

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: [REDACTED]

Thursday,

October 15, 2015

BEFORE:

BRIAN YOUNG, NTSB

CARRIE BELL, NTSB

This transcript was produced from audio

provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On Behalf of TOTE Services:

LEE PETERSON
Director, Marine Safety & Services
TOTE Services
10550 Deerwood Park Blvd, Suite 602
Jacksonville, FL 32256
904-248-4700

JIM FISHER-ANDERSEN
TOTE Services
10550 Deerwood Park Blvd, Suite 602
Jacksonville, FL 32256
904-248-4700

KEVIN STITH
TOTE Services
10550 Deerwood Park Blvd, Suite 602
Jacksonville, FL 32256
904-248-4700

On Behalf of ABS:

LOUIS O'DONNELL
Assistant Chief Surveyor
ABS Americas Division
ABS Plaza
16855 Northchase Drive
Houston, Texas 77060
281-877-5800
281-877-5803 (fax)

AL SHEPHERD, ABS
ABS Americas Division
ABS Plaza
16855 Northchase Drive
Houston, Texas 77060
281-877-5800
281-877-5803 (fax)

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

8:17 a.m.

1
2
3 MR. YOUNG: This interview is going to be
4 recorded and is that okay with you?

5 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

6 MR. YOUNG: Okay. So, my name is Brian
7 Young, I'm the Engineering Group Chairman.

8 It's 8:17 on Thursday, October 15th.

9 We're going to go around the room and
10 introduce ourselves.

11 MR. O'DONNELL: Louis O'Donnell, System
12 Chief Surveyor with ABS. I'm the ABS party
13 representative and I'm also part of the Engineering
14 Group.

15 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Jim Fisker-Andersen,
16 Director of Marine TOTE Services. I'm acting as part
17 of the NTSB Engineering Group.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Good morning, [REDACTED] My name is
19 [REDACTED] I'm a Coast Guard civilian investigator
20 and I work in the Human Performance Group.

21 MR. SHEPHERD: Hi, I'm Al Shepherd with the
22 American Bureau of Shipping from our Corporate
23 Management Systems Group and I'm here as a
24 representative in Human Performance.

25 [REDACTED] Good morning, ma'am. [REDACTED]

1 I'm here to support the Engineering Group.

2 [REDACTED] BELL: Good morning. Carrie Bell, NTSB
3 Human Performance Group Chair.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Good morning. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED] With the Coast Guard Department of Engineering.

6 MR. PETERSON: Good morning, [REDACTED] I'm Lee
7 Peterson. I'm with TOTE Services. I'm the party
8 coordinator.

9 MR. STITH: Kevin Stith with TOTE Services,
10 part of the Operations Group.

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Good morning, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED] I'm the Coast Guard Lead Investigator.

13 MR. YOUNG: And, if you could just introduce
14 yourself and state your name and spell it for the
15 record, please?

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] All right. My name's [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. And
18 I am [REDACTED] with [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]
20 MR. YOUNG: Great. Again, thanks very much
21 for your time this morning. And, if we could just
22 start with a little bit of your background as Coast
23 Guard [REDACTED] any sort of training or maritime
24 marine training you've had to get to this position.

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I've been in for ten years,

1 but I was prior enlisted. So after OCS, I sent to
2 Sector New York and did waterways management. But, for
3 this position, I am kind of a new inspector. I'm still
4 a marine inspector apprentice.

5 So, I've gone to Port State Control School
6 and done on the job training. I can't think of -- I've
7 been to other trainings that we've put on locally, but
8 nothing else that would -- no other technical schools.

9 MR. YOUNG: And, what is OCS?

10 [REDACTED] Officer Candidate School.

11 MR. YOUNG: And, what kind of a time period,
12 how long did you spend in OCS?

13 [REDACTED] Seventeen weeks.

14 MR. YOUNG: And, do you have an area of
15 concentration whether it's engine, deck, nautical
16 operation?

17 [REDACTED] As of right now, I mean it's
18 based on qualifications that you receive. So, I am
19 more of a trainee and I have to learn how to inspect
20 for both sides right now. I only do foreign ships.

21 And then, once I transition over to domestic
22 ships will be a little more concentrated in areas.
23 But, right now, I would just consider it to be a
24 generalized.

25 MR. YOUNG: And, prior to your ten years in

1 the Coast Guard, what was your education before that?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I have -- I went to the
3 University of New Hampshire, degree in communications
4 and sociology and then I have a Master's from Norwich
5 University in diplomacy, conflict resolution.

6 [REDACTED] BELL: Can you speak up just a little
7 bit?

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, sorry.

9 MR. YOUNG: Okay. I'm going to pass -- this
10 sort of questioning around the room with [REDACTED] training
11 and experience.

12 Lou?

13 MR. O'DONNELL: Yes, good morning, [REDACTED] Lou
14 O'Donnell, ABS.

15 You stated that you're the Port State
16 Control Chief in the New York Sector, so how long have
17 you been doing boardings and things like that with Port
18 State Control in New York?

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Not in New York, in
20 Jacksonville.

21 MR. O'DONNELL: Oh, in Jacksonville?

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] In New York, I was at
23 waterways management.

24 MR. O'DONNELL: Oh, okay, I'm sorry.

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] In Jacksonville, I've been

1 doing it for a year or a little over a year, so I
2 reported here last summer.

3 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. Approximately, just
4 off the top of your head, not specific numbers, how
5 many port state boardings have you done since you've
6 been here in Jacksonville? One a week? Two a week?

7 [REDACTED] It varies here, but I would
8 say maybe on average maybe three times a week.

9 MR. O'DONNELL: Thank you.

10 [REDACTED] You're welcome.

11 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: No questions.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

13 Could you tell us about your sea time or
14 underway time on vessels of any kind?

15 [REDACTED] I actually don't have any sea
16 time besides we did two weeks on the Coast Guard Cutter
17 Eagle in OCS. And then, the two weeks on board with
18 the El Faro.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

20 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: No questions.

21 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: I have no questions
22 either.

23 [REDACTED] with the Coast
24 Guard.

25 What was your grade when you were enlisted

1 before you went to OCS?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was an Operations
3 Specialist.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Thanks.

5 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: [REDACTED] as an Operations
6 Specialist, did you spend time in the Command Center?

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I did. I actually worked at
8 D-7 Command Center prior to going to Officer Candidate
9 School and, before that, I was as Group Port Angeles.

10 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: Okay, thank you.

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] U.S. Coast Guard.

12 Can you briefly described what an Operations
13 Specialist is and what that job entails?

14 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] An Operations Specialist, at
15 least for my portion because it's kind of broken up
16 both afloat and ashore, but I did search and rescue.
17 So, I would be the -- in Port Angeles, I did all radio
18 communications. So, I'd be the first person to receive
19 the calls and organize search efforts.

20 And then, in District 7, we were kind of the
21 oversight of the sectors in Florida and D-7 in general.
22 And there, I did intensive SAR planning, or search and
23 rescue planning, for District 7's area of
24 responsibility.

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Thank you.

1 MR. YOUNG: Okay. If we could move on to
2 the specific voyage that you were aboard the El Faro.
3 If you could maybe give us a little background on why
4 you were sent there, when you were there and then what
5 capacities you were aboard the ship?

6 [REDACTED] As part of the Marine
7 Inspection Apprentice Program through the Coast Guard,
8 it's required that we go on a ship ride to kind of
9 familiarize our self with what life at sea is like to
10 give us a little bit of an understanding of the roles
11 and responsibilities of everybody on board so that it
12 makes us better inspectors to kind of see a day in the
13 life of what they go through.

14 We are in charge of filling out a practical
15 factors like PQS of certain tasks that we need to get
16 done.

17 The program says that you're supposed to
18 underway for anywhere from like, I don't know, I think
19 it's about a month approximately, but they shortened it
20 for myself.

21 But, what was the rest of the question? I'm
22 sorry.

23 MR. YOUNG: When did this voyage -- when did
24 this trip take place?

25 [REDACTED] So, I got on board on May 19th

1 and I got off the ship on June 1st.

2 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: I'm sorry, I couldn't
3 hear you.

4 [REDACTED] Oh, May 19th to June 1st.

5 And then, while on board, I kind of just --
6 do you want me to go into the details yet?

7 MR. YOUNG: Yes, sure and that leads us into
8 the next part. If you could somehow give us a summary
9 of what you did with as much detail as you can?

10 I know it's a few months ago, but if you can
11 remember even some sort of a schedule what you did,
12 again, details on some of the operations you might have
13 seen and what you might have been involved with? I
14 know you can't remember day for day for day, but in
15 general and then just kind of paint a picture of what
16 the ship was like and what you experienced out there.

17 [REDACTED] Okay. So, when the program --
18 the ship rider program lays out kind of a detailed
19 guide of how you should stand watches and what kind of
20 responsibilities that you need to get done while on
21 board.

22 Because I was in a shortened program, I
23 didn't necessarily follow the specific guidelines of
24 the program of watch standing.

25 I met with the Captain on the day of or the

1 day that I got there and kind of asked him what he
2 envisioned and what he wanted me to do while I was
3 there. And, he basically said just you're kind of on
4 your own, meet the -- like get all your PQS filled out
5 and then whatever you need from us, we'll provide.

6 So, instead of following the guidelines of
7 the watch rotation, I decided just to focus on spending
8 all day that I was on board going down to the engine
9 room, being on the bridge, participating in cargo ops.

10 So, I didn't really provide a set pattern of
11 how I would do it, but I would just make sure that I
12 was doing something throughout the whole course of the
13 day.

14 So, usually -- and then the PQS items
15 included a lot of asking a bunch of navigational
16 questions, going through testing emergency equipment,
17 learning how to steer the ship, finding out the roles
18 and responsibilities of all the crew members on board.

19 A lot of it is for our foreign freight
20 qualifications so, a lot of cargo ops and what their
21 loading procedures are, their safety features during
22 cargo operations. We worked heavily with the Chief
23 Mate and kind of understanding how cargo is loaded, how
24 cargo's offloaded, stowage.

25 And then, I also spent some time in the

1 engine room, not as much just because it was a
2 steamship, so a lot of the things that they did down
3 there didn't really apply to our normal day to day
4 inspections.

5 But, we spent, I would say, a couple hours
6 each week down in the engine room. We learned how to -
7 - and, I say we because each week that I was on board,
8 I had one of my Petty Officer's come with me. So, they
9 are doing kind of an abbreviated just for their foreign
10 freight qualification, they needed to do just kind of a
11 familiarization one page check off sheet.

12 But, we went down to the engine room. We
13 learned how they blew soot. The Chief Engineer walked
14 us through all the equipment and kind of -- I don't
15 have an engineering background, so he kind of just gave
16 us a lot of overall training on what each piece of
17 machinery did.

18 We participated in an abandon ship drill and
19 attended their safety briefings and musters.

20 And then, just on a day to day basis, I mean
21 I would -- we would have breakfast and then usually go
22 to the bridge for the first watch. And then, have
23 lunch and then either go down to the engine room or go
24 up to the bridge and then kind of fluctuate back and
25 forth.

1 And then, in port, we would stay on the ship
2 and try to do cargo ops. And, it was a little hectic,
3 so we tried to stay out of their way.

4 But, that was kind of an overview of the day
5 to day things that we would do.

6 MR. YOUNG: Okay. So, based on that, we're
7 going to start maybe asking a few more pointed
8 questions and mostly on the safety stuff, at least in
9 what I'm concerned with.

10 You said you did attend an abandon ship
11 drill. During that time, if you can remember, were you
12 -- or in your room, was there a PFD and a survival
13 suit?

14 ██████████ Yes, sir.

15 MR. YOUNG: It was in your room?

16 ██████████ In my room.

17 MR. YOUNG: Okay. And, at any time, did you
18 bring those with you to the drill or open them up or
19 use them?

20 ██████████ I used my PFD. I never used
21 the immersion suit.

22 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Do you remember where it
23 was stored in your room?

24 ██████████ It was in the locker.

25 MR. YOUNG: Was it locked?

1 ██████████ No.

2 MR. YOUNG: You were able to get to it?

3 ██████████ I was able to get to it.

4 MR. YOUNG: All right. And, when you did go
5 to the abandon ship drill, do you remember if the boat
6 was actually launched down the embarkation deck or did
7 it remain up in the cradle?

8 ██████████ It was launched to the
9 embarkation deck.

10 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Did you attend more than
11 one abandon ship drill?

12 ██████████ No, just one.

13 MR. YOUNG: Just one? And during that
14 drill, do you remember any issues with the boat being
15 launched to the embarkation level?

16 ██████████ No.

17 MR. YOUNG: Did you attend a fire drill?

18 ██████████ I don't recall having a fire
19 drill.

20 MR. YOUNG: Okay. When you initially joined
21 the vessel, were you required to complete any
22 familiarization?

23 ██████████ Yes, the Third Mate, it was
24 the second day I was on board. He took us through an
25 extended familiarization tour of the ship, a little

1 more in depth than I think other people would have
2 given.

3 But, we went through all the safety
4 precautions. He showed us how to shut -- he went
5 through every possible emergency on board and walked us
6 around the entire ship. It took about four hours.

7 MR. YOUNG: And, the other thing you
8 mentioned, too, is you were part of maybe the morning
9 muster or any sort of safety briefings -- could you
10 just give us a little more detail on any safety
11 briefings you may remember?

12 [REDACTED] I only remember one and I
13 don't necessarily remember everything that was
14 discussed, but they gathered all the crew into the crew
15 mess and they were talking about -- I want to say it
16 was more of a roundtable discussion on safety, but I
17 forget what the topic of conversation was.

18 MR. YOUNG: And, do you remember the
19 Captain's name that was aboard the ship?

20 [REDACTED] Mike Davidson.

21 MR. YOUNG: It was Mike Davidson? Okay,
22 when it comes to drills and safety meetings, maybe
23 we'll open it up to the rest of the room.

24 MR. O'DONNELL: Louis O'Donnell, ABS.

25 Just a few quick questions. You said you

1 did some watches but you didn't spend a lot of time,
2 did you spend a full engine watch -- possibly
3 maneuvering watch?

4 [REDACTED] I was down in the engine room
5 for maneuvering. And, I also did an oilers round, a
6 couple of them. One of the oilers walked me through
7 and then I wanted to see how well I picked up on that
8 so I tried to do an oilers watch on my own just as
9 practice.

10 So, I stood a large amount of time down
11 there, but I didn't stand a full watch.

12 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay, understood.

13 [REDACTED] But, I was down there for
14 maneuvering.

15 MR. O'DONNELL: Did you happen to maybe or
16 did the Chief or the First when they were getting ready
17 to take arrival, did they happen to take you and walk
18 you through like the pre-arrival procedures on the
19 bridge and in the engine room testing gear or, you
20 know, testing manage and, you know, make sure they were
21 ready for arrival, all the things that would be
22 normally required for a CFR?

23 [REDACTED] Yes, sir. I went through all
24 the pre-arrivals with the Second Mate on the bridge and
25 I have a copy of the check off sheets and she went

1 through all the details of everything that they test
2 prior to.

3 And then, I also, during maneuvering
4 operations, I went down to the engine room, I think an
5 hour or so prior to, and they showed me the steps of
6 maneuvering and their testing procedures.

7 MR. YOUNG: Okay. How did you feel -- how
8 did you see, during the abandon ship drill that you
9 witnessed, how would you rate, based on your
10 experiences as a Port State Inspector, rate the
11 competency of the crew during their abandon ship drill?

12 ██████████ I felt like they were very
13 competent. I mean we do abandon ship drills on every
14 inspection that we go on and I saw no problems with the
15 way they conducted their drills.

16 MR. YOUNG: And, did everybody have their
17 PFD? I mean were the PFD on ready to go? I mean
18 everybody took the drill very seriously?

19 ██████████ Yes, sir.

20 MR. YOUNG: Okay. All right, thank you. No
21 further questions.

22 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: No further questions.

23 MR. ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ Coast Guard.

24 The Human Factors Group, you know, the
25 quality of the drills and how they were carried out are

1 very important. So, I have some questions.

2 You participated in two voyages on ship?

3 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, did they conduct
5 an abandon ship drill on each voyage?

6 [REDACTED] No, it was just the one
7 abandon ship drill in the two week period that I was
8 there.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, do you recall like
10 after you got underway or some time after that, do you
11 recall when that drill occurred? Like, was it the day
12 after they got underway or some other time?

13 [REDACTED] I don't recall. I want to say
14 that it was on my second voyage and not on my first,
15 which would be the second week I was on board, but I
16 don't recall the specific day.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, on board the El
18 Faro, did you -- the event that evolved, as best you
19 can recall, take us through the drill, the abandon ship
20 drill, you know, from the time into the normal to the
21 time the drill started.

22 [REDACTED] I honestly don't remember the
23 specific details. I remember lowering the lifeboat.
24 And, for the beginning portion of the drill, I was on
25 the bridge because all the guests or any visitors to

1 the ship always stay on the bridge prior to going out
2 to the lifeboats.

3 But, I don't remember the detail. I can
4 walk you through an abandon ship drill, but I don't --
5 it wouldn't be from my recollection.

6 MR. [REDACTED] No, we're looking specifically
7 to this one.

8 [REDACTED] Right.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall just offhand if
10 people brought items to the abandon ship drill? For
11 example, radios or any equipment like that?

12 [REDACTED] I don't remember.

13 MR. [REDACTED] And, after the drill, do you
14 recall if they had any -- like a feedback session to
15 determine if there were any deficits uncovered or, you
16 know, evaluate the quality of the drill?

17 [REDACTED] They did. They all met in the
18 crew mess after the drill to go over what was done.

19 MR. [REDACTED] And, just returning to the
20 orientation, the four hour orientation, do you remember
21 if the Mate talked about water-tight doors?

22 [REDACTED] He did.

23 MR. [REDACTED] And, what did he say?

24 [REDACTED] He showed us where the water-
25 tight doors were and how they're operated.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Did he say anything about the
2 policy -- shipboard policy about those doors?

3 [REDACTED] I don't recall.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. During the drill, do
5 you recall if the ship had like a riding crew on there
6 in this voyage that we're investigating, did they have
7 Polish riding crew?

8 [REDACTED] No, the only guests on board
9 were myself and the Petty Officers that came with me on
10 each week.

11 MR. [REDACTED] And, a the safety meeting on
12 both voyages?

13 [REDACTED] Safety meeting was on the
14 first voyage.

15 MR. [REDACTED] And, just offhand, do you know
16 how long it lasted?

17 [REDACTED] It was about 40 minutes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Did it seem like a majority of
19 the crew was there?

20 [REDACTED] Everyone was there except for
21 the critical people on watch.

22 MR. [REDACTED] And then, you mentioned, you
23 know, getting on in the morning and having breakfast
24 and going out, did you stand any night watches or
25 perform this, you know, this training at night?

1 ██████████ I did not. The only time I
2 did night ops was if we were transiting. So, I think
3 the first night, we left pretty late and I was there
4 for that, but I didn't -- I felt like we had already
5 taken up a lot of the crew's time and I didn't want to
6 bombard them on night watches as well.

7 MR. ██████████ And June 1st is, you know,
8 when you got off the ship was the start of the Atlantic
9 hurricane season, was there any discussion about --
10 related to safety about the upcoming hurricane season?

11 ██████████ Not that I recall.

12 MR. ██████████ Thank you.

13 ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ Officer for
14 ABS.

15 Just a couple of questions, with regard to
16 when you had the orientation and you took about four
17 hours, you said?

18 ██████████ Yes, sir.

19 ██████████ Pretty detailed. And that
20 was your second day of the launch?

21 ██████████ That was my second day.

22 ██████████ Right. And you covered in
23 good detail on how thorough.

24 Before you actually got underway, on the
25 first day, was there any kind of orientation for you?

1 ██████████ ██████████ The Captain met with us and
2 had us fill out all the in-dock paperwork and basically
3 told us to be on the bridge if there was any
4 emergencies.

5 The first day we got on board, it was hectic
6 because it was cargo ops and I don't think -- we were
7 kind of left to fend for ourselves in a way. Like, we
8 weren't underway at that point. So, the in-dock was
9 the first day we were actually underway.

10 So, I got on board, well, I guess I got --
11 yes, that would have been the second day, I'm sorry.

12 But, so, the first day that we got on board
13 was really chaotic. So, besides that first meeting
14 with the Captain, we kind of just hung out and waited
15 for things to settle down and then once we were leaving
16 port, we met on the bridge and did the transit. And
17 then, there was a lot of discussion, but no formal
18 briefing prior to.

19 ██████████ ██████████ Thank you.

20 ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ Coast Guard.

21 Does the -- you had stated earlier that you
22 had a syllabus that was required to be filled out. Is
23 that still in this requirement that you go to a safety
24 brief of any type and get it signed off or anybody
25 attend by the crew is it a required part of your

1 training?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I know that there were certain
3 items that we had to have signed off. I don't remember
4 all of them. I believe my training officer still has
5 that PQS and I can talk to him when I get back to the
6 office about finding it because it has specific dates
7 that I did everything.

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay.

9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I remember taking notes on the
10 back of it and said like safety brief. So, anything
11 besides the day to day stuff, I would kind of make a
12 note of.

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So, as far as the PQS items in
14 the syllabus, one of those items was a safety brief,
15 sending you to a safety brief?

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I don't recall.

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] All right, thank you.

18 Going on break, do you remember if there was
19 any discussion of whether -- since you were coming on
20 right at the beginning of hurricane season, so was
21 there anything in the safety brief that talked about
22 weather or a hurricane, did they do anything like that
23 or any different type of caution begun and (inaudible)
24 ***0:25:17***?

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I vaguely recall talking about

1 heavy weather, but I don't remember enough detail to be
2 exact on that.

3 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] But it was talk about heavy
4 weather?

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'm pretty confident that it
6 was but I don't know a hundred percent.

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] When you attended the safety
8 meetings that you attended, do you remember any of the
9 topics that were discussed?

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, sir.

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Did you take notes during that
12 same meeting?

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I did not.

14 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] You did not? Okay. Did you
15 receive any type of -- in association with the
16 (inaudible) *****0:25:54***** the ship, did you receive any
17 type of a pamphlet or any type of a booklet that was --
18 to take back to your room with you that night or
19 anything to study or any information like that?

20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, it was everything that I
21 had brought on myself.

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay. And, whenever you went to
23 the drill, do you remember if you were given any
24 detailed instructions on how to launch the life -- any
25 appliances and the life raft, was the life raft a part

1 of that drill? Any instructions with that?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] They didn't go into the life
3 raft launching. I do remember details about them
4 explaining how to lower the lifeboat and I even
5 participated in bringing it back up.

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Thank you.

7 [REDACTED] BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

8 You mentioned that when you went through all
9 the familiarization training that you felt like you
10 probably got more than most in terms of the
11 extensiveness of that familiarization. Can you tell me
12 why you think you got more than most?

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The Third Mate that was on
14 board at that time was very thorough. So, I think he
15 was very big on safety and everything onboard. And so,
16 every time he provided us training, it was more
17 thorough.

18 And, the reason I said that it was most, was
19 there was -- I know we had mentioned riders on board,
20 there were two cadets on aboard that, at the time. The
21 deck cadet that was with us ended up coming on this
22 safety brief even though he had already been on one
23 prior to and he said that it was way more involved than
24 the one he had received by the previous Third Mate.

25 [REDACTED] BELL: So, the two cadets with you, they

1 came on at different times?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The ones that came with me or
3 the cadets?

4 [REDACTED] BELL: The ones that came with you.

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay.

6 [REDACTED] BELL: Sorry.

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The ship riders that came with
8 me were, one came on the first week and then when we
9 pulled into Jacksonville, one got off and the other one
10 got back on or the other one came on. It was basically
11 so that I wasn't out there by myself. And, it gave
12 them a familiarization also.

13 [REDACTED] BELL: And they gave them a (inaudible)
14 ***0:28:15***?

15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Not a full -- I mean they just
16 had a one-page check off sheet that was more tailored
17 to their foreign freight inspections that they just
18 basically had to meet with the Captain and the Chief
19 Mate to talk about cargo.

20 [REDACTED] BELL: So, was that -- do you feel like
21 he -- either one of those Petty Officers did not get as
22 much familiarization training?

23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The first one got the full
24 four-hour brief. The second one didn't get any safety
25 briefing.

1 ██████ BELL: Did he request any additional
2 information or --

3 ██████ ██████████ No, the Chief Mate, we were
4 supposed to sign in with the Chief Mate saying that we
5 were going to do a safety briefing and then it never
6 ended up happening.

7 ██████ BELL: That's all I have for now.

8 ██████ ██████████ ███████ ██████████ with the Coast
9 Guard.

10 The safety briefing that the Third Mate took
11 you on, was he following a check list or was it mostly
12 on memory just what he knew about the --

13 ██████ ██████████ It was mostly on memory. He
14 literally just walked us through every part of the
15 ship, talked about anchoring, talked about -- we went
16 down to the engine room. He was talking about shutoffs
17 and just every possibly safety feature of the ship and
18 he was just doing that by memory.

19 ██████ ██████████ Okay. Do you recall, just
20 regarding the safety briefing, any safety stuff
21 regarding cargo security? We're going to go into more
22 detail on cargo securing later, so don't necessarily go
23 into it all, just regarding the safety briefing on
24 cargo.

25 ██████ ██████████ I don't remember specifics

1 about that now.

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Did you take a camera on
3 board with you?

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I had --

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Or use a phone? Did you take
6 any photos while you were on board?

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I did take a few photos. The
8 Captain said that there was a strict no photo policy,
9 so I was very careful on what I took pictures of. I
10 did upload all the pictures, myself and one of the
11 other Petty Officers that took pictures, uploaded all
12 pictures that were pertinent to the ship into a folder
13 that we have. So, there's some of us in the lifeboat
14 because we did a lifeboat inventory. And there are
15 some of cargo ops just because I was excited to be
16 onboard. But then the Captain said we couldn't take
17 pictures, so I wanted to make sure I wasn't taking too
18 many pictures.

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Did he say anything about
20 why, do you remember?

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I think that there are -- I
22 had heard, not from him, but I think that there was
23 some people taking pictures that ended up getting other
24 people in trouble. I'm not sure if that was related to
25 some other incident like years ago, but they have signs

1 up on the ship that says no photography. So, I thought
2 it was more probably a company policy.

3 [REDACTED] Thank you.

4 MR. PETERSEN: [REDACTED] I just have one quick
5 clarification. This is Lee Petersen with TOTE.

6 When you say that the second day on board,
7 you had the in depth indoctrination, that was the first
8 day at sea?

9 [REDACTED] Yes. So --

10 MR. PETERSEN: So, it'd be the second -- the
11 first day being in port, you guys left that night and
12 the next day you had the indoctrination?

13 [REDACTED] Yes, sir. So, I got on board,
14 initially, there was discussions of me being on board
15 on Monday and then staying overnight. But, we decided
16 to go on board on Tuesday, do cargo ops that day and
17 then Wednesday, or Tuesday night we got underway so the
18 first safety briefing was at sea.

19 MR. PETERSEN: Okay, thank you.

20 MR. STITH: Kevin Stith with TOTE Services.

21 Do you happen to remember who the name of
22 the Third Mate that you gave the familiarization?

23 [REDACTED] I don't remember his last
24 name, but it was Alex.

25 MR. STITH: Okay. And, the name of the

1 Chief Mate?

2 [REDACTED] I'm trying to think.

3 MR. STITH: Don't worry about it.

4 [REDACTED] I know he used to run L&G
5 ships but, I'm drawing a complete blank on his name.

6 MR. STITH: Okay, no problem. Just one
7 other -- do you remember who the Chief Engineer was?

8 [REDACTED] Rich, who was currently on
9 board.

10 MR. STITH: Okay. I've got a couple other
11 quick ones.

12 For your familiarization or ship tour or
13 whatever, in particular the bridge, I know you have
14 like limited bridge time and whatnot, but did you hear,
15 see anything unusual alarms or maybe obvious broken or
16 deficient equipment?

17 [REDACTED] No, everything on the bridge
18 was functional.

19 MR. STITH: All right. Kind of the same
20 thing in your safety tour around the ship looking at
21 fire stations or fire extinguishers or anything like
22 that, did you see anything that seemed to obviously
23 inadequate, out of place?

24 [REDACTED] No, everything that we had
25 looked at seemed to be functional. I would randomly

1 look at expiration dates just because it's what I'm
2 used to doing.

3 MR. STITH: That's what you do?

4 [REDACTED] And, I do want to caveat by
5 saying, when put on the ship, we were told to be in
6 more of a training environment and not an inspector's
7 role. So, not that I wasn't looking, but that wasn't -
8 - I wanted to make sure that the crew knew we weren't
9 on board in an inspection capacity and that, really, we
10 were just there to learn as much as possible.

11 So, I feel like if I was on board for an
12 inspection, I would be obviously eyes more open. But,
13 I was really there just to soak up as much information
14 and knowledge as I could.

15 But, I didn't see anything that was not
16 functional. We did -- when we did the lifeboat
17 inspection, we found their water was expired. But,
18 they replaced it as soon as they pulled into port.

19 MR. STITH: Okay. So, just to go on with
20 that real quick. They had extra equipment or extra
21 water?

22 [REDACTED] I think they ordered water to
23 have in the port in Jacksonville as soon as we pulled
24 in.

25 MR. STITH: Okay, so they got it

1 immediately?

2 [REDACTED] Mm-hm.

3 MR. STITH: All right. Just one other
4 question on with that. Basically, in your time or
5 going around the ship, did anybody ever approach you
6 with any concerns about the stability, the shape of the
7 ship, the equipment, the operation?

8 [REDACTED] No, not at all.

9 MR. STITH: Okay, thank you.

10 [REDACTED] Good morning, [REDACTED] It's
11 [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard.

12 During your time on board, did you ever
13 encounter any significant weather while you were
14 transiting?

15 [REDACTED] No, we had exceptional
16 weather. It was very calm.

17 [REDACTED] During your conversations
18 with the Chief Engineer, did you discuss any engine
19 route casualties like what you might encounter with an
20 engine type casualty?

21 [REDACTED] He did not -- I mean, there
22 was no engineering casualties while I was on board. He
23 was talking about how intense the steamship is and how
24 if there was a casualty, it would be more, I don't want
25 to say catastrophic, but I think that there's a lot

1 more that comes into running a steamship than a regular
2 ship.

3 So, I think I said at one point, like if in
4 an emergency situation, because they have to warm up
5 the plant for X amount of minutes and it's not
6 immediate. And, I said, well, would you be able to --
7 how would you be able to maneuver -- you had to leave
8 like quickly? And he said we could do it but it
9 wouldn't be in the best condition.

10 So, we talked about stuff like that, but
11 nothing specific to an actual incident that had
12 occurred or anything like that. I was just kind of
13 curious on how it related to other engines.

14 ██████████ Did you ever see anything on
15 the vessel or with crew competency that would stand out
16 to you as a Port State Control Inspector as a
17 deficiency or as a problem?

18 ██████████ No, not at all. I was
19 actually very impressed with the crew and the knowledge
20 that they had. I mean I learned so much from each one
21 of them and I never saw anything that made me think
22 that somebody wasn't capable of being in that position.

23 ██████████ How about level of
24 professionalism like conduct?

25 ██████████ They were all -- I thought

1 that it was superior. I mean, I don't -- we weren't
2 treated poorly. I really bonded with the crew, so I
3 felt like they were very professional and competent.

4 [REDACTED] Thank you.

5 MR. O'CONNELL: Louis O'Donnell with ABS.

6 One redirect to the Captain's question. You
7 stated their professionalism was superior and you
8 bonded with the crew. Did you feel like they welcomed
9 you as, even though you were an outsider and you were
10 coming in on into their family as the crew, did they, I
11 mean, you spoke about how the Third Mate spent a long
12 time giving you a brief, like they took you in as part
13 of the team while you were on board?

14 [REDACTED] I felt -- the first day or
15 two, it was a little weird just because we were trying
16 to like kind of push our way in and I think people were
17 confused on why we were on board.

18 The Captain was a little wishy-washy.
19 Sometimes he was very happy that we were on board and
20 then other times, he -- I felt a little bit as though I
21 was a burden to him.

22 But, the crew made it very apparent and they
23 had heard that the Captain would say some things about
24 us like making the crew uncomfortable on board. But
25 the crew would come up to me personally and be like,

1 we're very happy that you're on board and they enjoyed
2 -- I think it was nice to -- I think that route gets
3 kind of monotonous sometimes, so I think they were
4 excited to have something else to break it up a little
5 bit and they -- each one of them that I talked to was
6 very passionate about their job. So, I think that they
7 enjoyed training us.

8 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. And, when you say
9 crew, do you mean the officers and the unlicensed crew,
10 like maybe the Bosun, LMUs, Third Mate, Chief Mate,
11 Second Engineer? Is it a mix or is just the officers?

12 [REDACTED] I worked mostly -- I had the
13 most interaction with the officer. But, I did interact
14 with the rest of the crew during cargo ops and
15 maneuvering ops and the Bosun was always there. And
16 him and I talked a lot.

17 And so, a little bit of both, but I think
18 that most of my experiences come from when I talk about
19 competency or welcoming me in was mostly with the
20 officers.

21 MR. O'DONNELL: And, most of the junior
22 officers?

23 [REDACTED] Yes.

24 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. Thank you. Not
25 further questions.

1 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

2 Just a couple of follow ups. We asked about
3 pictures that you might have, do you have any journals,
4 personal journals or logs that talk about, or notes,
5 that talk about these voyages?

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, the only documentation I
7 would have would be from the PQS that I submitted to my
8 training officer. And then, we wrote after action
9 reports on that. So, he would also have a copy of
10 that. I might have one saved back at work.

11 MR. [REDACTED] So, that would be like a trip
12 report?

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Do you recall the
15 orientation that took place at sea, do you recall the
16 time of day?

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It was in the morning. We met
18 right after breakfast around 8:45, 8:30.

19 MR. [REDACTED] So, we talked about the
20 abandon ship drill, during these voyages, were there
21 any other kind of drills held?

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, sir.

23 MR. [REDACTED] So, there was one abandon ship
24 drill?

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] One abandon ship drill.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Just for clarification, was
2 Captain Davidson the Captain on all voyages?

3 [REDACTED] Yes.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Was there -- did you, you
5 know, you spoke about your impressions, your commitment
6 to the topics, the passion for what they were doing,
7 did you notice any difference in any subtle way between
8 the two voyages? Like with the personnel on how they -
9 - did any personnel change? Was there any --

10 [REDACTED] The only personnel that
11 changed out while I was on board was the Second
12 Engineer. So, it was Howie had left and [REDACTED] I don't
13 remember his last name, but [REDACTED] came on as the Second.
14 That was the only crew change out that I had on board.

15 MR. [REDACTED] So, this sense of the
16 professionalism with the crew, it was the same on both
17 voyages?

18 [REDACTED] It was.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Overall?

20 [REDACTED] Yes.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

22 [REDACTED] BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

23 You mentioned that you, as a group, you all
24 got together after the drill and talked about it. Were
25 there any deficiencies that were discussed?

1 ██████████ Not that I recall.

2 ██████ BELL: What was discussed?

3 ██████████ I don't remember.

4 ██████ BELL: And, did anyone else, at any time
5 while you were on board, express any concerns about
6 safety in general?

7 ██████████ No.

8 ██████ BELL: Okay, thank you.

9 MR. YOUNG: This is Brian Young with the
10 NTSB.

11 When you were aboard, were you in Coast
12 Guard uniform or were you undercover?

13 ██████████ We wore Coast Guard coveralls.

14 MR. YOUNG: So, they knew -- everyone knew
15 you were Coast Guard?

16 ██████████ Everyone knew we were Coast
17 Guard and the Captain kept trying to have us not wear
18 coveralls kind of so that we could be more, I don't
19 want to say approachable, but it looked more official
20 because we were in coveralls, but we didn't really come
21 with clothes that we'd want to work in necessarily.
22 So, and I just felt like it would be more professional
23 for me to be in coveralls than it would be for me to be
24 in civilian clothes.

25 MR. YOUNG: Got you. And, when you ate your

1 meals, did you eat in the officer's mess or the crew
2 mess?

3 [REDACTED] We ate in the officer's mess.

4 MR. YOUNG: And, being retired from
5 shipping, at 10:00 and 3:00 is the most critical part
6 of the day, coffee time.

7 [REDACTED] Yes.

8 MR. YOUNG: Would you have coffee in the
9 officer's mess or crew mess or in any other location?

10 [REDACTED] No, I mean I think that we --
11 I was usually on the bridge at that time. I didn't go
12 specifically for a coffee break.

13 MR. YOUNG: Okay.

14 [REDACTED] But, I did socialize with the
15 crew on a regular basis like and me and the Second Mate
16 would spend time together even if she wasn't on, so
17 we'd have coffee like in her room.

18 MR. YOUNG: Okay. I guess what I was
19 getting at, is it the crew interacting as a team for
20 coffee time and got together at lunch and seemed to be
21 a close knit group for breaks or lunch?

22 [REDACTED] I mean they interacted a lot
23 during the standard mealtime, but I didn't see them
24 interact too often besides that time.

25 MR. YOUNG: And, I know Captain Stith had

1 asked about any breakdowns on the bridge, but did you
2 notice any or hear about any breakdowns in the engine
3 room, any machinery that may have failed or not
4 performed properly?

5 [REDACTED] No.

6 MR. YOUNG: And, here's a hard question, do
7 you know if both boilers were running the whole time
8 you were there or did they ever shut any down?

9 [REDACTED] I don't know.

10 MR. YOUNG: Okay, I just had to ask.

11 And, one last question on this, the two
12 cadets, were they from any of the maritime academies or
13 were they from --

14 [REDACTED] They were from Maine Maritime.

15 MR. YOUNG: Both from Maine Maritime?

16 [REDACTED] Both of them. One was an
17 engineering cadet and one was a navigational -- one was
18 only on board for a month or two and the other was for
19 three months.

20 MR. YOUNG: And had they been on board for a
21 while?

22 [REDACTED] They had. I guess they hadn't
23 been on board for too long because they -- I know they
24 were still on board for a long time after we left. So,
25 I think they had just recently got on board. Maybe,

1 it's speculation, but two to three weeks prior to me
2 getting on board.

3 MR. YOUNG: And, typically, when cadets go
4 out to a ship, they're required to do a very large
5 project.

6 [REDACTED] Yes.

7 MR. YOUNG: Were you aware of any big --

8 [REDACTED] They were both working on
9 their sea projects the whole time I was on board.

10 MR. YOUNG: And, do you know what they --
11 what those projects entailed?

12 [REDACTED] I don't know all the
13 specifics. I mean I would look at -- I know the
14 engineering cadet was doing a lot of drawings and had
15 to learn a lot about the engine room. But, as far as
16 the deck cadet, he, I don't know it was like a huge
17 binder of all this stuff that he had to do and kind of
18 similar to what we were doing but on a huge level. I
19 don't know the specific details, but I know that he had
20 different tasks that he had to meet.

21 MR. YOUNG: Do you know or remember if any
22 of them were required to or were taking pictures for
23 their sea projects?

24 [REDACTED] I don't remember them taking
25 any pictures, but I don't know if they had to.

1 MR. YOUNG: Okay.

2 MR. O'DONNELL: Louis O'Donnell, ABS.

3 I have one redirect. You spoke a few times
4 about Captain Davidson, did you ever spend any one on
5 one time, you and your colleague, with Captain
6 Davidson? Did he maybe question you, discuss anything
7 with you? You know, besides the indoctrination you
8 referred to in the beginning, did, I mean did he really
9 spend any one on one time training, anything with you?

10 [REDACTED] He did actually. He would
11 bring us to -- a lot of times, we were all on the
12 bridge, so he would come up and hang out on the bridge
13 with us and if we had specific questions, he would
14 bring us down to his state room and kind of go through.

15 We talked a lot with him about cargo and
16 just the day to day ops from his perspective and what
17 his roles were. He had us fill out an NOA for
18 training. And, he was very invested in helping us get
19 what we needed done done.

20 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. So, Lou O'Donnell
21 here again.

22 You feel he was approachable if you wanted
23 to walk up to him? I know sometimes it's intimidating
24 as a cadet or a rider to walk straight up to the
25 Captain or the Chief Engineer to ask him a question,

1 but did you feel like he -- if you had to walk up to
2 him, he was approachable to ask a question? You know,
3 sometimes --

4 [REDACTED] Yes.

5 MR. O'DONNELL: -- we all feel like the
6 question I ask is, you know, we say a question not
7 asked is a stupid question. But, did you feel like you
8 could approach him and ask him anything if you had to?

9 [REDACTED] I felt like he was very
10 approachable. And, he would always joke around with
11 us. And, there were some times where I felt like he
12 didn't always want us on board, but he answered every
13 question. He talked to us. So, I never felt
14 uncomfortable with him.

15 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. That's it. Thank
16 you.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Coast Guard.
18 Thank you very much for your helpful
19 answers.

20 You said the weather on these two weeks you
21 were aboard was --

22 [REDACTED] It was pretty perfect. I mean
23 there was no rough seas. The winds were -- we were all
24 talking about it on the bridge because I was like,
25 well, this is kind of -- like, it would have been nice

1 to have -- I mean I didn't want to get seasick, but it
2 was beautiful weather there and back. So, the only
3 time we had any rain was in port in San Juan on the
4 second trip over. But, no rough seas at all.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so in this
6 investigation, weather is a factor.

7 [REDACTED] Yes.

8 MR. [REDACTED] So, you're on the ship and
9 it's really ideal conditions. Did anybody talk to you
10 about how the ship behaved in adverse weather?

11 [REDACTED] I know we discussed it a
12 little bit only because the ship was moving over to
13 Alaska eventually, so we were discussing how the ship
14 would handle over there and how the crew was -- they
15 were talking about having to nail down things and kind
16 of get it ready for more rough conditions because, for
17 the most part, they don't experience too much on their
18 normal run.

19 But, I don't remember hearing how
20 specifically the ship ran in rougher seas.

21 MR. [REDACTED] In your moving about the ship,
22 did you go down to the water-tight deck of the hold?

23 [REDACTED] I did. During cargo ops I was
24 all over the ship.

25 MR. [REDACTED] Did anybody talk to you about

1 in rough seas, and I'm just trying to make sure I have
2 this covered about at sea, like at rough seas on the
3 ship's typical runs, the seas would come aboard the
4 vessel?

5 [REDACTED] I don't remember any
6 discussions on that.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, did anybody talk
8 to you about any past experiences about any kind of
9 flooding or down flooding?

10 [REDACTED] No.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Stability?

12 [REDACTED] No.

13 MR. [REDACTED] And, anything else about just
14 the vessel operations that were on the voyage that you
15 were on? Like, what might have happened in other
16 voyages?

17 [REDACTED] I know that there was a lot of
18 discussions on things that like things that they've
19 seen or things that have happened, but I don't remember
20 specifics. I think it was just more talking on a day
21 to day -- I asked a lot of questions about what life
22 was like, so I don't remember if it was all based on
23 like experiences on the El Faro or just people's past
24 history on board ships.

25 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

1 ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ with the Coast
2 Guard.

3 You mentioned that the Captain went into a
4 lot of detail with you about the cargo. Can you
5 describe that in a little bit more detail for us?

6 ██████████ ██████████ We had specific questions on
7 one of my Petty Officer's PQS that was dealing with
8 cargo and he was just explaining his roles on how cargo
9 works.

10 I don't remember -- we also talked to the
11 Chief Mate a lot about cargo, so I don't remember
12 specifically what the Captain's role was. But, I know
13 he oversees all the cargo that's coming on board and
14 oversees what the Chief Mate's doing in regards to
15 cargo.

16 ██████████ ██████████ Yes, you can merge those
17 together, anything that the Captain or the Chief Mate
18 told you about part of the process or during cargo
19 operations, how they calculate stability, how they lash
20 cargo, anything related to cargo and stability.

21 ██████████ ██████████ So, one thing that I felt was
22 unique about this situation because we've studied cargo
23 for other ships, is that, for this one, they said that
24 the port captain was the one that set all the cargo
25 plans.

1 So, the Chief Mate didn't have as much -- I
2 mean most of the other ships we go on, the Chief Mate's
3 very heavily involved in cargo loading. Whereas, they
4 were telling me that the port captain is the one that
5 knows the cargo that's coming on and then he provides
6 that documentation to the Chief Mate prior to leaving.

7 And that I also, from my understanding, it's
8 kind of like an open brow, like all the cargo -- they
9 don't always know exactly what cargo they're getting.

10 And then, they load up to a certain point
11 and then they're shut off.

12 And then, I know that the -- everyone, or at
13 least all the deck officers were always down there
14 during their watches doing soundings. And then, I know
15 that the other crew was down lashing and making sure
16 that every thing was tied down prior to departure.

17 ██████████ Did you observe the process,
18 I know it was kind of a short period on board, just a
19 couple of weeks, did you observe the process where the
20 folks ashore, the steam doors and such called the port
21 captain where they would bring the stability
22 information, the cargo information, to the -- did you
23 observe that interaction?

24 ██████████ I didn't observe the
25 interaction, but I saw the paperwork.

1 ██████████ ██████████ Okay. Mr. ██████████ mentioned
2 the water-tight doors. When you were underway, what
3 was the common practice that you observed the water-
4 tight doors open or closed while you were underway?

5 ██████████ ██████████ I believe they were all
6 closed. The only time I remember them being open was
7 during cargo ops.

8 ██████████ ██████████ And which water-tight doors?
9 So, there's several different types of water-type doors
10 on this vessel, there's the very large cargo doors.
11 Within those, the large ones at the ramps, there's a,
12 you know, human-sized door to walk through. There's
13 also a water-tight closure and then there's smaller
14 hatches on deck --

15 ██████████ ██████████ Okay.

16 ██████████ ██████████ -- that we call stows that
17 also dog down. Can you go, just to the best of your
18 recollection, on each type of water-tight door, whether
19 it was opened, closed? If you opened it (inaudible)
20 ***0:55:00***? Did it seem like policy to close it
21 behind? Did the crew seem to close doors behind them
22 or were they left open?

23 ██████████ ██████████ I guess the only ones that
24 I've been picturing are the big cargo doors and I know
25 that those were open during a certain part of cargo and

1 then they had a routine of closing them. But, I don't
2 remember the specifics about all the other water-tight
3 doors and whether or not people would open them or
4 close them.

5 MR. STITH: Kevin Stith, TOTE Services.

6 Just going back to Captain Davidson real
7 quickly. In your time on the El Faro, did it seem like
8 he spent a fair amount of time on the bridge?

9 [REDACTED] He spent a large amount of
10 time on the bridge.

11 MR. STITH: On a daily basis, could you say
12 how many -- about how many hours he spent there?

13 [REDACTED] He would come and go a lot, so
14 it's kind of hard to -- I would say approximately three
15 to four hours if they weren't -- I mean, obviously,
16 during maneuvering, he's up there all the time, but I
17 know he would come up and hang out with the crew.

18 MR. STITH: Okay, that's good.

19 So, as far as his time on the bridge, you
20 would say he was very aware of everything that was
21 going on, situational awareness?

22 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

23 MR. STITH: And, very involved in bridge
24 team management?

25 [REDACTED] He was.

1 MR. STITH: Okay. Just one last question
2 about Captain Davidson. Would you characterize him as
3 the type of person that would be meticulous and very --

4 [REDACTED] Yes.

5 MR. STITH: -- straightforward and open?

6 [REDACTED] Yes, I think that he -- I know
7 he was always talking about trying to make things
8 better. Like, he showed me all these computer programs
9 that he created to kind of streamline things. So, he
10 was definitely meticulous in details.

11 MR. STITH: Would you say that he was the
12 type of person that would be prepared or had
13 forethought?

14 [REDACTED] Yes, 100 percent.

15 MR. STITH: All right. Just to move on, the
16 El Faro, in your time on there, did it seem like there
17 were any unusual steering or stability situations? Was
18 it leaning over to one side or taking --

19 [REDACTED] No.

20 MR. STITH: -- any sharp turns or --

21 [REDACTED] No, not at all.

22 MR. STITH: No handling issues? Were you on
23 board or on the bridge during like any departures or
24 arrivals?

25 [REDACTED] I switched it up. I was on

1 the bridge for arrival -- or departure and arrival.
2 And then, I was also -- and then I went to other --
3 like I went to a mooring station during departure or
4 arrival and then the engine room.

5 So, I want to say that I was on the bridge
6 for two to three arrival or departure.

7 MR. STITH: Okay. Did you observe
8 interaction with Captain Davidson and the pilots?

9 [REDACTED] Yes. I made sure to stay out
10 of his way, but he would every time he was out on the
11 bridge wings with the pilots, he called us over and we
12 listened kind of from --

13 MR. STITH: A distance?

14 [REDACTED] -- a distance. But, he wanted
15 us to be very involved with what was going on. So, but
16 he had intensive interaction with the docking pilots
17 and also the river pilots.

18 MR. STITH: All right. At any time, did it
19 seem like there were any issues in the river transit or
20 docking or anything that came up out of the ordinary?

21 [REDACTED] No, not at all.

22 MR. STITH: Okay. Did you happen to hear
23 anything from any of the pilots, any concerns about the
24 ship or the bridge equipment or anything along those
25 lines?

1 [REDACTED] No.

2 MR. STITH: Okay. All right, thank you.

3 [REDACTED] You're welcome.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the
5 Coast Guard.

6 How would you characterize the working
7 relationship between Captain Davidson and the crew?

8 [REDACTED] I think he had a good
9 relationship, but I think that they felt like he was a
10 little hands off on the day to day things like he was
11 heavily involved in navigation, but he didn't really
12 have much oversight of the like cargo or, I don't
13 really know how to put it into words of what I'm trying
14 to say.

15 I think there was some -- a little bit of
16 contention between him and the crew, but I felt like
17 they did respect him as a Captain and felt like were
18 comfortable with his judgments.

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] When you say a little of
20 contention, you had some time with some of the junior
21 officers?

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes.

23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Are you -- can you give an
24 example of why you might come to that conclusion?

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I think that, and maybe it

1 just comes with the higher you get up in the ranks, but
2 I felt like he wasn't always cognizant of how hard the
3 crew was working and he was the Captain. So, he had a
4 lot more -- I mean he's ultimately responsible for
5 everything, but he was a little hands off in the day to
6 day like grunt work of it all and didn't always
7 sympathize with how hard the crew worked.

8 [REDACTED] Did you hear complaints from
9 the crew that you were interacting with?

10 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

11 [REDACTED] Did the crew voice any
12 fatigue concerns to you about being overworked in that
13 basically related to fatigue?

14 [REDACTED] I don't know if they were
15 fatigued, but he did hold a very strict like I think it
16 was 12-hour days. So, like they got their allotted
17 rest, but there was no additional rest necessarily.
18 So, they were working the whole day.

19 [REDACTED] While you were on board, did
20 you hear or did you get the impression that the ship's
21 schedule played into that, that there was a mentality
22 that the ship had to be on time or pressure from that
23 side?

24 [REDACTED] No, I don't think so. I felt
25 like, obviously, during cargo ops, it was very chaotic

1 because there was a large rush to get everything going.
2 And, I know they had said that based on the currents,
3 they had to go full steam ahead down to Puerto Rico in
4 order to get there. And then, they kind of leisurely
5 came back based on the currents.

6 But, I don't remember there being any demand
7 to be there at a set time or be rushed because of that.

8 [REDACTED] Okay, thank you.

9 [REDACTED] You're welcome.

10 MR. YOUNG: (inaudible) ***1:03:37*** just I
11 know [REDACTED] been waiting awhile.

12 [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

13 Going back to the water-tight doors, to be
14 very specific, did you ever make rounds with the - out
15 on deck as part of your training?

16 [REDACTED] Yes.

17 [REDACTED] Sort of the routine rounds of
18 the place and how often did the crew make those rounds
19 up on deck?

20 [REDACTED] I did kind of --

21 [REDACTED] Was the round for the benefit of
22 your training or was the round a round the crew made
23 routine?

24 [REDACTED] So, sometimes I wasn't always
25 involved in every aspect that was going on because I

1 was in such a tight -- so, I wasn't always notified
2 when things were happening.

3 So, I know that different crew members had
4 set rounds that they had to do. I don't know what all
5 of them were. I know that I went out on a round to
6 check stowage and the reefers with the electrician the
7 Chief Engineer and they did that, I think they did it
8 like four times a day and the Chief went twice a day.
9 But, we did that right after dinner and checked all the
10 reefers.

11 But, I don't know the frequency of the other
12 rounds, but I know that each crew member was
13 responsible for -- I went with the Second Mate to do
14 soundings one time. So, I know that each crew member
15 had responsibilities and different types of rounds that
16 they had to do, but I didn't participate in all of
17 them.

18 ██████████ When you happened to know if any
19 of those rounds included checking of the water-tight
20 hatches and the doors and stuff to make sure that they
21 were secure?

22 ██████████ I believe they were but I
23 can't say for certain because I don't remember.

24 ██████████ And, with regard to water-tight
25 hatches, when you were down in the engine room, to be

1 very specific, on the portal side, there's a water-
2 tight door that leads into the number three cargo hold.
3 Do you ever remember going through that and into the
4 cargo hold or was it secure the whole time or was it
5 open for ventilation of the engine room? Can you
6 recall that? It's kind over on the portal ship side,
7 there's a little office over there is the way it was
8 explained to us directly under the hatch that leads
9 into the number three cargo hold on the number three
10 deck.

11 [REDACTED] I don't really remember to be
12 honest. When we did rounds, I kind of lost a little
13 bit of situational awareness. So, I don't always know
14 where we were or which route we had taken. So, I don't
15 remember.

16 [REDACTED] So, did you ever remember going
17 from the engine room into any of the cargo holds?

18 [REDACTED] I know that we -- on that
19 safety orientation when we were walking around the
20 entire ship, we ended up in the engine room and I
21 believe that that would have been probably the one time
22 maybe we did because I don't think we went through the
23 normal -- we kind of -- it was the second day I was
24 there, so I don't really remember, but I remember just
25 kind of being there but not going in the standard way

1 that we had always gone. But, we were crawling up and
2 down through the different holds, so I'm not really
3 sure which route we took.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So, was that when you were
5 underway?

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] That was while we were
7 underway.

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So, you went through cargo holds
9 underway?

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay. As part of your time when
12 you were underway with the vessel, did you get familiar
13 with or were you ever presented the safety manuals or
14 access to it?

15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] We asked about it as part of
16 our training and I looked through a little bit of it
17 but not in excessive detail.

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] All right, so it was part of the
19 (inaudible) ***1:07:46*** --

20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] -- to get familiar with it?

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes.

23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

24 MR. YOUNG: Great. Do you want to take a
25 quick five minute break?

1 ██████████ Yes, please.

2 MR. YOUNG: All right, it sounds like it.

3 Good, all right, let's take a give minute break.

4 (Whereupon, the above-entitled ██████████ went
5 off the record and then resumed at 0937 a.m.)

6 MR. YOUNG: Okay, the time is 0937. We're
7 resuming the recording of the interview with Lieutenant

8 JG ██████████

9 Okay, so we're discussing the some of the
10 observations with the crew aboard the ship in terms of
11 rest and fatigue and we'll continue with Carrie Bell.

12 ██████████ BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

13 So, you mentioned that he kept a 12-hour
14 day. Were there concerns specifically with the crew
15 about that or discussions that you had with them?

16 ██████████ I think the only discussion I
17 really remember having that with was the Second Mate
18 but she had, in my opinion, like the hardest watches.
19 So, she was -- I think it was, yes, the 12:00 to 4:00.
20 So, yes, the 12:00 to 4:00, so I felt like she would
21 get a watch at 4:00 and then have to be up at 8:00
22 ready to do like cargo and her other day to day duties
23 and then stand watch at 12:00. And then, get off at
24 4:00 and then quickly go to bed so that she could get
25 back up.

1 So, I think that that's just the nature of
2 being at sea and that's just the watch.

3 So, she was tired, but I don't think it
4 hindered any of her duties and that she was just used
5 to that.

6 I know that there were some talk that it
7 would be nice sometimes to have a little bit, if there
8 was no actual job that needed to get done at that given
9 moment, maybe having a little bit more rest. But, I
10 think it was just the nature of being at sea.

11 ██████ BELL: Was that conversation she was
12 having with you or did she have any of those
13 conversations with the Captain that you know about?

14 ██████ ██████████ She had with me specifically.
15 And I know one of my Petty Officers that came with me
16 and I mentioned something, I forget what the question
17 we asked the Captain was but it was in regards to rest
18 hours. And, he was like, oh, the crew's fine. They
19 don't need any more rest.

20 Like, and it was just kind of a comment that
21 he made, but I forget the specific question that was
22 asked to him. I don't know if she actually ever
23 brought it up to him, asking for more rest or not.

24 ██████ BELL: Do you know who did the schedule?

25 ██████ ██████████ From my understanding, it was

1 kind of an ingrained, I mean, as the Second Mate, she
2 always stood those watches. So, I think it was just
3 kind of a standard schedule. I'm not sure if the
4 unlicensed crew had a different schedule, but I know
5 that the Bosun was in charge of working with them.

6 [REDACTED] BELL: Were there any scheduled breaks
7 during this time that someone else would kind of
8 relieve?

9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The only time that there was a
10 relief was for dinners or meals. So, I forgot how it
11 worked out, but somebody would come up like they would
12 get off watch, eat and then go back and relieve whoever
13 was on watch so that they could eat and then go back.
14 But no set breaks in between those watches.

15 [REDACTED] BELL: So, while you were on the ship,
16 did you feel that when you were sleeping or when you
17 were resting that you were actually getting sleep, any
18 noise that kept you awake or --

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, I slept fantastic on
20 board. It was loud. We were on the deck with the
21 galley so it was a little loud, but -- and the door,
22 like my colleagues' door had a difficult time opening
23 and closing so that part was loud. But overall, on
24 board, it was really easy to sleep.

25 [REDACTED] BELL: And, did you have very

1 interruptions or any interruptions?

2 [REDACTED] I did not personally, no.

3 [REDACTED] BELL: You also mentioned there was some
4 contention with the Captain and the officers. Would
5 you say that was specifically with the officers or
6 would you say that was with the entire crew?

7 [REDACTED] I don't -- it's hard to tell.
8 I know that -- I think while I was on board, it was a
9 little difficult because the Captain had made some
10 comments about how we made the crew feel uncomfortable
11 for being there.

12 And, I had mentioned, one of the questions
13 we had asked was what kind of activities the crew does
14 when they're not working? And, he's like, oh, usually
15 we're all hanging out but since you guys are on board,
16 they're all in their [REDACTED]

17 And so, that kind of -- those comments kind
18 of got trickled down to the crew and they kept coming
19 up to me and being like that's not how we feel.

20 So, I feel like, on some personal levels,
21 they -- everybody on board had some issues, but I don't
22 know if that was just normal. I mean, if you spend X
23 amount of days with the same people, I think that,
24 after a while, everybody is contentious with everybody.

25 So, I don't think it was anything outright

1 bad. I think that sometimes him saying stuff wasn't
2 necessarily the reflection on the crew and they wanted
3 to make sure that I was aware of that.

4 [REDACTED] BELL: Were there any conversations that
5 you had with any of the crew that made you, in general,
6 concerned just in the way they interacted with each
7 other or anything in general?

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, not at all. I felt very
9 comfortable with the crew.

10 [REDACTED] BELL: That's all I had.

11 MR. STITH: Kevin Stith with TOTE Services.

12 On your time on board the El Faro, did you
13 ever see the or know of Captain Davidson coming up to
14 relieve the watch for any period of time? Maybe early
15 in the morning or in the evening?

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I know he did during transits,
17 obviously. I don't remember specifically. He spent a
18 lot of time up there throughout the day like on and
19 off. I don't remember him officially taking the watch
20 besides during transits.

21 MR. STITH: Okay, thank you.

22 MR. SHEPHERD: Al Shepherd, ABS.

23 A couple of questions, please.

24 So, the Second Mate, that was Danielle?

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

1 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay. So, with Danielle, she
2 told you she worked 12 hours? She did her eight hours
3 of watch and then she worked another four hours?

4 [REDACTED] Yes.

5 MR. SHEPHERD: Did she explain what she was
6 doing those four hours?

7 [REDACTED] She did a wide range of
8 things. So, she would do soundings. She tested fire
9 dampeners. She did other projects around deck that
10 needed to get done. So, I know she had set duties that
11 she had to do every -- like they all had set duties
12 that had to get done in like a given month.

13 So, she would use that time to get those
14 things done or help out with whatever else needed it.

15 MR. SHEPHERD: Maintenance type?

16 [REDACTED] Yes.

17 MR. SHEPHERD: She was maintenance type?

18 And, it was every day she would get off watch at 0400,
19 be out -- have to (inaudible) ***1:15:46*** 0800?

20 [REDACTED] I believe so. Yes, she would
21 be at breakfast and then work.

22 MR. SHEPHERD: And that was seven days a
23 week as far as you know?

24 [REDACTED] As far as I know.

25 MR. SHEPHERD: How about the Chief Mate?

1 Was the Chief Mate a watch stand?

2 [REDACTED] He was.

3 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay. And, did he have -- do
4 you know if those have the maintenance -- are they on
5 this routine as well?

6 [REDACTED] I don't remember -- I didn't
7 follow him around as often as I did the other crew. I
8 know he was heavily involved in cargo, so every time
9 they were in port, he was there throughout all cargo
10 operations.

11 I don't know his specific day to day tasks
12 besides standing watch.

13 MR. SHEPHERD: How about the Third Mate?

14 [REDACTED] He was in charge of all
15 safety. So, when he wasn't standing watch, I mean we
16 did the lifeboat drill, or lifeboat inventories with
17 him. He would check all the fire lockers. He had just
18 gotten on board, so he was making -- going through all
19 of his check list that he would normally do in like a
20 month and making sure that they were all up to date
21 from the last Third.

22 MR. SHEPHERD: Was that (inaudible)

23 ***1:17:00***?

24 [REDACTED] No, his name was Alex.

25 MR. SHEPHERD: Alex? But, specifically,

1 with regard to working beyond your watch table, was he
2 working?

3 [REDACTED] He was.

4 MR. SHEPHERD: Four hours a day as well?

5 [REDACTED] Yes.

6 MR. SHEPHERD: And, do you know what time
7 his hours of work were?

8 [REDACTED] I --

9 MR. SHEPHERD: Let me ask you this, what was
10 his watch table?

11 [REDACTED] I think he did the 4:00 to
12 8:00.

13 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay.

14 [REDACTED] Or 8:00 to 12:00. I don't
15 remember.

16 MR. SHEPHERD: Oh, that's okay.

17 [REDACTED] I think that -- oh no, he did
18 the 8:00 to 12:00.

19 MR. SHEPHERD: He did? And then, what other
20 time of day was his maintenance ops? You said they did
21 --

22 [REDACTED] Oh, so his would be -- I think
23 his would be after his 12:00 watch. So, he would get
24 off watch, each lunch and then do his maintenance.

25 MR. SHEPHERD: Any -- did you have any

1 (inaudible) ***1:18:11*** with the Chief Mate?

2 [REDACTED] Have what?

3 MR. SHEPHERD: Much of a conversation or
4 dialogue with the Chief Mate?

5 [REDACTED] I did.

6 MR. SHEPHERD: And, you also said she got
7 with (inaudible) ***1:18:20*** meeting. This is based
8 off what you were saying.

9 [REDACTED] I felt like they got along
10 really well. They had a great working relationship.
11 They spent a lot of time together. I mean, their state
12 rooms are fairly close together so they were always
13 interacting and I never saw any problems with them.

14 MR. SHEPHERD: What was your sense for the,
15 you all usually work for (inaudible) ***1:18:49***
16 sense of the crews interview level or did they -- could
17 you tell they were (inaudible) ***1:18:56*** eight hour
18 (inaudible) ***1:18:57***?

19 [REDACTED] I didn't notice any major
20 fatigue issues. I mean even with Danielle, she always
21 seemed ready to go. Like, I don't -- I never noticed
22 visible signs of tiredness.

23 MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you.

24 [REDACTED] BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

25 Did she ever say anything like in terms of

1 sleeping?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, I think that due to her
3 hours and the amount of -- like she had to fit in --
4 she would take like over-the-counter meds for sleeping.

5 [REDACTED] BELL: Do you know what she was taking?

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I want to say NyQuil or
7 something similar.

8 [REDACTED] BELL: But, she was -- her sleep
9 schedule was what time?

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Her sleep schedule would be
11 from like 4:00 in the morning to 8:00 in the morning
12 and then it would be like 6:00 to midnight-ish, so
13 right after -- she would usually grab her dinner to go
14 and immediately go to bed and then wake up and have her
15 dinner like before watch.

16 [REDACTED] BELL: Did she ever say anything about
17 not being able to get to sleep during that amount of
18 time?

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] There were a couple of times
20 where it was loud, whether that be from cargo or just
21 people walking through that she said she wouldn't be
22 able to sleep.

23 MR. YOUNG: Lee, you can just continue with
24 this and we'll come around in an orderly fashion.

25 [REDACTED] BELL: A couple other questions. You

1 mentioned earlier that the Captain was usually on the
2 bridge three to four hours, do you have any idea what
3 he was doing when he was not on the bridge?

4 [REDACTED] I don't. I think that he
5 obviously probably was doing paperwork. I know there
6 was TV in the common -- in a common room. So, I think
7 he played video games and stuff, but he wasn't on the
8 bridge consistently for that amount of time. He would
9 kind of come and go or just like hang out on the bridge
10 for a while. But, I don't know what he was doing on
11 his off time.

12 [REDACTED] BELL: And, did you ever hear him
13 speaking with anyone ashore? Anyone from the company?
14 Any kind of check in that he was doing regularly?

15 [REDACTED] No.

16 [REDACTED] BELL: Did he ever say anything about
17 having any check ins with the company or anyone
18 (inaudible) ***1:21:42***?

19 [REDACTED] Not that I recall.

20 [REDACTED] BELL: Thank you.

21 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: Nothing on this topic.

22 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: Nothing.

23 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: No questions.

24 MR. YOUNG: Brian Young with the NTSB.

25 Speaking of ashore, did you notice any of

1 the crew going ashore in port?

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Only a couple crew members
3 based on their duties were able to go ashore. I know
4 that one of the oilers would go ashore as soon as soon
5 as we got to Puerto Rico or to just based on his watch
6 rotation, it worked out.

7 Alex, the Third Mate, was able to go to
8 shore for a couple hours in Puerto Rico because that's
9 where his family lives. So, he was able to get off.

10 And, I think a couple of the ABS or other
11 crew members got off, but none of the -- besides Alex,
12 he was the only officer. No, I take that back, the
13 Second Engineer, [REDACTED] went to shore for a little bit
14 in Puerto Rico also.

15 MR. YOUNG: Okay.

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] But, very quickly. I think he
17 just went to get pizza. So, I think the only people
18 that were off the ship for an extended period of time
19 were a couple of the unlicensed crew.

20 MR. YOUNG: [REDACTED]

21 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

22 Just to follow up on Danielle's sleep
23 issues, she was taking NyQuil. What did you -- what
24 was your impression of that? I mean did she report
25 that to the company? The ship's officers?

1 ██████████ I'm not sure if she told
2 anyone she was taking stuff for sleep or if it was just
3 kind of -- I mean I'm sure other crew members knew. I
4 just felt like if it came up in conversation with me,
5 it probably would come up in conversation with other
6 people. But, I don't know for a fact that somebody
7 else knew.

8 MR. ██████████ On the voyages you made, do
9 you know if any other crew members were like ill or
10 sick or had medical issues?

11 ██████████ Nobody that I was aware of was
12 sick.

13 MR. ██████████ Do you know of anybody else
14 that was taking prescription medications?

15 ██████████ Not that I'm aware of.

16 MR. ██████████ How about over-the-counter
17 medications?

18 ██████████ Not that I'm aware of.

19 MR. ██████████ Did she say anything about the
20 ship's policy related to over-the-counter medication?

21 ██████████ No.

22 MR. ██████████ Kind of circling back to some
23 of the other things we talked about, if that's all
24 right.

25 The immersion suit, were you given any

1 training regarding the use or wearing of the immersion
2 suit?

3 [REDACTED] I was not.

4 MR. [REDACTED] If you couldn't get to the PFD
5 in your room or the immersion suit, survival suit,
6 where could you get another one?

7 [REDACTED] I think that the gear locker
8 for survival stuff was right across from my room. So,
9 I could have gotten it in there. There were some on
10 the bridge. The Bosun had a big locker storage area,
11 there were some in there.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Was the -- do you know if they
13 called the gear lock the oilskin locker?

14 [REDACTED] No, I believe that was
15 something different. They had a bunch of different
16 lockers. I mean, they had the fire locker, they had
17 the -- I thought the safety gear locker was where they
18 kept other excess safety stuff.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Do you know if the access to
20 those were locked or unlocked?

21 [REDACTED] I don't remember whether the
22 safety gear locker was locked. I believe the fire
23 locker was open.

24 MR. [REDACTED] And then, you have talked
25 about going down into the engine room, correct?

1 ██████████ Yes, sir.

2 MR. ██████████ Have you been in a steamship
3 engine room before?

4 ██████████ No, this was my first.

5 MR. ██████████ Okay. What were the people
6 wearing in the engine room at sea?

7 ██████████ Usually pants and a tee shirt.

8 MR. ██████████ And, how hot was it?

9 ██████████ It was brutally hot, like 100
10 plus degrees.

11 MR. ██████████ And, did they talk to you at
12 all about how hot it was?

13 ██████████ They did.

14 MR. ██████████ And, did they talk to you
15 about how they control -- any means to control the heat
16 in the engine room?

17 ██████████ Heat in regards to like
18 temperature for people or heat in --

19 MR. ██████████ Yes, you're walking around,
20 you know, you're walking around in the engine room and
21 it's hot, right?

22 ██████████ Right.

23 MR. ██████████ Did they say anything to you
24 about any means that they had at their disposal to
25 reduce the temperature in the engine room while on

1 underway? That we do this or we do that?

2 [REDACTED] No. I mean for personal
3 comfort levels, they had a big air vent right in front
4 of the engine controls and there were two chairs. So,
5 that's usually where the engineers would stand or sit
6 or stand.

7 And then, there were a couple other air
8 vents throughout the engine room that you could get
9 some relief. And then, there was an office that had an
10 AC unit.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. So, if you were walking
12 around in the general engine room space, did you feel,
13 and take a minute to think about this, did you feel
14 like a significant draft of air moving past you or was
15 the air pretty still?

16 [REDACTED] I believe that the air was
17 pretty still unless you were walking near an air vent.

18 MR. [REDACTED] That's the all the questions
19 I've had with what we've talked about so far.

20 MR. SHEPHERD: Al Shepherd, ABS.

21 [REDACTED] just a couple more questions. We've
22 talked about the bridge, how about the engine room.
23 Did you know what kind of -- do you know if the -- did
24 you talk to the First Engineer, First Assistant
25 Engineer?

1 ██████████ I did.

2 MR. SHEPHERD: Was he a watch leader or did
3 he --

4 ██████████ He was not.

5 MR. SHEPHERD: He was day worker?

6 ██████████ He was a day worker, yes.

7 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay. Did you know what kind
8 of hours did he have in your conversation with him,
9 what kind of hours he worked? Was it eight? Twelve?

10 ██████████ I didn't talk to him as
11 frequently as I talked to some of the other engineers.
12 I don't remember how many hours he worked, but I just
13 know that he was a day worker and didn't stand watch.

14 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay, thank you. How about
15 the (inaudible) ***1:28:26*** Assistant?

16 ██████████ He stood watch.

17 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay.

18 ██████████ I think it was the same as
19 Danielle's watch, so but I didn't talk to him too much
20 about like rest or other activities that he did. I
21 don't know what kind of work he did besides standing
22 watch.

23 MR. SHEPHERD: Okay. And the same with the
24 Third?

25 ██████████ Same with the Thirds.

1 MR. SHEPHERD: And there's another Third,
2 right, because the Second was (inaudible) ***1:28:56***
3 watch standing?

4 [REDACTED] Yes, two Thirds and one
5 Second.

6 MR. SHEPHERD: Did they talk with you about
7 what their watch and their shift?

8 [REDACTED] No, not really. I mean I
9 talked to them about the engine room and their watch
10 and what duties they had, but I don't -- I didn't spend
11 as much time with them. And, in the engine room, it
12 was so loud to have like a personal conversations that
13 I didn't -- I kind of just went down and tried to learn
14 as much as I could and then I would leave.

15 MR. SHEPHERD: Sure. Thank you.

16 Was there any discussion as far as with any
17 of the crew, you talked to the officers, you talked
18 with the engine crew, where you heard how they reported
19 the hours they work? Did they mention that they have
20 recorded hours they work?

21 [REDACTED] They did. They recorded them
22 and I believe some spreadsheet that they would submit
23 every week.

24 MR. SHEPHERD: Yes.

25 [REDACTED] And, then the Captain would

1 pay them weekly.

2 MR. SHEPHERD: They told you that he's
3 (inaudible) ***1:29:54*** to do that?

4 [REDACTED] No, I just know that there was
5 a computer up on the bridge that at least the deck
6 officers would go in and put in their hours and then I
7 know the Captain was dealing with payroll on a weekly
8 basis. But, I don't know the specifics of that.

9 MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you.

10 Are we doing general questions. Just a
11 quick question. Did you ever, at any point during the
12 voyage, did you cell phone work? Were you aware of
13 anybody on board that had a sat phone or any means to
14 communicate with their families or outside of the
15 normal ship communicating channels?

16 [REDACTED] No, not that I'm aware of. I
17 know that people would use their phones as soon as we
18 got to Puerto Rico or to Jacksonville but nothing in
19 between besides the normal shipboard stuff.

20 MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you.

21 [REDACTED] BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

22 Two questions. Was there ever any
23 conversations regarding payroll about overtime?

24 [REDACTED] I don't remember any specifics
25 about overtime.

1 ██████ BELL: No one talked about getting
2 overtime or not getting overtime? Not being allowed to
3 get overtime or anything like that?

4 ██████ ██████████ I don't remember.

5 ██████ BELL: And, when you had your
6 familiarization training, did they ask you if you had
7 ever donned an immersion suit?

8 ██████ ██████████ I don't believe they did.

9 ██████ ██████████ ███████ ██████████ with the Coast
10 Guard.

11 During your time on the bridge, did you
12 observe the system that they used to receive weather
13 information?

14 ██████ ██████████ I did.

15 ██████ ██████████ Can you tell us what you
16 observed about that system?

17 ██████ ██████████ So, they had, obviously, all
18 the GMDSS and NavTechs, an MR set and I know that, at
19 the time that I was underway, there was some sort of
20 storm in the Pacific and they kept getting weather
21 alerts.

22 So, they would acknowledge the alert and
23 then print it out. And, they had a whole pamphlet of
24 all the alerts that they had gotten in. And they kept
25 a GMDSS log for weather.

1 ██████████ ██████████ Can you describe the printout
2 that you saw at all?

3 ██████████ ██████████ I think it just came out on
4 like an old school printer and it would have like the
5 date, time group and details about the storm that was
6 approaching and the wind conditions and the area that
7 it was located in. But, I don't know what other
8 specific information you're referring to.

9 ██████████ ██████████ Was it just text or were
10 there photos on it?

11 ██████████ ██████████ It was just text.

12 ██████████ ██████████ Okay. So, that was in the
13 printout. Did you also see any information come across
14 on the computer that they were using?

15 ██████████ ██████████ They checked --

16 ██████████ ██████████ Computer programs?

17 ██████████ ██████████ From what I remember, they
18 checked the weather on a routine basis throughout the
19 watch on a computer program, but I don't remember the
20 details of that. But, they frequently looked at the
21 weather.

22 ██████████ ██████████ Do you happen to recall how
23 frequently they would use that computer system to look
24 for it?

25 ██████████ ██████████ I would say at least once a

1 watch.

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And, you didn't see it on the
3 computer?

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I looked at it just for
5 situational awareness and understanding of where they
6 were getting weather from but I didn't play around with
7 it myself.

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Did you see imagery in that -
9 - on that computer or just text?

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I don't remember.

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 MR. YOUNG: Any around the room?

13 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: No questions.

14 MR. YOUNG: Brain Young with the NTSB.

15 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Do you recall if that
16 weather information was in color or black and white?
17 Jim Fisker-Andersen, TOTE Services.

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The printout or the computer?

19 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: The display that they
20 were referencing for the weather information?

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'm pretty sure that the
22 computer program was in color, but I can't quite
23 visualize it. I know that NavTech is just standard
24 black and white printing.

25 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Thank you.

1 MR. YOUNG: Brian Young with the NTSB.

2 Just changing gears a little bit and with
3 general questions. I'm just trying to get a
4 clarification on the scuttle. On the second deck where
5 a lot of the trailers and vehicles were secured, there
6 were scuttles that are maybe oval shaped and looking
7 like manholes about a foot off the deck.

8 In order to open the cover, do you remember
9 if you had to turn a wheel to get access and unlock it
10 or do you remember if they were threaded dogs?

11 [REDACTED] I think they were threaded
12 dogs, but I don't know for sure.

13 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Thank you.

14 And, these would have been the scuttles and
15 manholes that --

16 [REDACTED] And, you would open it and
17 there'd be a ladder going down.

18 MR. YOUNG: Right, right, okay. And then
19 was there a sign that said person in the hold that you
20 would flip around when you went down in order to alert
21 other people that someone could be in the hold?

22 [REDACTED] No, I do know that the Bosun
23 went down to the holds quite a bit and he would call up
24 to the bridge and let who ever was on duty know that he
25 was down in the holds and then he would check back in.

1 And, they did that routinely with other places that
2 crew members would go for accountability purposes.

3 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. O'CONNELL: Louis O'Donnell with ABS.

5 Can you recall through those scuttles for
6 the access to the lower holds, at the end of the day
7 like when day work was done and there was really nobody
8 on the cargo area, did the Bosun or somebody on the
9 deck part maybe, whoever may be Third Mate, Second
10 Mate, were they all secured in the evening when
11 everybody was up on the bridge and down in the engine
12 room? Were those all kept secured normally in off
13 hours?

14 [REDACTED] I don't remember.

15 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay, that's it. Thank you.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

17 Thinking back on the abandon ship drills, I
18 know it was some time, though, you experienced one of
19 those?

20 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember if in the
22 drill they talked about lowering the boat to the rail
23 and how that was done?

24 [REDACTED] If they talked prior to
25 actually launching?

1 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No, they set off the drill and
3 then everybody carried out their duties as they would
4 in a drill.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And then, once the boat
6 was at the rail, did someone discuss, okay, the boat's
7 at the rail, this is what we would do next after the
8 boat was (inaudible) ***1:37:34*** and then what the
9 plan was once they left the ship?

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] No.

11 MR. [REDACTED] And who supervised the drill,
12 do you recall?

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] On the lifeboat that I was at,
14 the Chief Mate was in charge of the overall drill, but
15 one of the ABs was taking the lead on directing people.
16 And I think his name was Marvin.

17 MR. [REDACTED] And, do you recall if that
18 person would be called the Boat [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I don't recall that.

20 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Jim Fisker-Andersen,
21 TOTE Services.

22 In your briefing or in your -- during the
23 drill, were you given a specific task to accomplish or
24 was your task to help as directed?

25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Because we were visitors on

1 board, we were told to report to the bridge. Once we
2 were on the bridge and the drill was going, the Captain
3 let us go down just to observe the rest of the drill.
4 So, I wasn't necessarily an active participant from the
5 beginning, but for accountability purposes, I was
6 supposed to be on the bridge.

7 MR. FISHER-ANDERSEN: Thank you.

8 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast Guard,
9 again.

10 Do you recall what your muster station was
11 for the boat drills?

12 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] My muster station was the
13 bridge and then I was assigned to lifeboat one.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Which lifeboat would that have
15 been? Which side, do you recall?

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I don't remember.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember if it had an
18 engine or it had just kind of a fleming gear?

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I think that -- because I know
20 me and my Petty Officer were talking and he's like, oh,
21 I want to be on the one with the engine. But, I don't
22 remember which one we were assigned to. But, I think
23 it may have been the one with -- I don't know, it would
24 just be a guess at this point, but I --

25 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And then just a couple

1 of general questions.

2 On your PQS for the ship ride, your check
3 list that you had, did it include observing a voyage
4 plan?

5 [REDACTED] It did.

6 MR. [REDACTED] And, can you talk to me about
7 what voyage planning of that vessel entailed?

8 [REDACTED] So, for that voyage, I mean
9 they do such a regular trip every time, it was kind of
10 pretty much from my understanding was the same. So,
11 they would plan out the course that they were going to
12 take and then put together a package and then provide
13 it to the Captain, if I'm remembering correctly. I
14 don't remember the specific details, but I know that --
15 I don't remember.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall if it contained
17 any component related to weather?

18 [REDACTED] It did.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember what that was?

20 [REDACTED] Can you say that again?

21 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember what the
22 weather considerations were? Did they talk about them
23 to you?

24 [REDACTED] They didn't talk to me about
25 them. I think they just pulled up the weather and

1 provided it with their voyage package to the Captain.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Did they mention that in any
3 weather related issues, they consulted the company, the
4 TOTE organization and the shore side personnel about
5 the weather during the course of the voyage?

6 [REDACTED] No. I do know that the
7 Captain mentioned that there was an alternate route
8 that they could take to divert from weather, but I
9 don't remember them referring to the company about
10 consulting.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Do you remember if he said
12 anything about they had to ask permission to take that
13 route?

14 [REDACTED] I don't remember if he said
15 that.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Do you remember
17 observing a pre-departure meeting? Shipboard pre-
18 departure meeting?

19 [REDACTED] Oh, like a whole everyone --

20 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, like --

21 [REDACTED] -- involved?

22 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, like a discussion about
23 anything for like before we go, we're going to have
24 this pre-departure meeting and discuss the voyage?

25 [REDACTED] No. I know that they had

1 different calls like they had all hands but then, at
2 that point, everyone would kind of go to their assigned
3 duties. And then, I know that the Captain met with
4 everybody on the bridge prior to leaving. But, it was
5 never an all -- I never saw an all hands departure
6 meeting that I remember.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Did you see any time like in
8 observing the pre-departure shipboard operation,
9 anything to talk about the risks of the voyage?

10 [REDACTED] No.

11 MR. [REDACTED] And then, just (inaudible)
12 ***1:42:42***. We've asked a lot of questions and we
13 might not have asked the right ones, but did you
14 observe any problems on the voyage at all?

15 [REDACTED] No, I did not.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

17 MR. SHEPHERD: Al Shepherd with ABS.

18 Would you, in your time you were on board,
19 did you observe any activities, any jobs that were
20 being done, there was a job hazard analysis conducted
21 before the job?

22 [REDACTED] No.

23 MR. SHEPHERD: Were you -- was anything
24 about voyage planning discussed with you all just about
25 the information?

1 ██████████ No, it was more of just I was
2 asking questions about it so they would kind of show me
3 what they did to create the voyage plan. But, I wasn't
4 heavily involved in it.

5 MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you.

6 ██████████ ██████████ Coast Guard.

7 Just sort back on the drills, so I'm going
8 to ask that's been asked before in a different content,
9 to make sure we understand. You said there was one
10 abandon ship drill done in the entire two week period
11 that you were on board and there were no other drills
12 performed? So, there was not ever a fire fighting
13 drill? An man overboard drill? Confined space entry
14 rescue drill or anything like that? Just the one
15 abandon ship drill, right?

16 ██████████ Yes.

17 ██████████ Was there a tabletop type drill
18 where everybody sat down and discussed like fire
19 fighting, man overboard or as a group?

20 ██████████ That was what was discussed in
21 that first transit where we had the big safety meeting
22 in the mess deck. I don't remember the topics of
23 conversation, but that was kind of more of a tabletop
24 drill instead of doing an actual drill.

25 ██████████ Okay.

1 ██████████ But, I don't remember the
2 topics of that. I know that they did mention, because
3 I think it was fairly new was the new confined space
4 entry requirements. So, they discussed having to do
5 one of those drill at some point.

6 But, I don't remember the specifics of that
7 meeting, I just know that it was more of a tabletop
8 discussion on drills versus an actual drill.

9 ██████████ Okay. And, you briefly
10 mentioned the alternate route as far as voyage planning
11 goes. Can you give us any detail about what that
12 alternate route was or for bad weather?

13 ██████████ I don't know if I'm saying it
14 right, but I think it was closer to the Florida through
15 the old Bahama Channel would have been their alternate
16 route.

17 ██████████ Okay. Thank you very much.

18 MR. O'DONNELL: Yes, Lou O'Donnell with ABS.

19 Just going back to just a few minutes ago,
20 the job hazard analysis. Did you do any day work or
21 any work with Mates, Engineers, anything like that?

22 ██████████ I saw a few different types of
23 work because that was one of the -- because I was only
24 on board for two weeks, I couldn't really get invested
25 in like a big project. But, I know they were fixing

1 the store's crane. So, I watched them replace the
2 wiring in the crane.

3 MR. O'DONNELL: Sorry. Maybe redirecting
4 that, kind of like in the morning, maybe when you said
5 you'd either go up to the bridge or you'd go with the
6 Mate or whatever you did when you started the morning,
7 did you see like maybe the Bosun gather with the Chief
8 Mate and maybe the crew deck crew or the Chief Engineer
9 and all his crew, licensed, unlicensed gather and did
10 they maybe have some type of discussion in the morning
11 about what they were going to or if they were going to
12 do a big job like the crane when they were working on
13 maybe some kind of discussion on what they were going
14 to do, how they were going to do it before they started
15 their work? Did you ever observe anything like that?

16 [REDACTED] I know that the Chief Mate
17 would meet with the Bosun on a daily basis and discuss
18 the jobs that needed to get done. I don't know whether
19 I was a part of any of those. I would just, in the
20 morning, I would talk to the Chief Mate and ask if
21 there was anything being done that day that I could
22 observe or partake in.

23 But, I don't recall seeing that meeting.
24 And then, it was my understanding that the Bosun would
25 gather the crew and kind of task out the assignments

1 for the day on what needed to get done.

2 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay. So, you didn't
3 physically witness them having like some, you know,
4 type of meeting before they did something?

5 [REDACTED] Not that I recall.

6 MR. O'DONNELL: Okay, that was my last
7 question. Thank you.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

9 I just want to make a clarification, asking
10 for clarification on talking about the abandon ship
11 drill. When we talked about which boat you were
12 assigned to, I just want to make sure I had this right.
13 Is that you don't recall which boat you were assigned
14 to or, during the course of the voyage, did you know
15 which boat you were assigned to physically? Did you
16 walk to the boat and say this is my boat?

17 [REDACTED] While I was on board, I could.
18 It was labeled in our room. There was one discrepancy
19 because my Petty Officer's door said something else and
20 then the muster list said -- so on their muster list it
21 says like guest room one goes to like lifeboat one or
22 lifeboat two and then that's documented in our room
23 where our muster station is. But, that was fixed on
24 the spot, so we both knew which lifeboat we had to go
25 to. I just don't recall currently which one that was.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And just to further
2 clarify, if the alarm went off at 2:00 in the morning,
3 you could have left your room based on your orientation
4 and physically walked out and touch your lifeboat?

5 [REDACTED] I --

6 MR. [REDACTED] The proper lifeboat?

7 [REDACTED] I could.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast Guard.

10 When you were on board, were there any other
11 individuals riding the vessel besides the other
12 official rest of the crew?

13 [REDACTED] There were the two cadets, but
14 there was no ship riders.

15 [REDACTED] None of the -- on this last
16 voyage, there was a riding gang, were they on board?

17 [REDACTED] No, they were not.

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the
19 Coast Guard.

20 Do you remember how you were altered to the
21 crew abandon ship drill?

22 [REDACTED] On the board in the officer's
23 -- there was like a white board on the officer's -- in
24 the officer's mess that had like important details for
25 the day. So, I know that it said we were going to have

1 a drill at X amount -- or at like 1400. So, I knew
2 that that drill was happening.

3 I believe the general alarm was set off. I
4 know on the bridge it says like this will be the signal
5 for these certain drills. I don't remember what the
6 signal was, but I knew at that point that it was an
7 abandon ship drill.

8 [REDACTED] Do you remember where you
9 were?

10 [REDACTED] I was on the bridge.

11 [REDACTED] When the drill was
12 initiated?

13 [REDACTED] Yes.

14 [REDACTED] Thank you.

15 MR. YOUNG: Brain Young with the NTSB.

16 We have fired a ton a of questions at you
17 and we really appreciate you remembering as much as you
18 could.

19 Do you have any questions for us? It's your
20 turn.

21 [REDACTED] I don't think I have any
22 questions.

23 MR. YOUNG: No? If there is ever anything
24 you can remember or help maybe including your pictures,
25 we'll ask for them officially through our connections

1 with the Coast Guard. But, if there's anything else
2 that you could remember, if you wouldn't mind letting
3 us know and we maybe would ask you some questions in
4 the future if we can come up with any more questions.

5 But, is there anything else you have to add
6 on to anything in general with the ship, your visit? I
7 think we've covered a lot of different areas.

8 [REDACTED] Yes, I mean I think that, I
9 mean just my own personal opinion, I felt like everyone
10 on board was very knowledgeable and experienced and I
11 learned so much from them that it's been an interesting
12 couple of weeks to deal with all this.

13 MR. YOUNG: I'm sure. And we really do
14 appreciate you coming down. I'm sure it's tough.

15 So, no further questions, we'll secure the
16 interview. It's 10:21 and, again, thank you very, very
17 much.

18 [REDACTED] Thank you.

19 (Whereupon, the above-entitled [REDACTED] went
20 off the record at 10:21 a.m.)

21


22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Interview of 

DATE: 10-15-15

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 95 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