

U.S. COAST GUARD  
SECTOR NORTH CAROLINA, WILMINGTON

Investigator Statement Form

Investigator/Witness Name: Charles A. Mellor, LT  
IIA Number: 4474566  
Date of Incident: Oct 29, 2012  
Incident Name: BOUNTY sinking

The following interviews were conducted in Tampa, FL, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012:

Interview #1: Robert Hansen (Owner), Tracie Simonin (Director), & David Wyman (Surveyor)

- Stated mariner licenses were a condition of employment.
- Mr. Hansen has been owner since Jan 12, 2001. BOUNTY has had a total of three re-builds & has had a dry-dock each year.
- Sept 17, 2012, BOUNTY arrived at dry-dock in Boothbay, ME.
- Oct 19, 2012, Mr. Wyman conducted survey of BOUNTY at Boothbay as required by insurance company.
- Thursday, Oct 25, 2012, BOUNTY crew took tour of Navy submarine. BOUNTY left New London, CT port about 1800.
- BOUNTY is part of a drug consortium.
- Claudene Christian was a volunteer on BOUNTY from April till just before voyage on Oct 25, 2012 when she was employed as a paid crewmember. Volunteers are provided food & sleeping quarters.
- Company has been working last few years towards getting a load line certificate.
- 3 pump systems onboard BOUNTY: 1) 2 x seven & half inch electric pumps with 2 inch piping system; 2) 2 x hydraulic pumps; & 3) back up trash pump all used to pump bilge.
- Tracie ordered fuel filters as requested by CAPT which she believed were 30 micron Raycore filters.
- 4 fuel tanks- tanks use to be under little shed on deck, but were moved to aft near engines. Crew quarters was moved & rebuilt forward.

Interview #2: Dan Cleveland (Mate)

- On BOUNTY since 2008; got mariner license beginning of 2012.
- Has been a deck hand, AB, boatswain till last year then moved to watch leader, & now a 3<sup>rd</sup> mate after earning mariner license.
- Has been on BOUNTY longer than anyone on boat except CAPT. Has been in two hurricanes in the past ((1) 2008 off Costa Rica & (2) Paloma hurricane) on BOUNTY with similar waves & winds, but neither hurricane was as long lasting as Sandy.
- Has been on BOUNTY times in the past when vessel was taking on water & the crew needed to pump out bilge. Normal spots of flooding were 1) shaft packing & 2) seams on hull

- Used cotton & DAP (from Home Depot) for caulking vessel. Vessel was framed with white oak & dug fir at tween deck & up. DAP product sometimes dried out & cracked in bad weather causing it to fall out. This led to leaking. There was a couple places in engine room where flooding occurred before, so probably caused some of the flooding during the voyage on Oct 29, 2012. During voyage from Oct 25-29, 2012, 30 min rounds were conducted on vessel to look for leaking.
- Three watches per day 0800-1200, 1200-1600, & 1600-2000. Dan had the 1600-2000 watch. "A" watch: Mark Warner, Claudene Christian, John Svendsen, & Doug Faunt. "B" watch: Matt Sanders, Jessica Hewitt, Adam Prokosh, & John Jones. "C" watch: Dan Cleveland, Drew Salapatek, Anna Sprague, & Josh Scornavacchi. Engineer was Chris Barksdale & Cook was Jessica Black.
- Dan mentions that there was lots of discussion about weather prior to leaving port. They used "Grib" files (reports for watching storm) & pilot chart in galley so crew could track their location during storm.
- Dan thought the plan of the CAPT was to go East & South to get far away from storm. He though CAPT wanted to get South of Hatteras & later decided to cut in front of storm scurting west of storm along coast line.
- During voyage was making 9 knots which is faster than they had ever traveled before on any prior trip.
- Was running fore course (storm sail) but it ripped so set fore statsail at 1600 on Sunday. CAPT heaved 2 (running 45 degrees to storm) so could make headway of water in bilges; pump better. Idea was to push water to starboard side so hydraulic pumps could rid vessel of water in bilge. Starboard pump was pumping well. Dan started checking bilge strainers; looked ok. It was hard to tell if pumps were making progress because water was swishing all over. Was running hydraulic, electric & trash pumps trying to rid vessel of water. Major problem being faced was water in engine room.
- When the vessel was in the yard the plan was to drop the stern down by 6 inches so fuel tanks, water tanks, & lead ingets (approximately 40 lbs each) had been moved to engine room. Positioned 4 x 1000 gal steel fuel tanks aft & then moved 4 x 500 gal plastic tanks aft. Fuel & water tanks were placed together just forward of engine room sharing a bulkhead.
- Sunday night after watch, the tween deck started filling with water so everyone donned their immersion suits & went to the top deck.
- Some time on Sunday it was found that the site glass had been broken on fuel tank so fuel had been lost. Port main & port generator stopped working.
- During storm, gaft spar broke (Mizzen) so Dan went up to lasso down sail so it would quit beating boat. Before ship sank the vessel was not under sail.
- Prior to voyage, a 27 foot stick section broke & was moved under deck of ship stowed away & another section of stick was removed from back mast pole & moved to front.
- Electric pumps were usually used to pump bilge during trips.
- When BOUNTY left dry-dock & sailed to CT, she was bone dry which was unusual because she usually accumulated water in her bilge during voyages.
- During the voyage that BOUNTY sank, Dan had at sometime during the trip, taken the fuel filters out of the starboard generator & put them into the port generator because had wrong filters & starboard side was taking on water.

- Tried to use trash pump to rid vessel of water, but never got the trash pump to work.
- Had muster with CAPT & crew in Navigation shack just before vessel sank. Dan remembers seeing Coast Guard C-130 overhead at that time. CAPT said they were taking on approximately 2 foot of water per hour. Everyone put their immersion suits on in tween deck, but once tween deck filled, the crew moved to top deck; Epirb was turned on.
- Just before vessel sank, Dan saw CAPT on deck in immersion suit sitting on 3 spars (50 foot long & approximately 1 foot diameter). John yelled fore deck was under water. Crew started discussing about if or when to go overboard, when the boat went over on starboard side & sank. One life raft released on its own as a result of the vessel sinking & the other life raft (found floating after vessel sank) was released by a crew member.
- Recap from beginning: Dan states that the day started at 0800 on Thursday Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, to prep for tours that would start at 1000. The BOUNTY crew did a day sail with the Navy crew from the submarine MISSISSIPPI on BOUNTY that ended around 1600. After that, the BOUNTY crew went in vans to tour the Navy submarine. Once back from the visit of the submarine, the BOUNTY crew had a conversation on the deck with the CAPT about weather concerns before leaving. The CAPT talked about how comfortable he was in bad weather, talked about safety concerns to include going overboard. It was known amongst the crew that the CAPT was scared of going overboard. CAPT gave option to crew to leave should they not want to sail into hurricane Sandy & then the BOUNTY set sail around 1800 for St. Petersburg, FL for upcoming tours November 8, 9, 10, & 11. Friday & Saturday weather was ok, but water in the bilge started sometime Saturday. Sunday weather became really bad & the bilge became the major issue onboard.

Interview #3: John Svendsen (Chief Mate)

- Has been on BOUNTY for three seasons. Has been a licensed mariner for 12 years. Has worked in past in San Diego maritime industry & was involved with diving operations.
- When BOUNTY was in dry dock, John flew in from FL & did a walk through with vessel surveyor. The surveyor stated that the rudder needed reinforcement so the repair was made while in yard.
- From the yard in Boothbay, ME to New London, CT the BOUNTY had a crew of 17 to include Don Bolton, Morgan, & Marco who got off in New London, CT. They were not making the voyage to St. Petersburg, FL that left on Thursday Oct 25, 2012.
- Chris Barksdale was not a licensed engineer, but John had worked with him in the past so recommended him for the position as the new engineer on BOUNTY.
- Thursday, Oct 25, 2012, the crew did a day sail with Navy crew on BOUNTY. After that, the BOUNTY crew visited Navy submarine for tour. John had heard from Dan Cleveland & Laura Groves that everyone (including family members of crew) was worried about sailing into hurricane Sandy, so John pulled CAPT aside to mention to him the crews concerns & need to talk to the crew. John & CAPT talked about their options of either sailing N, not sailing, or sailing towards

Bermuda, crossing North to get to West side of storm. They checked weather every hour. CAPT addressed crew stating that he had faced bigger storms with big seas & wind & was confident to continue with voyage. CAPT told crew that anyone could leave if they didn't want to make trip. BOUNTY set sail around 1800.

- Friday, Oct 26, 2012, John noticed that less water had accumulated in the bilge than what was normal from past voyages. Pumped 24/7 with electric pumps to rid bilge of water. Fuel filters normally changed 1 per month.
- Saturday, Oct 27, 2012, winds increased to 30-40 knots, BOUNTY was still heading South by East. John had meeting with mates talked about engine room & bilge good. Started getting 50 knot gust when decision was made to head West.
- Sunday, Oct 28, 2012, CAPT made decision that morning to head from 270 miles off shore back to West. Made it back within 190 miles off shore when vessel sank. That Afternoon (around 1700) was woken by Laura because of small fire on new stove (toggle switch) & was notified of port site glass broken in engine room (possible fuel leak). Water in bilge checked, water level high, but not unusual. John explained that the BOUNTY had 2 electric pumps connected to 1 manifold connected to 8 compartments with 1 strainer per compartment used to pump water off vessel. Port generator & port engine offline (filters had been changed earlier that day). Was able to get port generator back online, but still didn't have port engine. Used 2 electric pumps & portable hydraulic pump to pump water in engine room. Was told that water was coming through seam on port side in engine room (2 foot by 6-8 foot seam on port side spraying inside across deck). Starboard generator went down then 20-30 minutes later engine surging like losing fuel. Changed 2 filters & starboard generator started back up. Not sure what time, but CAPT was below deck & fell into table hurting his back. 2100-2200 John talked to CAPT about when to call Coast Guard because of engine problems & rising water. Called on SAT phone Coast Guard (it took 10-15 min to get reception) & called Bob Hansen (XO, Coast Guard Eagle). Soon thereafter, vessel lost starboard engine & generator (only had port generator).
- CAPT told John that he thought it would take 4 hours to flood ship & they would need to abandon ship, but it ended up happening much quicker than that.
- Laura & Dan were getting safety gear ready, keeping morale up.
- Crew eventually evacuated out of flooded tween deck to main deck in their immersion suits mustering on port side. Bow started dipping down.
- John & CAPT had discussion on deck about when to abandon ship, but 20-30 seconds after their talk, vessel rolled over & everyone fell overboard.
- John, when asked if he would have taken the trip, stated that he wouldn't have put lives at risk, but with CAPT experience he felt comfortable to sail.
- States that last abandon ship drill was in last 2 months.

#### Interview #4: Doug Faunt (Deckhand)

- Licensed AB. With BOUNTY since 2008; total of 240 days sea time.
- Oct 2, 2012, got on vessel. Helped slide fuel tanks into place (water tanks already in place) while in yard (Boothbay, ME). All muscle work done by BOUNTY crew while vessel was in yard.

- Leaving Boothbay yard to New London, CT Doug felt that the electrical & bilge pumps were not working well & vessel wasn't cleaned well. Vessel was taking on water a little more than normal in engine room because vessel now set deeper in water in the stern. States that everyone knew that vessel wasn't in good condition & not ready for traveling, but there was pressure to make New London to show ship to Navy crew. Trevor was previous engineer, but now had a new engineer Chris Barksdale.
- Voyage plan for leaving New London port on Thursday, Oct 25, 2012, was to sail at approximately 5 knots for 1400 miles in 14 days. Instead left that day running engines at 1900 rpm 9-10 knots which was highly unusual from the normal 1700 rpm & speed of 5-6 knots of all past voyages.
- They were using electric pumps, but added the hydraulic pump to help pump water out of bilge which was odd because they had never needed to use that pump before on other trips.
- Remembered vessel making lots of noise during this trip unlike past trips.
- Should have been easy to pump engine room. Water level wasn't going down & water was coming in through the ceiling. Again, it wasn't normal for the electric pumps not to keep up with water in bilge. Even after adding the hydraulic pump for the first time ever, still couldn't rid engine room of water.
- All bedding was soaked. Water was coming in through above deck.
- Mustered on deck before course sail split.
- There were electrical problems (arcing & sparking because of all the salt water in vessel). People were getting shocked.
- Weather proofing for control panels & electrical in engine room wasn't completed leaving the yard so electrical was failing & people getting shocked. Doug states that fuel leak & stray electrical (once wet) were causes for generators & engine failures.
- While on deck, just before vessel sank, no one could walk, only sliding & crawling. No one could hold on to their gear because vessel was listing & rolling badly.
- Said they conducted abandon ship drills 1 per week & man overboard drills 1 per month because it was known that CAPT was scared of this. They had created a "ditch kit" with 3 days worth of supplies should they ever have to abandon ship.
- CAPT really wanted to keep schedule to get to St. Petersburg, FL on November 9, 10, & 11 so Down syndrome group could visit BOUNTY.

Interview #5: Matt Sanders (Mate)

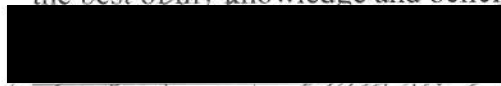
- Matt voiced not wanting to make a written statement nor verbal statement at this time. He provided his phone number so he could be reached at a later date for a phone interview.

Interview #6: Chris Barksdale (Engineer)

- Had worked in past with John Svendsen when in Hawaii.
- Joined BOUNTY in dry-dock & was involved with re-plumbing water lines of recently moved tanks in engine room.
- Said BOUNTY had 2 John Deere engines 385 hp with 8.1 liter main generator.

- At dry-dock, engine room needed lots of cleaning, but couldn't get to it because of other task needed. Didn't get to spend enough time in engine room as desired. BOUNTY was refloated on Oct 17, 2012, left dry-dock on Oct 20, 2012, & arrived in New London, CT on Oct 24, 2012; cleaning was not completed.
- Engineer watch leaving New London to St. Petersburg, FL was from 0700 to 1800.
- Maintained bilge log, water temperature log, hour meter log, fuel level log, fuel transfer log, daily engineer log, etc.
- John Svendsen, Matt Sanders, & CAPT showed him around engine room at dry-dock.
- Stated that CAPT had told him to only use starboard generator & to use the port generator as a back-up. Engineer thought this was odd because it was his experience that you should alternate using the generators to assure that they were always in good working order.
- Stated that he believed the engineer whose position he replaced got relieved for being disgruntled & for having messed up the engine room.
- Stated not being able to find log showing when fluids on the vessel had been changed.
- During voyage when vessel sank, bilge was pumped more by crew during their rounds than by the engineer. Engineer states he knew about incorrect fuel filters having been ordered, but to his knowledge there was enough correct filters onboard & the correct filters were being used during trip.
- Fuel tank sight glass was busted (on Oct 29, 2012) so diesel ran dry & then shut down. They had to be primed to get running again. Matt could only get port generator started again.
- States that water was coming over side of boat & running down the walls from above. Recalls lots of noise being caused by the flexing of the vessel during the voyage.

I have read my statement as documented above (and, if applicable, on continuation pages), and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true and correct.

 CT  
Signature

13 Dec 12  
Date