we're
18 investigating this. NTSB is the lead
19 investigative agency for this accident.

20 But, to that end, we also employ
21 expertise from other parties to help us gather
22 factual information and that's why [REDACTED] here

1 today. He's a Coast Guard investigator and he
2 has considerable seagoing experience as well on
3 the deck side. So, that's [REDACTED] component
4 here as the actual part to the NTSB
5 investigation.

6 A little bit about the report
7 itself, how it plays out. We are doing this
8 fact finding, both looking for the vessel, well,
9 we're also conducting interviews and collecting
10 documentation from the company. That takes
11 probably in the range of a few months to get all
12 the information collected.

13 After that, we'll go about drafting
14 a report which, in the end, will have
15 conclusions of findings of the event, the
16 accident, as well as probable cause for why --
17 determination or probable cause of why it
18 happened. And also recommendations that we'll
19 distribute hopefully to prevent such an accident
20 from recurring.

21 So, that's pretty much what the NTSB
22 does. We're not -- we're purely a safety

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 investigations, we don't have any statutory or
2 regulatory enforcement authorities, so we don't
3 enforce the laws, we just produce the reports
4 and account for the safety aspects to hopefully
5 prevent this from happening again.

6 I think that's pretty much what I
7 wanted to go through, just that in the
8 interview, you have the right to representation.
9 You have the Commandant here. I assume he's
10 your representation. If you have any questions,
11 feel free to converse with him.

12 One thing I would say is if we ask
13 you a question, because we're going to ask you a
14 broad array of questions and topics, if you
15 don't know the answer, you don't have to make
16 any assumptions. Just feel free to say I don't
17 know that, that's fine. Because we're probably
18 going to ask you many questions that you don't
19 know.

20 But, at the same token, you have a
21 lot of information that would greatly help us in
22 the investigation due to the circumstances of

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 the accident and the lack of availability of the
2 ship and it's crew, unfortunately.

3 So, to that end, we'll get started.
4 Anytime you want to take a break, feel free to
5 say you want a drink of water or take a break.
6 We're more than happy to do that. This will
7 probably run a good hour, a little -- maybe a
8 few minutes more.

9 MS. RINGLEIN: Sure.

10 MR. CURTIS: But, if you want to
11 take a break at any point in time, let us know.

12 And so, we'll start it off, we'll go
13 from Brian on to [REDACTED] and, as Brian said, when
14 they say their last question, probably not quite
15 the last question. So, bear with us and we
16 certainly appreciate your sitting down with us.

17 MR. YOUNG: Yes. Great, thanks.
18 Probably what we'll do is we'll just start.
19 We'll introduce ourselves for the recording.
20 We'll state out names and at the end, you just
21 spell your name. Okay?

22 So, this is Brian Young with the

1 NTSB, I'm the Engineering Group Chairman for
2 this investigation.

3 MR. CURTIS: Brian Curtis, the
4 Acting Director in the Office of Marine Safety
5 at the NTSB.

6 MR. [REDACTED] My name is [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] I'm a civilian Coast Guard and Marine
8 Casualty Investigator and I'm, John, I'm
9 focusing on the Human Factors Group. But, then
10 I'm kind of helping out the Nautical Operations
11 Group in my questioning of you to get your
12 recollection. So, thank you very much for being
13 here.

14 MR. YOUNG: And Captain?

15 CAPT GANDY: I'm Captain Nathan
16 Gandy, Commandant of Midshipmen.

17 MR. YOUNG: And, John?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: John Ringlein, it's
19 R-I-N-G-L-E-I-N.

20 MR. YOUNG: Great. Do you need a
21 break?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Not yet.

1 MR. YOUNG: Okay, great.

2 So, John, again, as everyone said,
3 thank you very much. We really do appreciate
4 you being here and, you know, you may think just
5 because you're a cadet, you're maybe the lowest
6 man on the totem pole, but we don't think that
7 whatsoever. We think you are probably the best
8 eyes and ears that we have on there.

9 So, we really ask you to really try
10 to think back to the time you were there. I
11 know it's a long time ago, but a lot of these
12 questions we're going to ask could be the first
13 day on there. I know it's back in May or
14 whatever, but just do your best to help us out.

15 So, maybe before we get to you
16 joining the ship, maybe just give us a quick
17 summary of any sea time you might have had prior
18 to joining the El Faro.

19 MR. RINGLEIN: The only sea time I
20 had before them would be through the school, the
21 training crew's freshman year and, normally, we
22 do our cadet shipping sophomore year, but I

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 missed it by a few summers. So, I had a few
2 summers off and then I did it this summer.

3 MR. YOUNG: Okay. So, was this a
4 required sea time to go out on a merchant ship?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes.

6 MR. YOUNG: As opposed to the
7 training ship?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Correct, yes. I
9 think we have to do 90 days as deck cadets
10 whereas entry cadets only have to do 60.

11 MR. YOUNG: So, when you came on to
12 the El Faro, you were ready to do a 90-day trip?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Correct.

14 MR. YOUNG: And, do you remember
15 when you joined the ship?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: May 5th was the day I
17 joined.

18 MR. YOUNG: And, how long did you
19 stay?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: It was 93 days. I
21 got off August 4th.

22 MR. YOUNG: And, through that entire

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 time, did you just shuttle back and forth
2 between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it was
4 Jacksonville-Puerto Rico, back and forth.

5 MR. YOUNG: Numerous times?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it was once a
7 week. So, it'd be a week long, we'd leave
8 Jacksonville on Tuesday and get to Puerto Rico
9 on Friday, leave Friday night and be back by
10 Monday. And, yes, in Jacksonville.

11 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And, when you did
12 join, did you join with the engine cadet the
13 same you guys showed up together?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, showed up -- we
15 were actually both at the airport and I saw him,
16 he had a Marine Maritime bag, so we got a cab.
17 We were together and we got on board.

18 MR. YOUNG: And you joined in
19 Jacksonville?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: Correct, yes.

21 MR. YOUNG: And, maybe if you could,
22 because, again, I'm an engineer, so I don't know

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 what happens up on that bridge, but maybe give
2 me a ballpark idea of what your duties were as a
3 deck cadet when you joined the ship?

4 MR. RINGLEIN: So, when I -- as I
5 was on there?

6 MR. YOUNG: Yes.

7 MR. RINGLEIN: I would stand -- I
8 usually stood a morning watch for four hours and
9 then -- well, they cycles me through, I started
10 with the Third Mate. It was my first and so,
11 that was the 8:00 to or 12:00 to -- no, what was
12 it, 4:00 to 8:00, it was from 4:00 to 8:00.

13 And then, after that, I would go --
14 where did we go after that -- I think I'd do my
15 four hours of maintenance. And then, after
16 that, when we were out at sea, I'd have pretty
17 much the rest of the day off to work on my
18 project or to go help out somewhere else if I
19 wanted to work overtime.

20 And then, when we were in port, I
21 would usually, depending on where we were, I'd
22 stand my watch. And then, unless we were

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 already in port, then I would do a -- I would go
2 down and help load cargo down beneath. I think
3 it was all the reefers, we'd plug in all the
4 reefers.

5 MR. CURTIS: And, was there a
6 standard watch for the Mates? Was the Chief
7 Mate on a certain watch and a Second Mate on a
8 certain watch? How did that go?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: So, Third Mate was
10 the 4:00 to 8:00, then the Second Mate was 8:00
11 to 12:00 and Chief Mate was 12:00 to 4:00,
12 unless I have that -- I'm trying to think. No,
13 it was the Chief Mate it was 4:00 to 8:00 and
14 then the Third Mate would get him, so it would
15 be 8:00 to 12:00 and the Second Mate was 12:00
16 to -- that's how it went.

17 MR. CURTIS: So, the Chief Mate
18 definitely was a watch stander?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, correct.

20 MR. CURTIS: And they would put the
21 Chief Mate on 4:00 to 8:00?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, yes.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: That makes sense.

2 And then, the Second Mate was on
3 noon to 4:00, midnight to 4:00?

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Midnight to 4:00,
5 yes.

6 MR. CURTIS: So, when you started
7 out on the ship, you were doing a watch with?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: The Third Mate.

9 MR. CURTIS: The Third Mate 8:00 to
10 12:00?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm. And then,
12 after the first month, I switched over and I did
13 the rest for the next two months with the Chief
14 Mate.

15 MR. CURTIS: And then, when you were
16 doing your maintenance, would you ever do any
17 maintenance on the lifeboats or the life rafts?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: We did -- we didn't
19 do any maintenance on the lifeboat, we did help
20 like the Third Mate do inventory of lifeboat
21 equipment and stuff like that.

22 I'm trying to think, I think we did

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 -- I repainted part of the lifeboat, like it was
2 the port side lifeboat or no, it was the
3 starboard side lifeboat. That was at one point,
4 I can't remember, I think we just painted it or
5 something like that.

6 MR. CURTIS: Speaking of lifeboats,
7 do you remember having any outside vendors
8 coming in working on the wenchies at all?
9 Someone possibly of a company named Harding or
10 someone out of Jacksonville working on the
11 wenchies for the lifeboats in port?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't believe so,
13 not that I recall.

14 MR. CURTIS: And, while we're
15 talking about lifeboats and all, did you ever
16 see any of these lifeboats get lowered to the
17 embarkation level?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it was the -- I
19 believe it was the starboard lifeboat. I'm
20 trying to think, because we were up to the dock
21 and we lowered it down to the dock. So, yes,
22 that would be the starboard lifeboat.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: They lowered it beyond
2 the embarkation level?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, when we were in
4 port, they lowered it all the way down to the
5 dock and then we took it off and then put it
6 back on and sent it back up.

7 MR. CURTIS: And, was that for any
8 particular reason or --

9 MR. RINGLEIN: I think they were
10 just testing it. Yes, I think they were just
11 testing it to make sure it went all the way
12 down.

13 And then, but once a week, we would
14 lower it to the embarkation deck.

15 MR. CURTIS: And during that time,
16 with your three months there with that lowering
17 for the embarkation level, did you ever have any
18 major issues or notice any major issues that the
19 boats didn't get launched properly?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: No, everything went
21 smoothly every time we did it. It was pretty
22 quick.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: Okay. I know most of
2 the questions are going to be all about nautical
3 stuff, but I have a lot of engineering questions
4 that you may or may not know. But, I know you
5 did some bridge watches.

6 Did you ever have or remember any
7 calls from the engine room that they may have
8 lost propulsion or lost a boiler or lost any
9 major piece of machinery that would have slowed
10 the ship down?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

12 MR. CURTIS: No steering gear?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

14 MR. CURTIS: Did you ever see the
15 Chief and the Captain interact with each other?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, when he would
17 come up to the -- he'd usually come -- the
18 Captain would come up during our watch in the
19 morning, so when I was with the Chief Mate. So,
20 usually, I think he came up around 6:00.

21 MR. CURTIS: I'm sorry, I was
22 talking about the Chief Engineer.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Oh, Chief Engineer?

2 MR. CURTIS: Yes.

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Chief Engineer and
4 the Captain?

5 MR. CURTIS: Yes.

6 MR. RINGLEIN: I mean at breakfast
7 and stuff like that but --

8 MR. CURTIS: They weren't fighting
9 and screaming or anything at each other?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: No, I never heard
11 them.

12 MR. CURTIS: And, I guess I jumped
13 ahead a little bit, but you were on there for a
14 long time, for three months?

15 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

16 MR. CURTIS: Did you always work
17 with the same Captain or did you work with
18 different Captains?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: I was with Captain
20 Davidson from the time I got on until he got
21 off, so that would have been ten weeks. And
22 then, the new Captain came on, I forget his

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 name. He was on until I got off, I think two or
2 three weeks later.

3 MR. CURTIS: Okay, so towards the
4 end of your trip, the Captains changed up?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

6 MR. CURTIS: So, you had Davidson
7 for the bulk of your trip?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, for ten weeks.

9 MR. CURTIS: For ten weeks? And
10 then, about -- what did you say, about ten days,
11 another Captain, or two weeks to ten days, you
12 had a new Captain?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I believe it was
14 three weeks I was with the other Captain, yes.

15 MR. CURTIS: Any chance the
16 Captain's last name was Axelson (phonetic)
17 ***0:13:16***?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, that was it.

19 MR. CURTIS: Did you ever deal with
20 Captain Axelson (phonetic) ***0:13:22*** much?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: Just a little bit.
22 I'd go and -- because since it was towards the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 end of my trip, I was starting to set up going
2 back home. So, that's when I'd interact with
3 him most of the time and then breakfast and
4 stuff like that. But, other than that, not
5 much.

6 MR. CURTIS: How was your
7 interaction with Captain Davidson?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: It was good, we got
9 along really good. I mean he took me under his
10 wing pretty much right when we got on. Yes.

11 MR. CURTIS: Didn't give you a hard
12 time? Because sometimes Captains and cadets to
13 Captain?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Oh, yes, no, he
15 definitely, he'd give me a hard time all the
16 time about it but it was all good fun.

17 MR. CURTIS: It was expected stuff?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, yes. I'd
19 figured that coming in.

20 MR. CURTIS: It's not like you were
21 at Kings Pointer or something? Right?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: No. Right.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: And, how would you
2 compare your interaction between yourself and
3 Captain Davidson as maybe yourself and Captain
4 Axelson (phonetic) ***0:14:19***, is there -- I
5 know you were getting probably ready to go home
6 and this new Captain comes on.

7 MR. RINGLEIN: Right. Me and
8 Captain Davidson had much more interaction than
9 with -- because Captain Davidson went to Maine
10 Maritime and I going to Maine Maritime at the
11 same time. We had kind of a lot to talk about
12 and we talked about the changes in the school
13 compared to when he was there and when I'm here
14 now, how much different it is.

15 And, Yes, that was about it. We had
16 -- I didn't really talk to Captain Axelson
17 (phonetic) ***0:14:54*** all that much.

18 MR. CURTIS: Okay. Did it seem like
19 the crew worked pretty well for Captain Davidson
20 or did it seem like there was any sort of
21 contention between the crew and the Captain?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: At times there was a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 little bit of tension. I think they got a new
2 payroll system when I was on there that wasn't
3 working as well as it was supposed to be
4 working, I guess. And, it was giving the crew a
5 lot of -- they were getting kind of angry about
6 that.

7 And then, they were -- I forget what
8 they were -- they were trying to take more money
9 out in their allotment or something like that
10 and then I think he was -- he didn't like them
11 taking out more money because -- it was really
12 confusing. I don't remember exactly how
13 everything went down.

14 But, yes, every once in a while,
15 there'd be some tension, I guess, between the
16 two but everybody still got everything done and
17 went about their day.

18 MR. CURTIS: That's good, that's
19 good.

20 Moving into your room, I'm sure it
21 was luxurious, your room, but do you remember if
22 you had a life jacket in your room available to

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 you?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I did because
3 every week, we did our boat drill and I'd have
4 to have -- I'd have to get my life jacket out of
5 my -- I think I had two or three life jackets in
6 there and one immersion suit.

7 MR. CURTIS: And, you've have -- and
8 that was my next question, the immersion suit
9 was in your room and available to you?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, yes.

11 MR. CURTIS: Do you know if they --
12 and any inventories that you did, that if there
13 were any extra survival suits around the ship?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Extra ones? I can't
15 remember if there were any extra ones. But, as
16 far as I know, there was ample amount for
17 everybody.

18 MR. CURTIS: But, it was definitely
19 available to you?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

21 MR. CURTIS: Okay.

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Correct.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: Great. And, I know you
2 -- while you were standing watch, you probably
3 had an AB up there, it probably dealt with the
4 boats and all?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

6 MR. CURTIS: What was your
7 impression on how the crew felt they were (a)
8 being treated and the condition of their ship?
9 Did they seem to like what they did? Did they
10 complain all the time? Did they hate the ship?
11 That the thing was a rust bucket? What were
12 they generally like?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Sometimes they would
14 complain. I don't think it was directly related
15 to the ship, I think it was related to some of
16 them were more used to having a more laid back
17 shipping experience, I guess. And then, on our
18 ship, it was a little bit more different.
19 They'd have to -- I mean they would have to put
20 in 12-hour days, a lot of them were only used to
21 putting in 8-hour days. So, I think there was
22 resentment towards that.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 I never heard anybody complain about
2 the well-being of the ship or the seaworthiness
3 of the ship or anything like that. I mean it
4 was a little -- it was a 40-year-old ship.
5 There was rusty spots and stuff like that, but I
6 don't think it was anything that -- nothing that
7 made me feel unsafe or anything.

8 MR. CURTIS: And, typically, sailors
9 like to complain? They're not happy unless
10 their complaining so a lot of times they're
11 going to complain just to complain?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

13 MR. CURTIS: But, you know, we're
14 looking for were people saying, you know, man,
15 this thing is just falling apart and that's what
16 the question was, you know, if they are actually
17 bringing any concerns out that you might have
18 overheard?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Right. Yes, I don't
20 think -- I never really heard any concerns.

21 MR. CURTIS: And, I think you
22 answered my next question, is you did have

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 weekly drills?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, every week,
3 usually from when we leave Jacksonville, it was
4 usually on our way to Puerto Rico that we'd have
5 a drill.

6 MR. CURTIS: And, were they
7 announced or planned or unplanned?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: They were announced.

9 MR. CURTIS: Okay. So, you knew
10 when it was coming?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: It was coming, yes.

12 MR. CURTIS: After each drill, would
13 you take part of the -- or aware that there was
14 any sort of a meeting afterwards or a critique
15 or anything about the drill?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm. We would do -
17 - so, they would usually do a fire drill and
18 then right from the fire drill, they'd do the
19 boat drill. And then, after the boat drill, we
20 would all meet in the crew mess and they would
21 either -- they would talk about -- it was
22 different all the time. They would critique if

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 anybody had any questions or anything like that,
2 it could be answered.

3 And then, they had the list of all
4 the things they needed to cover, like how to put
5 on immersion suit, how to -- I forget what the
6 other ones were. It was like how to -- I forget
7 what those things are called, to shoot the lines
8 out.

9 MR. CURTIS: They pyrotechnics?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes, we had
11 about that, about putting on a gas mask and
12 stuff like that. We'd usually have -- I think
13 they'd talk about for it was like 45 minutes
14 afterwards, we'd all sit there and they'd put in
15 movies about confined space entry and stuff like
16 that.

17 MR. CURTIS: Okay. That's good.

18 And, do you remember seeing or being
19 involved with any sort of check list at all for,
20 say like, the safety management system, say
21 like, maybe pre-arrival, pre-departure?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes. Yes, I remember

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 the Third Mate doing those. Yes, except --
2 well, I wasn't -- because I was -- at the
3 beginning, I was up on the bridge for when we
4 depart and stuff like that and then they moved
5 me down to the bow for docking, undocking, that
6 kind of stuff.

7 But, yes, I remember him checking
8 off pre-departure, all that kind of stuff. And,
9 gear tests coming in, some of that before we
10 picked up the pilot and yes, it was that kind of
11 stuff.

12 MR. CURTIS: Other than those check
13 lists, do you remember hearing or being
14 instructed anything with a safety management
15 system that may have been on a computer,
16 computer-based or possibly a big paper book?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes. Yes, there was
18 one up on the bridge. There was a binder and
19 then -- yes, because I used that because that
20 was part of my project.

21 MR. CURTIS: So, was it a paper
22 copy? A big --

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes, it was a
2 big binder.

3 MR. CURTIS: Do you have any idea
4 what was in there? Was it -- I mean, I'm not
5 going to make you recite the entire -- but, what
6 would generally be something that you may have
7 found in there just so I make sure we're talking
8 about the same thing.

9 MR. RINGLEIN: I think it was like
10 security and stuff like that. I can't remember,
11 it's in my project. I put it in there. I can't
12 remember exactly off the top of my head.

13 MR. CURTIS: Okay, okay. We'll read
14 your -- and, would you be willing to share your
15 project with us?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, of course.

17 MR. CURTIS: Because I think we'll
18 learn a lot from your project.

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

20 MR. CURTIS: And, what are some of
21 the things that we'll find in your project?
22 What were you required to do?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Oh, geez, I had to do
2 like celestial kind of stuff, take some cites of
3 stars and stuff. There's a couple of essays
4 about -- I can't remember, they gave you like a
5 list and you had to choose a certain amount off
6 that list to write about that was --

7 I had -- I did a log every day when
8 I was on watch. I basically copied what was in
9 the official log.

10 MR. CURTIS: And, is that recorded
11 in your project?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, that's in there.

13 Yes, I'd have like course changes I
14 think and stuff like that in that part.

15 I'm trying to think of what else is
16 in there. I have drawings in there that I had
17 to do of the ship and where different things are
18 located. And that was about it. There might be
19 a few other little stuff in there.

20 MR. CURTIS: Okay. Yes, we'd be
21 really interested to read that. I think it'll
22 educate us greatly.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, sure.

2 MR. CURTIS: And, what about
3 pictures, is the other thing, did you -- and you
4 said you took a bunch on your phone?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: I have pictures on my
6 phone. I don't have any in my actual project.

7 MR. CURTIS: Okay.

8 MR. RINGLEIN: But, I had my phone
9 and then I had a Polaroid camera, too. That
10 actually might be in my car, I just haven't
11 developed them yet. But, yes.

12 MR. CURTIS: Whatever pictures you
13 can provide to us or share with us, we would
14 really appreciate that, too.

15 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay, yes. Is there
16 a certain way you want me to --

17 MR. CURTIS: Whatever's convenient
18 for you. We'll talk with the Commander --

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay.

20 MR. CURTIS: -- and work something
21 out with him and we can get them. So, again,
22 that's a huge part for us is to be able to --

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 between you and the other cadet, the only
2 pictures we have of the ship, that's it.

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

4 MR. CURTIS: We don't have anything
5 else.

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay.

7 MR. CURTIS: So, we'd really
8 appreciate that.

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Sure.

10 MR. CURTIS: Okay, so, like the bulk
11 of your questions are going to be more nautical
12 and cargo, so I don't want to waste any more of
13 your time. I know he's kicking me under the
14 table because he wants to ask meat and potato
15 questions, but unless Brian has anything else,
16 but it's going to be more about your deck
17 department time.

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
20 here.

21 What I'd like to do is you got in a
22 cab and you came to the Port of Jacksonville and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 you saw the shiny new cars off to the right,
2 millions of them. You drove through the gate
3 and you get the pier and there's the El Faro.

4 So, what I'd like you to do as best
5 you can, take us through coming aboard the ship,
6 help us, as much detail as you can, you know,
7 when you started walking up that gangway, you
8 know, what the process was for that first day
9 aboard?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay. So, we got
11 there, went up the gangway. They had us sign
12 in, usually when you come up right there, there
13 was the log book that we'd sign in on.

14 And then, who came down? One of the
15 crew came down and kind us ushered us up to
16 where our rooms would be. And, at that time,
17 who was it, it was the steward came down and, I
18 forget his name, Bob I think or Rob, and he
19 unlocked our doors, let us in and then said to
20 go up to see the Captain, up two flights.

21 So, we went up, introduced ourselves
22 to the Captain, Captain Davidson. And he had a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 bunch of paperwork for us to sign. And, we had
2 all our like our passports and TWIX (phonetic)
3 ***0:25:46*** and all that kind of stuff. He
4 took copies of those.

5 And, I'm trying to think what else.
6 Got us situated for like payroll and that kind
7 of stuff. And then, he told -- I think he told
8 Victor to go down and see the Chief Mate or not
9 Chief Mate, the -- who did he tell him to go see
10 -- the Chief Engineer. Or he said, go get
11 situated in your room and then go see the Chief
12 Engineer.

13 And then, he told me to go get
14 situated in my room and then head down to the
15 main deck to see the Bosun get like a quick
16 familiarization.

17 So, I went down, I went and unpacked
18 a little bit and then I got my -- I got dressed,
19 went down to see the Bosun and it was a standby
20 Bosun and I introduced myself and then he took
21 me on a -- like a walkthrough around the ship
22 and where things were located and that kind of

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 stuff.

2 And then, they had me start helping
3 with cargo. So, I went down to the deck where
4 they drove the cars and the containers on, stuff
5 like that. And, they taught me how to plug in
6 reefers and that whole how to do that kind of
7 stuff, how the cargo comes on and told me to
8 watch where I was going because there's people
9 driving in and out all the time. It was pretty
10 hectic.

11 And then, I think I had a break
12 after that because we were sailing that night.
13 Then they wanted me up on the bridge, so I went
14 up on the bridge as we were leaving.

15 And, I think that was it. I just
16 went to bed after that.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Pretty beat?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: I was exhausted.
19 Spent all day on a plane and then doing all
20 that, yes.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, when you
22 were making your walk around the ship, where

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 they showed you the ship in general, in other
2 words, they were saying this is the main deck,
3 this is number two deck, this is our water-tight
4 deck? How thorough was that description?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Well, the first one,
6 the first description was -- it was pretty
7 broad, but it was like this is a fire station.
8 This is where this is. There's a fire station
9 here, here, here, here, here, that kind of
10 stuff.

11 And then, it was really -- it was
12 the next morning that I got like a real in depth
13 walkthrough of the ship. I did that with the
14 Third Mate. He went around and gave me a pretty
15 in depth ship familiarization.

16 MR. [REDACTED] All right. So, were
17 you awakened that morning like for 0400? Was
18 that your sea watch so to speak?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: No, because I started
20 with the Third Mate, so I was 7:00 to -- or 8:00
21 to 12:00 for that.

22 MR. [REDACTED] So, the Third is going

1 to take you around and give you a tour of the
2 ship?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, how was he
5 relieved from his bridge duties to do that?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Like, the relief
7 process?

8 MR. [REDACTED] No, no, I mean if he's
9 taking you around the ship when he's supposed to
10 be on watch and you're at sea?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: It was after we stood
12 that watch.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so around noon?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: So --

15 MR. [REDACTED] He's going to take you
16 on a tour of the ship? So, walk us through that
17 in depth tour?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Okay. Let's see how
19 we started? They had us meet down on the main
20 deck and then he took us -- where'd he take us --
21 -- he took us on that deck where we were putting
22 the cargo on and showed us the fire stations,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 how the water-tight doors worked, how the
2 mechanism works for those.

3 Where the -- like where the
4 different fire station rooms are -- what else
5 did he show us -- where the panel is to show if
6 water-tight doors are open or closed and that
7 kind of stuff.

8 HAZMAT locker -- I'm trying to think
9 -- oh, where like the EPIRB is and the SARTs.
10 Where else did he take us? Yes, because we were
11 -- he took us up to the bridge.

12 Oh, he took us in the engine room as
13 well. I can't remember where else he took us.
14 Because I did it three -- two or three times
15 because we got -- I did my first ship
16 familiarization and then a couple weeks later,
17 we got -- or I think it was a week or two later,
18 we got new crew, so they had to give him a ship
19 familiarization so I went around again.

20 And then, like another week or two
21 later, we got those two Coast Guard cadets that
22 came on and then they needed one. So, then we

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 did another one. But, those two other ones were
2 with a different Third Mate.

3 I can't remember what else they
4 showed us. I mean I can't remember any more.

5 MR. [REDACTED] John, you mentioned
6 when you went down to -- after you finished your
7 watch, you went down and you said they showed
8 us, who was us?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: For?

10 MR. [REDACTED] That first tour you
11 took, that detailed tour after you finished your
12 first watch or do you recall you said he showed
13 us, who was us?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it was me and
15 Victor.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so Victor got
17 the thorough walk around?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And then, can
20 you remember like if you take a minute just to
21 close your eyes and think about it, how'd you
22 get in the engine room on that thorough tour?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: I'm trying to
2 remember which way they brought us in. I think
3 we went -- because you have to go down to that
4 deck where they hooked the ramp up to drive
5 cargo in and off. And, you go through, let's
6 see, I think it's the number one water-tight
7 door. You go down through that. I think it was
8 hold number five is where you can get into the
9 engine room from. I think that's the way we
10 went.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, you went
12 from the after hold into the lower engine room
13 water-tight door? Do you remember that? Was
14 that -- am I putting words in your mouth or is
15 that --

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes, because we
17 were towards the stern and then you go down a
18 ramp through the number one water-tight door and
19 then there's the engine room.

20 MR. [REDACTED] Was that open?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: No, that was closed,
22 but there was like a little door, I think they

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 opened that up to walk through. They didn't
2 actually open the entire door to let us in.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Do you want to follow
4 up there just because I'm -- I don't recall as
5 much as you do?

6 MR. CURTIS: I think you might be
7 talking about the big cargo door, right?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

9 MR. CURTIS: Right there? Yes?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, a big cargo
11 water-tight door, yes.

12 MR. CURTIS: Okay. But, to get into
13 the engine room, there were a few man-sized
14 water-tight doors between the cargo hold and the
15 engine room on the port side and then there's
16 also one that's after the engine room off the
17 ramp that comes into like the machine shop on
18 the port side, too. So, we're just kind of
19 wondering --

20 MR. RINGLEIN: It was the machine
21 shop one. That's the one we went through I
22 believe. I can picture it in my head, I just --

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 yes, I just remember going through that door and
2 then you'd go down a little bit and then there
3 was like an opening to get into that, I think it
4 was the machine shop and then there'd be the
5 engine room right over there. I'm not sure how
6 else to describe it.

7 MR. CURTIS: Okay, thank you.

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

9 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] again.

10 On that first time you were on board
11 the ship, Victor mentioned some cowboys, what
12 are the cowboys?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: They were just --
14 they were riders because we had -- we were
15 taking cattle from Jacksonville over to Puerto
16 Rico. So, they would -- yes, they were just
17 riding with us. They would like clean up after
18 the cows and feed them and water them and milk
19 them and that kind of stuff.

20 MR. [REDACTED] Did the cowboys eat
21 with you guys?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Well, me and Victor

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 ate in the officer's mess and I think those
2 cowboys ate in the crew mess. Yes, they ate in
3 the crew mess. I barely ever saw them.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Right, so do you know
5 how many approximately?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: I want to say two,
7 maybe three.

8 MR. [REDACTED] And, did you ever see
9 them at these safety drills or muster safety
10 meetings that followed the drills?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes. Yes, yes, they
12 were there because I think they had to sign the
13 sheet, too, as well.

14 MR. [REDACTED] That would be the
15 sheet that you passed around at that safety
16 meeting?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, the muster
18 sheet, yes.

19 MR. [REDACTED] So, at the safety
20 meeting, did they talk about EPIRB and like
21 flares and SART radios and things like that?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes. Yes, I think --

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 yes, they did do that in the meetings. They
2 brought that out on the EPIRB.

3 MR. [REDACTED] And, what did they say
4 about it?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: I think they talked
6 about like the length of time it's good for,
7 like eight hours of continuous flashing or
8 something like that. I can't remember the exact
9 numbers.

10 MR. [REDACTED] Did they talk about
11 whose job it was to make sure it was deployed
12 or, you know, who grabbed the EPIRB if -- did
13 they talk about that at all?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't remember
15 exact -- because the first couple weeks when we
16 did the fire drill, my job was to go up to the
17 bridge and then we'd do all the testing of the
18 equipment. That was my job, test the EPIRB,
19 test the SARTs and all that kind of stuff. I
20 don't remember if -- I can't recall if they
21 talked about who grabbed it. I don't remember
22 that part.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] And so, I think the
2 EPIRB on the El Yunque was on the after side of
3 the starboard side of the bridge, was that where
4 this was on the El Faro?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: So, we're facing
6 forward, yes, it'd be on the starboard side
7 around in the back of the bridge house.

8 MR. [REDACTED] And, do you remember,
9 because we're trying to figure this out, when
10 you took it out of its housing, did you have to
11 do anything to prevent it from accidentally
12 activating?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Not activating, no.
14 We just have to make sure it wouldn't fall
15 because it was in that casing and sometimes it
16 came loose and when you take the thing off, it
17 might fall out. Because, there's a big housing
18 around it and you have to take that pin out to
19 pull the housing off. Then you have to pull the
20 EPRIB down to test it.

21 MR. [REDACTED] And, did you have to
22 step up on something to get to it or could you

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 reach it from your height?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: I could reach it.

3 MR. [REDACTED] So, you also mentioned
4 in the drills that they instructed you on how to
5 put on an immersion suit. Did anyone put on an
6 immersion suit fully?

7 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I did. They had
8 the -- because if the -- yes, the Third Mate was
9 telling -- explaining how to put it on and I --
10 they had me actually put it on and zip it up.

11 MR. [REDACTED] And, had you had any
12 training here at the academy?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, we take a basic
14 survival class.

15 MR. [REDACTED] And, could you talk
16 about that a little bit?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Sure. We do -- we go
18 down by the pool. I mean, it's also five years
19 ago I took this. And they would just how to put
20 on an immersion suit, how to flip over a raft if
21 it got turned over, how to right it back up. We
22 practiced -- they had like a mock like

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 helicopter housing --

2 MR. [REDACTED] Dunker?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, dunk us down.
4 We'd have to get out of that. Provisions that
5 were on lifeboats, yes, that was pretty much
6 that kind of stuff.

7 MR. [REDACTED] You also mentioned
8 just when you were talking to Brian that you did
9 these drills when you left Puerto Rico?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: When we left
11 Jacksonville.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so you did the
13 drills each voyage back and forth?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: It was once a week.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so they'd be on
16 the --

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Which is our whole
18 round trip voyage was a week long.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

20 MR. RINGLEIN: So, we'd do it
21 leaving Jacksonville about or day or two after
22 leaving Jacksonville.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] And, we were told that
2 on one of your voyages, there was a hurricane
3 out there and the ship ran slow and was a day
4 late getting into port and that it didn't
5 adequate describe which leg of the voyage,
6 whether it was a southbound, but do you recall
7 that?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't recall us
9 being late. I'm trying to think, we were
10 running behind -- the only time I remember us
11 running behind was -- because it was like a
12 holiday on Monday, so they had less time so they
13 did all the unloading and loading in one day, I
14 guess instead of, I forget, it was a Monday, I
15 forget what holiday it was. That was the only
16 time I remember us being late. But, we weren't
17 even late by that much.

18 There wasn't -- I don't remember us
19 being in any -- I only remember it raining once
20 when we were out on the water and it was --
21 there were some thunderstorms and stuff, but I
22 don't -- that was about it. It was really the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 only weather we saw out there.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. You did okay on
3 time? Want a break? Are you good?

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Actually, could I get
5 a water?

6 MR. CURTIS: Absolutely. Pause it?

7 MR. YOUNG: Yes, we're going to -

8 MR. CURTIS: Take a five minute
9 break.

10 CAPT GANDY: Time's not an issue.

11 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
12 matter went off the record and resumed at 2:10
13 p.m.)

14 MR. [REDACTED] All right, so it's
15 about ten minutes to two and we just turned the
16 recorders back on.

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] again.

18 All right, so now I'm going to ask
19 you about a couple of topics and, if you would,
20 think back upon your experiences onboard the
21 ship and talk to us a little bit about your
22 experience with cargo loading and, you know,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 you're a deck officer, so, you know, calculating
2 stability and so forth as part of the process
3 for heading to sea.

4 Can you talk about the El Faro in
5 particular and what you observed on there?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Like regular cargo
7 operations?

8 MR. [REDACTED] Mm-hm.

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

10 MR. [REDACTED] As it relates
11 particularly to stability.

12 MR. RINGLEIN: To Stability? Okay.
13 I remember taking -- we would take a salinity
14 test. I remember doing that.

15 I wasn't really around much for
16 doing the calculations for stability because I
17 would -- I mean it was pretty rapid getting
18 cargo on and stuff like that, so I would mostly
19 be down doing that.

20 I remember the Chief Mate, I asked
21 him to show me once, he had like a whole
22 computer program doing it out on that and stuff

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 like that. It's a whole bunch of numbers doing
2 -- I never really did one actually myself.

3 But, yes, we'd usually come up from
4 -- because I'd be on -- out about with the Chief
5 Mate and then we'd leave, he would go up and do
6 -- I would go up to the bridge and he would go
7 do the -- fill out the paperwork or whatever and
8 then bring it up to the bridge and give it to
9 the Captain and the Captain would sign it. It
10 was all the stability numbers I think.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And where in
12 the sequence and as you're on the bow, is that
13 with respect for unmooring?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes. Yes, that was
15 for docking and undocking, yes.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, you're on
17 the bow with the Chief.

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

19 MR. [REDACTED] And you're getting
20 underway or you have gotten underway when the
21 Chief Mate goes up to the bridge?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: We are -- well, we'd

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 be off the dock, so technically, we would be
2 underway, yes.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so just to make
4 sure I understand this, you're up there, you
5 cast off the bow lines and you bring in your
6 lines or wires, you know, you're working with
7 the tug boat. Then, the Chief Mate goes up and
8 deals with the Captain related to stability
9 figures?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: I think it -- I was -
11 - I'm pretty sure that was stability figures. I
12 can't -- I just remember him doing a bunch of
13 computer stuff and then bringing it up to the
14 Captain and the Captain would sign it.

15 MR. [REDACTED] And, when you were up
16 on the bow, did you ever take draft readings?
17 Like, did you ever walk down the dock and get
18 them before you sailed?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: I didn't personally.
20 But, I would -- because we'd all stand by the
21 gangway to bring the gangway up before we left.
22 And the Chief Mate would go down and get the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 drafts and then he'd meet with the port
2 supervisor, I guess, and they'd exchange
3 paperwork. And, I think it was sort of a binder
4 with a thumb drive in it and some other stuff.

5 MR. [REDACTED] And, did you have a
6 radio on your hip?

7 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

8 MR. [REDACTED] And, could you hear
9 the conversations between the ships officers
10 involved with mooring and unmooring and the
11 tugs?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm. Yes, the
13 Chief Mate, when we were docking and undocking
14 trying to get me more involved, I would do the -
15 - I would call up like tug line on, tug line
16 off, X amount of feet from the docks, swinging,
17 closing, opening, that kind of stuff.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Did you ever call in
19 getting underway or, in particular, the Chief or
20 asking you to call down to the tugs and give you
21 the port side draft readings?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] So, the Chief walked
2 down and observed the starboard draft, but they
3 didn't get somebody on the outboard side of the
4 ship to get the port side drafts? Maybe the
5 pilot boat, could you hear the pilot boat?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Nothing, I didn't
7 hear anything, no.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, you know,
9 part of your experience was to learn as much as
10 you could about shipping operations, how did the
11 officers on the ship describe like the loading
12 of the ship or the stability or how would
13 affected the ship's motion at sea or was she a
14 heavy ship or was she a tender ship? Was there
15 any kind of conversation like that?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Not really. The only
17 thing I can really remember is That she swung to
18 port like pretty easily and pretty hard. I mean
19 that was about -- and she came over -- but she
20 came over to port quickly, quicker than she
21 could over to starboard.

22 So, steering, you'd have to pay

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 attention not to swing it -- it wouldn't take
2 much to swing it to port I guess is what I mean.

3 MR. [REDACTED] And, did anybody ever
4 talk to your about like a noticeable list like,
5 for example, on the run down to Puerto Rico,
6 because of the loading, there was more of a list
7 or coming out of Puerto Rico back to
8 Jacksonville, there was less of a lift or
9 anything like that?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Not for list, no,
11 because they'd always check the list before we
12 left. I forget what it had to be between -- you
13 couldn't have more than like a one degree list I
14 think so we wouldn't leave.

15 I remember one time, they had to --
16 we couldn't leave yet because they had to
17 readjust cargo so we wouldn't have too much of a
18 list.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Did they actually
20 readjust cargo or did they pump ballasts around
21 the ship to decrease the list?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: No, they moved the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 cargo. It was like one box or two up on the
2 main deck, up on the bow.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember where
4 that was in your stay? Was it the beginning,
5 the middle, the end?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: It was probably
7 around the middle.

8 MR. [REDACTED] What were the comments
9 about that? Anything? I mean, you know, these
10 ships pretty tight on its schedule, but did they
11 say anything about that?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: No, not in regards to
13 the schedule. Captain Davidson pretty much
14 always said well, we'll get there when we get
15 there. We've got to be as safe as we can.
16 We're not going to leave in an unsafe manner.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Any -- so you got to
18 interact with all the officers, the bridge
19 officers?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Can you talk about
22 your interaction with them? Sort of go down the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 officers and what kind of relationship you had?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Sure. Well, because
3 I got to see both sets of officers because of
4 the amount of time I was on there.

5 So, when I got onboard, I think it
6 was Jeremy was the Third Mate, Danielle was the
7 Second Mate, there was Captain Davidson. Who
8 was the -- we had -- it was a standby Chief
9 Mate, he was Russian. I can't remember his
10 name, I think he was Russian. He was only on
11 for a few weeks and then Ray Thompson came on.
12 He was the Chief Mate.

13 And, so, let's see, I got along very
14 well with Jeremy. I think he got frustrated
15 with me a couple times just because him doing
16 his job and then me kind of like learning but he
17 also has to do his job at the same time. Me
18 asking a bunch of questions all the time, so I
19 don't really blame him.

20 But, he was only on for a couple of
21 weeks and then he got off. His relief came on.
22 I can't remember his relief's name -- Alejandro

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 was his relief. And I did a lot of work with
2 Alejandro after that. I was pretty much always
3 on cargo operations with him and stuff like
4 that. And we got along really well, too.

5 Who else was there? I worked with
6 Danielle a lot, too, Second Mate. We got a long
7 really well and we'd go out in port sometimes or
8 go get food and stuff like that.

9 Who else? I got along really well
10 with Ray because we were -- because I stood
11 watch with him for those two months or whatever.

12 And, so it was him, who else was
13 there? I forget who his relief was. He was
14 from -- the Chief Mate's relief was from Puerto
15 Rico.

16 Yes, I mean I got along -- well,
17 everybody seemed to work really well with each
18 other and got along. I mean there was a few
19 little incidents when people got frustrated with
20 each other, but it was nothing you wouldn't
21 normally see in a regular office or anything.
22 Yes.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] Did they express any
2 concerns about the ship? We're talking about
3 shipboard, directly related to shipboard.

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Not that I can think
5 of.

6 MR. [REDACTED] Was everybody that you
7 know that you associated with, did anybody have
8 any problems with fatigue or getting enough
9 rest?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: No, well, Captain
11 Davidson always, especially the next morning
12 after we left port, would always say like was
13 anybody close to their SECW hours? Did they
14 need -- is anybody tired, they need me to take
15 over and they can go down and get some rest or
16 something like that, he always made That very
17 clear to anybody that if they were tired or
18 something, he would take over the watch or
19 something like that.

20 So, I don't think -- it didn't seem
21 like there was any problem with fatigue with
22 anybody. Well, there was one time an officer

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 fell asleep on watch, but Captain Davidson came
2 and work him up and had him stand up. I mean
3 that was about really the only time.

4 MR. [REDACTED] And, the typical
5 bridge watch comprised how many people?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Including me?

7 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, I mean if you
8 weren't on there, what would the bridge watch
9 be?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: It'd be two people,
11 the watch officer and the AB.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, and the AB was a
13 helmsman lookout or they were on Iron Mike or
14 autopilot and --

15 MR. RINGLEIN: They were on auto --
16 we were mostly on autopilot, yes. And then, so,
17 yes, a helmsman lookout.

18 MR. [REDACTED] So, when you went --
19 when you mentioned about the officer fell
20 asleep, were you on watch at the time or with
21 that officer?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I was on that,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 at that point, yes.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Any comments by
3 Captain Davidson as he came onto the bridge?

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Woke him up, told him
5 to stand up, drink a pot of coffee or a cup of
6 coffee, if he wanted to, or if he needed a break
7 that he would take over for him.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall where
9 the ship was at that time?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: We were in the middle
11 of our --

12 MR. [REDACTED] Far at sea?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes.

14 MR. [REDACTED] So, your watch is at
15 sea, I mean did you -- what did they tell you to
16 do? Were you there to -- did you do radar
17 plotting with the ARPA system?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: No, I didn't. I
19 would just do every hour was a position, so that
20 was my job was to take that position down and at
21 the end of watch, I would do the VOS and so take
22 the temperatures, wind direction, barometric

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 pressure, all that kind of stuff. I did that at
2 the end of watch.

3 And, I think was pretty much all I
4 did up there. I would work on my project, but -
5 -

6 MR. [REDACTED] Did you ever go with
7 somebody to check the VDR?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: No, I never went with
9 anybody.

10 MR. [REDACTED] So, part of the time
11 you were operating, there was a problem with the
12 El Yunque that they had problems with their
13 lifeboat davits and there was a time where they
14 didn't sail on schedule. Can you talk about
15 that a little bit?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Well, I mean I don't
17 really know much about it, just from what I
18 heard, that's pretty much all I heard was
19 they're having a problem. So but, I remember
20 our guys going and they were saying that the El
21 Yunque had a problem with that so we needed to
22 go and check up on that and make sure everything

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 was going good because we were probably going to
2 get looked at next.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Did it affect the
4 ship's schedule?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

6 MR. [REDACTED] So, you didn't -- your
7 sort of week long regimen of, you know, the
8 round trips down to Puerto Rico didn't change at
9 all as a result of that? Do you remember
10 loading any more cargo?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: I remember -- well, I
12 remember our schedule changed at one point. I
13 don't know the exact reason. I don't think it
14 was anything due to shipboard operations. I
15 think that was more office side. Because we
16 used to come in -- I guess years ago how they
17 had it was we'd come in Monday, unload Monday
18 and then we'd stay the night, load on Tuesday
19 and then leave Tuesday night or Tuesday
20 afternoon, one of those.

21 And then, well that's how it was
22 when I was onboard and then they switched it

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 back to how it used to be. I guess it used to
2 be where we'd come in Monday morning unload,
3 load, leave Monday night or Tuesday. Now, I
4 can't remember.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so just see if I
6 got this right. When you were on there in the
7 beginning, you kind of had a day to unload and a
8 day to load and then sail?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

10 MR. [REDACTED] And then, they changed
11 it --

12 MR. RINGLEIN: We used to stay the
13 night and then load the next day but then they
14 changed it where all our unloading and loading
15 was in one day. So, it was all on Tuesday
16 instead of Monday and Tuesday. That how.

17 MR. [REDACTED] And, you know, I have
18 to tell you that you have a phenomenal recall of
19 events. So, I'm going to ask you to -- I'm
20 going to press that and ask if you remember
21 when, not the date, but, you know, was it in the
22 beginning of your tour or the middle of our tour

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 this change took effect?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: It was towards the
3 end. Yes, it was towards the end.

4 MR. [REDACTED] And the end was August
5 4th?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Correct, yes.

7 MR. [REDACTED] That was Coast Guard
8 Day, by the way.

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Oh yes?

10 MR. [REDACTED] Yes. So, you know
11 y'all have everything to be proud over there
12 with your maritime merchant marine stuff.

13 You know, you're on there and you're
14 a deck officer and, you know, you creep into
15 hurricane season which starts June 1st. What
16 was the conversation with the ships officers
17 about, you know, hurricane season coming up?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't really
19 remember them talking too much about it. Yes, I
20 don't really remember there being much talk
21 about it.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Anything about

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 precautions or like, for example, we'll go down
2 the list like cargo lashing?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Not -- I mean it
4 might have been different, they might have
5 talked about it up for like the up -- because I
6 only worked down below pretty much. I never
7 really worked on deck with cargo. So, I don't
8 know how they -- what they really talked about
9 up there.

10 But, from where I was down below,
11 everything pretty much stayed the same from what
12 I remember.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, when you
14 say below, you talk about it below, are your
15 talking about like the vehicle decks?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Versus the topside
18 decks where the containers were stacked?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, the deck right
20 where they bring the ramp up to.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, that was
22 your area?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, from there all
2 the way down was mine, yes.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Were there any -- and,
4 as you went about the ship like in the, you
5 know, the mess decks or the bridge when you were
6 up there, did they talk anything like weather
7 routing? Storm avoidance? Slowing down?
8 Speeding up? Anything related to that?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Not that I heard of.

10 MR. [REDACTED] Did they talk at all
11 like even in a casual conversation about how
12 TOTE managed like the vessel operations
13 themselves? Like, for example, I know that the
14 ship sent a news report, was there any
15 conversation about how much the ship was
16 interacted with while it was at sea with TOTE?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Not that I know of.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall like any
19 messages that might have come in like over the
20 email system that were discussed about, you
21 know, you've got to pick up speed or you're
22 going to be late or anything like that for your

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 cargo?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: No, not that I
3 recall, nothing like that.

4 MR. [REDACTED] So, how was the
5 general mood on board?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: I thought, I mean,
7 besides what I said earlier about people being
8 disgruntled about how like working longer hours
9 and stuff like that, I guess that kind of made
10 people more unhappy, I guess, than normal. But,
11 it was nothing really that was -- it was nothing
12 more than anybody would be with like a regular
13 job I guess.

14 MR. [REDACTED] So, right now, there's
15 like a brand new L&G state of the art container
16 ship coming through the Panama Canal going to
17 come over there into that --

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

19 MR. [REDACTED] -- service. And they
20 just got another one building and then they got
21 these L&G conversions. What was the
22 conversation on board the ship about those

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 ships?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, that was a big -
3 - there was a lot of hurt feelings, I guess.
4 Some of the people were kind of unhappy that
5 they weren't chosen to go on the newer ships
6 where some people with less experience were
7 chosen to go on the newer ships.

8 And, some of the people were
9 disgruntled thinking that in 12, 16 months, I'm
10 going to be out of a job and then I have to go
11 find a new job and that kind of stuff.

12 There was a lot of people were
13 talking about that like trying to figure our
14 ways to possibly get on the newer ships or what
15 they were going to if they should get off now
16 and try to find a job or and it was that kind of
17 stuff going on.

18 MR. [REDACTED] And, you know, Captain
19 Davidson was a Maine Maritime guy and it sounds
20 like he had an affectionate relationship with
21 you because you were, you know, a fellow guy
22 from the academy.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 I mean, did he express any opinions
2 about what his role in the new ships were or,
3 you know, if he was going to get a new ship?

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, he was a little,
5 I guess you'd say he was a little hurt because
6 he didn't get chosen to I guess be Captain of
7 any of those new ships. And then, some people
8 that did get picked to be Captains of the new
9 ship didn't have as much experience. So, I
10 think he was a little hurt about that.

11 He told me a few times that he was
12 more hurt that because he, I think, I guess he
13 called and asked, like asked for the reasons why
14 he didn't get picked and they didn't really give
15 him any reasons. They just said we're going in
16 a new direction but they didn't really give him
17 any reason. So, I think he was a little hurt
18 about That.

19 MR. [REDACTED] So, do you know
20 anybody that was picked?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, Ray Thompson got
22 picked to go on the new ones. Alejandro.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] Was that Barrios?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Barrios, yes. He got
3 picked. I can't remember if Jamie got picked at
4 all, Jamie Torres. I'm trying to think if there
5 was any from the crew.

6 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall, I know
7 this wasn't your bag, but engineer wise, just
8 off the top of your head?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: I'm not sure. I
10 don't know if Mike Holland or Mike Brennan got
11 picked to on those new ones, I'm not sure. I
12 can't think of anybody from the engineering
13 department.

14 MR. [REDACTED] So, did that kind of -
15 - was that kind of pervasive like, you know, you
16 got aboard, you got to meet the Captain and then
17 you kind of picked that up or did that happen
18 somewhere like a watershed while you were
19 aboard, maybe the Captain called and said, hey,
20 am I getting that job and they said, you know,
21 they wouldn't give him the reasons? Did it
22 happen during the voyage or during your tour?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it wasn't --
2 yes, it was probably a couple of weeks in that
3 it started being talked about. Because, it was
4 kind of -- like it wasn't very talked about at
5 the beginning and then, like as we went on, it
6 was talked about more and more I guess as more
7 and more information was coming out about who
8 was going and who wasn't going, that kind of
9 stuff.

10 MR. [REDACTED] And, could you feel
11 it?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

13 MR. [REDACTED] It was palpable?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I could -- yes,
15 you could tell people were upset.

16 MR. [REDACTED] So, you mentioned the
17 Coast Guard ship riders. Can you talk about
18 what they did? You know, who they were? What
19 they did and so forth?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I actually still
21 keep in touch with one of them when all this was
22 going down. We would talk back and forth about

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 what was going on.

2 But, they were -- so it was a girl,
3 she was like had a -- I forget what she was
4 doing -- she had like a project or something she
5 had to fill out. And they sent another person
6 with her, I guess so she wouldn't be alone. And
7 then, they were on for a total of two weeks.
8 She was on for the two weeks. He got off after
9 the first week and then another guy came on. He
10 stayed the next week. And they got off.

11 They would just go around -- they
12 got like a ship familiarization, that kind of
13 stuff. And, I don't -- I wasn't with them all
14 the time, so I don't know exactly what they were
15 doing throughout the day.

16 But, they would spend time down in
17 the engine room. I don't know if she had like a
18 project or something that she had to work on
19 that was questions she had to answer and stuff
20 like that.

21 And then, like they stood a couple
22 of watches up on the bridge with us.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. [REDACTED] And what were -- what
2 was the, just in general, what was the Captain's
3 attitude, if you're aware of what his view about
4 them was?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: About them?

6 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

7 MR. RINGLEIN: He was always nice to
8 them. I guess I heard from them that I guess he
9 was a little disgruntled about them as well or I
10 heard that in the past. I can't remember
11 exactly what it was that -- I guess he didn't
12 like the way that they did that, how they had to
13 -- I can't think of the right words. He didn't
14 like the way that they went about doing their
15 training, like the way it was set up for them to
16 do their training, I guess.

17 MR. [REDACTED] So, let me see, I'm
18 trying to tell you if I just have a couple more
19 questions.

20 I just want to -- did you ever go
21 below the water-tight deck when the ship was at
22 sea? Down to the two lower -- they had the tank

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 tops and then the number three?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: I'm trying to think.
3 Yes, yes.

4 MR. [REDACTED] And, how did you get
5 down there?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Let's see, so I go
7 down to the deck where they load -- where they
8 put the ramp up to and load. And then, let's
9 see, then I go down the starboard side and then
10 there was a scuttle and you'd go down that
11 scuttle which goes to another one that would go
12 down and then you'd basically take those
13 scuttles all the way down.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Did you ever go from a
15 hold while you were at sea into the engine room?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: From a hold into the
17 engine room? Yes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] And, how'd you do
19 that?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: There's a -- because
21 there's the hold and then how'd I get in there?
22 I can't remember if there's a scuttle that goes

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 down or if we -- I can't remember. I can't
2 remember if there's a scuttle that you go down.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember --

4 MR. RINGLEIN: Or I can't -- we
5 might have gone into the engine room a different
6 way and then through the engine room. Because
7 you can go through the engine room into that
8 hold. And then from that hold into the engine
9 room, it was --

10 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Do you remember
11 if the water-tight door was open or closed?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: That one would be
13 closed. Yes.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And the
15 scuttle, did it have a quick acting hand wheel
16 on it?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm, yes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] So, the computer
19 system that they used to load cargo was called a
20 cargo max, did anybody show you how that was
21 utilized, like just for familiarization?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, and now I don't

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 know if I got that confused with what I was
2 saying before about the paperwork with the Chief
3 Mate. That might have been what that was that I
4 was thinking of.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Well, that's the
6 beautiful thing about the transcript. If you
7 remember things differently --

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Right.

9 MR. [REDACTED] -- it annotate the
10 transcript.

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Right. I think
12 that's where I got those two -- I think I got
13 those two mixed up. Yes, because he would show
14 me -- because it was -- yes, because I think
15 he'd have to factor in the salinity with that.
16 Yes, I can't remember exactly.

17 MR. [REDACTED] And, the only think
18 I'm thinking about is, you know, the point where
19 that was all dumped into the computer to
20 generate the paperwork, you know, whether it was
21 before you went to the focsle head or when you
22 came back after you left the focsle head.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Right. Was the cargo
2 max, was that the one it'll -- and it'll print
3 out like a --

4 MR. [REDACTED] One-page sheet.

5 MR. RINGLEIN: -- side version of
6 like what the ship looks like?

7 MR. [REDACTED] I think it'll just
8 print out a one-page sheet with the computer
9 generated draft, the trim, the list, the tons,
10 the long tons of cargo.

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I can't
12 remember. If I saw it, I'd probably recognize
13 it.

14 MR. [REDACTED] And when you looked --
15 you said the Chief Mate went down to take a look
16 at the load line -- the draft marks?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] And, did you ever take
19 a look?

20 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I think I did a
21 quick one.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Did you ever see the

1 load line submerged?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't think so.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, we've been at
4 this for a while, but is there something from
5 the, you know, my job is to look at, as part of
6 this team, to look at the decision people made,
7 the human, you know, the condition they were in,
8 fatigue, you know, medication, anything like
9 that. Is there anything I might have missed
10 just because I didn't think well about questions
11 I might have asked you?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't think so.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. We'll move to
14 my colleagues.

15 MR. CURTIS: Brain Curtis, thank
16 you, [REDACTED] I just have a couple questions,
17 John.

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Sure.

19 MR. CURTIS: I appreciate your
20 patience with us today.

21 Back to the Captain, you mentioned
22 that he wasn't selected. And, I don't want you

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 to speculate, but did you see any personal
2 characteristic traits that maybe that's why the
3 company decided not to have him take one of the
4 new ships, just from your own perspective?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I mean I guess
6 because the crew got a little frustrated with
7 him some times just with, especially with all
8 the things that were going on like with the
9 payroll and stuff like that.

10 And, yes, I'm not sure exactly
11 because he called and asked, I guess, and they
12 wouldn't give him a reason or not why he wasn't
13 picked. So, I mean I don't really -- I don't
14 know, I always got along really well with him,
15 so I don't know. I didn't really see anything
16 that I thought would get that way because he's
17 very, very smart. Like he knew what -- and he
18 was always very safety conscious.

19 MR. CURTIS: Okay. Back to the
20 EPRIB, just to verify that it was -- how many
21 EPIRBs were on the vessel? Just the one or were
22 there others that you were aware of?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Just the one.

2 MR. CURTIS: You mentioned you
3 tested it, could you go through the procedure
4 you used to test those and when they were
5 tested, the EPIRB?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, now I can't
7 remember -- yes, the EPIRB's the big bubbly
8 looking one. Yes, so we'd take it off the --
9 take the pin out, take the housing off, pull it
10 down and then you turned it to the right I guess
11 to -- well, it says test on it. Turn it to the
12 test and wait for it to flash. And then, it
13 would flash and then we'd put it and put it back
14 in and close it up.

15 MR. CURTIS: And, you put it back to
16 the setting?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, it would click
18 back.

19 MR. CURTIS: Okay. So, was it
20 basically at day time that it would go back to?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: Right, yes, it was on
22 like a spring or something, so you'd push it and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 it'd go right back.

2 MR. CURTIS: Just one last one. So,
3 you obviously got along with a lot of the folks
4 on board in the relationship. Was there one
5 person that was assigned as your mentor who
6 would take you around and generally be
7 responsible for making sure all your questions
8 were answered and anything you wanted to see was
9 arranged?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I guess he
11 wasn't really, I guess he was more self-
12 appointed as my mentor, that would probably be
13 Alejandro. He would always show me around and
14 stuff and make sure I was seeing like if
15 something was being done, he'd make sure I saw
16 what was being done.

17 But, pretty much, everybody, all the
18 officers on board were like that. If I had a --
19 I had no problems about asking questions or
20 anything like that because I knew they weren't -
21 - they would just answer them. They had no
22 problems answering my questions or anything.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. CURTIS: All right. Well, thank
2 you, John.

3 Brian, you have some follow ups?

4 MR. YOUNG: Yes, this is Brain Young
5 with the NTSB. Just a few more questions based
6 on what Brian and [REDACTED] have kind of started and
7 you really have done a great job in describing
8 the ship and the people and the maybe it just
9 created about ten more questions.

10 One thing when you were speaking
11 with and listening to the Captain about him not
12 being chosen to go to the new ships, you said
13 the Chief Mate was chosen to go over?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

15 MR. YOUNG: Do you know if he was
16 chosen to go as Chief Mate or get promoted to a
17 Captain?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: Well, I guess he went
19 over originally as Chief Mate, I guess, but
20 then, he pulled me off to the side and told me
21 that he was -- that they were going to move him
22 up to Captain. But, that I had to keep it a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 secret, I couldn't tell anybody just for people
2 on board that didn't get picked and that kind of
3 stuff. And, so yes, so I guess he's Captain
4 now.

5 MR. YOUNG: And, did you see any
6 change in the Chief Mate once he kind of found
7 out he was leaving? Did he say anything like
8 well, I'm glad I'm leaving this ship because of
9 problems with it or --

10 MR. RINGLEIN: No, that's why I
11 really liked Ray because he's very professional
12 about everything that was going on. Yes, no,
13 nothing like that.

14 MR. YOUNG: Nothing like, I'm
15 leaving this rust bucket kind of attitude?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: No, no, no, no, no,
17 he was very professional.

18 MR. YOUNG: And, once he was -- it
19 was decided that he was leaving the ship, was
20 there any tension or so between the Captain who
21 hadn't gotten picked and the Chief Mate who was
22 leaving? Did it seem like there was any issues

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 or say jealousy?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I think there
3 was a little jealousy. I don't know, Ray said
4 that the Captain would take jabs at him a little
5 bit here and there but, yes, that's what he told
6 me.

7 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And, just one
8 last question about the Captain and you and him
9 interacting. Did he ever say anything to you
10 about any plans he had for big vacations coming
11 up after he got off or was he looking forward to
12 any sort of activities at home after his trips?
13 Was there some big vacation coming up or
14 anything?

15 MR. RINGLEIN: No, nothing like a
16 big vacation. I mean he'd talk about like
17 putting his resume together and getting ready to
18 send it out and that kind of stuff. But, I mean
19 that's all he really talked about.

20 MR. YOUNG: And, did he ever say
21 anything to you about any sort of pressure from
22 the company for him to maintain a schedule?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

2 MR. YOUNG: No?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: No, because he'd
4 always say we'll get there when we get there.
5 We just want to get there safely.

6 MR. YOUNG: Yes, a lot of people can
7 say that, but do you think he actually carried
8 that out? Did it seem like that was his --

9 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I think he did.

10 MR. YOUNG: -- mode of operation?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm.

12 MR. YOUNG: Was there ever a time,
13 if you can remember, that the ship didn't leave
14 with its full engine propulsion availability say
15 maybe with one boiler or any issues with the
16 engine room?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Not that I ever heard
18 about.

19 MR. YOUNG: And, what was your
20 typical speed of the ship? Do you remember
21 going southbound?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: It was, I forget

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 which way was a little bit faster than the other
2 one. It was coming back the jets goes a little
3 faster. It was in the 20s. Well, I mean it all
4 depends on what time we left at, too, because we
5 had to make the -- I think it was like 10:45 we
6 had to be at the buoy at to get the pilot. So,
7 we would -- we'd be altering speed all the time
8 for an average 20, some where around there.

9 MR. YOUNG: And was that pretty
10 consistent northbound and southbound?

11 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, yes. I mean and
12 it all depends on what time we left the night or
13 the day before to make time. But, yes, I'd say
14 somewhere around 20.

15 MR. YOUNG: That's good. When you
16 were aboard, were there every any riding gangs
17 or any workers, laborers, aboard the ship other
18 than the cowboys?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, towards, it
20 wasn't really towards the end but it was a
21 little past the middle, I guess, they started
22 getting people on board to start converting over

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 because they were going to bring it up to
2 Alaska.

3 Yes, there was one guy that came on,
4 Jeff, I can't remember his last name, he was on
5 board down in the engine room working on stuff
6 and they would do stuff in port.

7 They would have us, when we were in
8 port, start clearing stuff off on the port and
9 starboard side on that deck where they drive the
10 cars up on. There was two -- I think they were
11 going put wenchers up there or something like
12 that.

13 So, our job was to go up there and
14 clear all that stuff off those and either throw
15 the stuff away or move it. We moved a lot of
16 stuff from the Bosun's locker up on the main
17 deck down to the forward and stuff like that.
18 We did a lot of that.

19 There was some -- there was two
20 welding guys that were on there. I think they
21 might have been working on the wench. I
22 remember them being on there. I think that was

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 about it.

2 MR. YOUNG: Never any Polish
3 laborers on the time you were there? Like a few
4 workers speaking Polish or does that ring a
5 bell?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't know if those
7 two guys working on that wench were Polish or
8 not. I never really talked to them.

9 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And, during some
10 of your maintenance jobs, did you ever go around
11 testing builds (phonetic) ***1:23:48*** floats
12 in the cargo holds?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: I don't think so.
14 No, I don't think so.

15 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And, were you
16 ever involved with ballasting the ship?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I did -- that
18 was one of my jobs, that was another one of my
19 jobs, was to watch the ballast and to -- so, at
20 a certain time when we got into port, my job was
21 to go down the scuttles all the way down to the
22 tank top and then I would open up -- there was

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 two ballasts down there. So, I'd open those up
2 and then I'd go back up and then on the second
3 deck, there was two more. My job was to open
4 those up.

5 And, we'd fill on to, when we were
6 leaving Puerto Rico I think, we'd fill one to
7 530 tons and the other one to 300 tons. And
8 then from Jacksonville to Puerto Rico, I think
9 they were both at 15 tons, I think, something
10 like that.

11 And yes, so that was my job was to
12 do soundings and to watch until they reached the
13 point they were supposed to be at. And then,
14 the Third Mate would usually check up on me and
15 then check it, too, afterwards.

16 MR. YOUNG: And, with the same tanks
17 every time that you would work on for
18 ballasting?

19 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

20 MR. YOUNG: Do you remember what
21 tanks they were that you were working?

22 MR. RINGLEIN: 1-A centerline and 1-

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 B starboard. And then, we also, at one point,
2 we had to go down in to the ballast tank because
3 the lever that went from the -- from down at the
4 tank top up to the second deck to open up that
5 one, would get stuck sometimes.

6 So, they had to -- we had to take
7 the plate off to get -- nobody actually went
8 down into the tank I don't think. At least I
9 wasn't there when they did, but we'd have to --
10 I remember airing it out and the Chief Engineer
11 was there and he was doing a bunch of work on
12 it. That was about it for ballasts.

13 MR. YOUNG: And, it may be different
14 in port or at sea, but when you were going in
15 and out of these scuttles, do you remember
16 having to open them up or were they always open?
17 Was there a rule about --

18 MR. RINGLEIN: They were always --
19 they were closed until we got -- until we were
20 docked and then I would go down and as I was
21 heading over there, I'd usually open up the
22 scuttles and I'd turn the ventilation fans on

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 until I reached the one scuttle and then go down
2 that one.

3 So, they were always closed until we
4 got into port then they'd be opened up that way
5 the long shoremen can come in and get down and
6 start unlashing.

7 MR. YOUNG: And, as a general rule,
8 would you find that these scuttles were closed
9 at sea or did you ever find any open?

10 MR. RINGLEIN: No, they were closed.
11 The only times they'd be opened is if we were
12 going down to work on something down below, we'd
13 open it up to go down.

14 Because I went with -- the Bosun's
15 job was to do a security check before we left
16 and to make sure those scuttles were closed.
17 So, I'd go with him every once in a while and
18 he'd do one side and I'd do the other side and
19 go check them out and then close them. So, they
20 were always closed, yes.

21 MR. YOUNG: Okay, good. And there
22 was one thing you said as part of your job in

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 port when cargo was coming on that you either
2 observed or assisted securing cargo. Who
3 secured the cargo when the vehicles came into
4 the second, third and fourth decks?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Long shoremen secured
6 the cargo.

7 MR. YOUNG: They did?

8 MR. RINGLEIN: Mm-hm.

9 MR. YOUNG: And what would the
10 ship's crew do? Would they observe or check or
11 --

12 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, we would check
13 because there was a couple times that they
14 didn't lash down the cars correctly, so we had
15 to go and we, ourselves, had to lash the cars
16 down.

17 And, we'd have to make rounds and
18 make sure the keys weren't in the ignition and
19 that the parking breaks were on and so we'd
20 check everything.

21 But, mostly, we were assigned with
22 doing the plugging the reefers and stuff like

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 that. And, we'd get to a point where they were
2 just brining them in and you'd have to -- it's
3 pretty quick, so you'd be constantly running
4 back and forth plugging them in and turning them
5 on and that kind of stuff.

6 So, we were mostly consumed with
7 doing that. But then, they'd do a walkthrough
8 at the end before we left or anything.

9 MR. YOUNG: Okay, good. When you
10 were out at sea and signed on to the ship, did
11 you have your own email address from the ship
12 and you were sending emails from the ship?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: I didn't send any.
14 They showed me how to but I never really needed
15 to because we were always in port at least twice
16 a week, so I'd always either Friday or Monday, I
17 would have cell service, so I didn't really need
18 email.

19 MR. YOUNG: And, if you did want it,
20 would you have your own name at something? Or
21 would it be a crew at globe net or something dot
22 com, do you know? Would you have your

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 individual email or would the whole crew use one
2 address?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: I want to say we all
4 used one because I think I remember them saying
5 that make sure you put your name in the title of
6 the email or something like that or whoever is
7 sending you an email, put your name in that.
8 That way they know it's yours.

9 MR. YOUNG: And, throughout your
10 voyage, would you have cell service for a while
11 or lose it or what was story with the cell
12 service on your trips back and forth?

13 MR. RINGLEIN: We'd usually have --
14 so, if we left Tuesday, we'd usually have it out
15 until we reached the sea buoy, probably close to
16 about there and then we'd probably lose cell
17 service and, yes, that was about it for both
18 places.

19 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And the last two
20 questions, did you have your own room?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

22 MR. YOUNG: You did? You didn't

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 have to share it?

2 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

3 MR. YOUNG: How was the food on
4 board?

5 MR. RINGLEIN: It was good. I liked
6 it. I didn't think it was bad.

7 MR. YOUNG: No? How much did you
8 make a day?

9 MR. RINGLEIN: I made, I think it
10 was \$34.00 a day, but then I got anything after
11 eight hours for me was overtime. So, I'd get
12 overtime.

13 MR. YOUNG: So, you were getting
14 overtime?

15 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

16 MR. YOUNG: That was good. I'm all
17 set.

18 MR. [REDACTED] I have a couple more.

19 [REDACTED]

20 So, can you give us just an overall
21 impression of the safety culture if you had to
22 sum that up?

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I thought
2 everybody on board, especially the Captain, was
3 very safety conscious. I mean there was one
4 point where he took me aside during a watch and
5 he basically gave me a lecture about how to walk
6 up and down the stairway ladders and stuff like,
7 the proper way to hold them and all that kind of
8 stuff.

9 Yes, everybody -- they were good
10 about doing things quickly and efficiently, but
11 safely at the same time. Yes, I thought the
12 safety culture was really good on board.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. You had
14 mentioned Captain Thompson and you used the
15 label with him, professional. Would you use
16 that same label for Captain Davidson?

17 MR. RINGLEIN: For the most part,
18 yes. I mean there was, I guess there was times
19 where he kind of wasn't as professional as he
20 could have been. But, I mean for a majority of
21 the time, yes, I thought he was very good.

22 He'd always -- I mean, he was

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 willing to go to bat for people I guess. But
2 the whole thing going on with the payroll and
3 stuff like that, he was always telling people
4 that he was going to make sure that everything
5 got figured out and that they were all taken
6 care of and that everything was going to go get
7 fixed and figured out.

8 So, I think, yes, for the most part,
9 I think he was. I think he was just very hurt
10 about not being picked.

11 MR. [REDACTED] And, you know, because
12 I'm looking at human factors, how did the hurt
13 manifest itself? I mean not his own hurt to
14 himself, but how did it transmit out to the
15 crew?

16 MR. RINGLEIN: I think some people
17 got frustrated with it just hearing about it. I
18 don't know, some people -- I guess some people
19 didn't really like him, but I mean that could go
20 for any person anywhere. But, I think a lot of
21 people respected him.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Captain Breuer Axelson

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 (phonetic) ***1:33:39***, he was on there for a
2 little while while you were on there, right?

3 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

4 MR. [REDACTED] He left TOTE.

5 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

6 MR. [REDACTED] Why did he leave TOTE?

7 MR. RINGLEIN: He had a lot of
8 family things going on. His son, I guess, has
9 some kind of mental illness or something like
10 that, I don't know exactly and something -- his
11 wife was having like physical things going on
12 like hospital kind of stuff going on. So, I
13 think he left for that to be home and be with
14 them and stuff like that.

15 MR. [REDACTED] So, did you kind of
16 gather that while you were aboard or did you
17 hear it after you learned that he left?

18 MR. RINGLEIN: No, I was still on
19 board when I heard about that.

20 MR. [REDACTED] No, I mean did Captain
21 Axelson (phonetic) ***1:34:48*** talk about
22 these issues and then later when he left TOTE,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 you said, you know, to yourself, yes, he was
2 talking about that or did someone tell you after
3 he left and you found out that this was the
4 reason for him leaving? Were you aware of it
5 while he was aboard, the family problems and so
6 forth?

7 MR. RINGLEIN: Oh, yes, yes. Yes, I
8 overheard him --

9 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

10 MR. RINGLEIN: -- talking up on the
11 bridge and stuff, yes.

12 MR. [REDACTED] And then, you
13 mentioned the 10:45 arrival at the sea buoy?

14 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes, I think that's
15 what it was, 10:45.

16 MR. [REDACTED] One of the company's
17 things in their mission statement is on time
18 every time. Do you think that was a driving
19 concern for the ship operation, adherence to the
20 schedule?

21 MR. RINGLEIN: No, I don't really
22 think so. I don't think there was ever really a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 hard rush to -- I mean we were always, for a
2 majority of the time, we were mostly slowing
3 down so we'd be there on time instead of being
4 there too far ahead of time.

5 I remember the Captain would have me
6 keep, when I was on watch, like hourly ETAs,
7 like the speed we need to make to stay on time
8 and stuff like that. But, I don't think it was
9 ever that much of a driving factor for him.

10 MR. [REDACTED] And, were you ever
11 really late?

12 MR. RINGLEIN: No.

13 MR. [REDACTED] I mean --

14 MR. RINGLEIN: No, we were always on
15 time when I was on there.

16 MR. [REDACTED] John, thank you very
17 much for answering our questions like you did.
18 We appreciate it very much.

19 MR. CURTIS: Brian Curtis, one last
20 time.

21 No questions, John, but I do want to
22 give you the opportunity because we don't know

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 what you might know that you consider important.
2 So, we'll open it up to you if you have any
3 questions about the process or questions about
4 that we didn't ask you that would be information
5 we might want to know?

6 MR. RINGLEIN: I can't really think
7 of anything. I don't really have anything.

8 MR. CURTIS: Okay.

9 MR. YOUNG: This is Brian Young,
10 again.

11 We'll each give you our business
12 cards and I don't think that happened yet, but
13 we will make sure and if there is anything else
14 you do think of down the road or maybe if we
15 have some other questions, we may contact you or
16 --

17 MR. RINGLEIN: Definitely.

18 MR. YOUNG_ -- through Captain
19 Gandy, again. But, again, we thank you very
20 much for helping us out.

21 MR. RINGLEIN: Yes.

22 MR. YOUNG: A world of information,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS
1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 very good.

2 So, we'll call the interview
3 complete. We'll stop the record. It's 1450.

4 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
5 matter went off the record at 2:50 p.m.)

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Interview of John Ringlein

DATE: 11-03-15

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 103 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.



NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701