

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

DUKW 34 AND M/V CARIBBEAN SEA

\* Docket No.: DCA-10-MM-025

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: RENATA HEGEDUS

Conference Room  
Sector Delaware Bay  
United States Coast Guard  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Friday  
July 9, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,  
at 12:52 p.m.

BEFORE: LIAM LARUE  
Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

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Health, Safety, Quality and Environment  
K-Sea Transportation

GREG BLUMENTHAL, General Manager  
Ride the Ducks Philadelphia

SHANE LAWS, Chief Warrant Officer  
United States Coast Guard

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:52 p.m.)

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2  
3 MR. LARUE: Okay, it is 12:52 on Friday, July 9th. This  
4 is Liam LaRue from NTSB. And we're going to be talking with  
5 Renata Hegedus. Okay, I pronounced it correctly. We've got the  
6 same people from the earlier interviews. We don't need to go  
7 around the room.

## INTERVIEW OF RENATA HEGEDUS

8  
9 (Whereupon, Ms. Hegedus answered assisted by an  
10 interpreter.)

BY MR. LARUE:

11  
12 Q. What I'll do is I'll just get you to -- how old are you?

13 A. Nineteen.

14 Q. Nineteen, okay. And what I'd like you to do, please, is  
15 to just tell us the story of what you remember from the time you  
16 got on the boat and just kind of walk through the whole event, and  
17 then we'll follow up with some questions.

18 A. (Through interpreter) When they got on, everybody took  
19 their seats. And the leader explained to them that they're going  
20 to go around the town and started to show how to use the life  
21 jackets, but not really seriously how to actually put it on. And  
22 through the city, everything was fine. When they got into the  
23 water, the motor started smoking, and it was very smelly, which  
24 was a bad smell, but she can't quite, you know, say what type of a  
25 smell. Somebody went to the motor and started doing something.

1 She doesn't know what the other captain was doing. They were just  
2 waiting as passengers. They didn't know what was happening.

3 And she noticed that everybody was looking back. And  
4 then she looked back too, and she saw that the other captain or  
5 leader was on the radio, but couldn't hear what he was saying.  
6 Everybody started running for the life vests, but there was a big  
7 chaos, and they couldn't get down the life vests. So, she grabbed  
8 one but was just holding it, didn't put it on, and she saw that at  
9 that point, the other boat was already pushing them. And she felt  
10 the water, and she couldn't put the vest on but just held it the  
11 whole time, held onto it the whole time. Next, she was in the  
12 water. That's it.

13 Q. How did you get to land?

14 A. (Through interpreter) They were taken by the current.  
15 Somebody grabbed onto her, and then she was on a boat.

16 Q. Do you remember what kind of boat it was or who was on  
17 it?

18 A. (Through interpreter) She thinks it was the, you know,  
19 one of the safety rescue boats.

20 Q. What color was it?

21 A. (Through interpreter) She thinks it was black. She  
22 thinks it's a rescue boat.

23 Q. Okay, so you -- we have a seating chart here. So, this  
24 is the front of the boat and the back. Do you remember where you  
25 were sitting?

1           A.    We were next to each other, and I think the 10th or the  
2 12th.

3           Q.    Okay, so you were on the left side of the boat, the port  
4 side of the boat, either seat 10 or 12?

5           A.    Yeah.

6           Q.    Were you sitting on the outside or the aisle?

7           A.    Outside.

8           Q.    Outside. Do you understand? Okay, okay, so you said  
9 you got in the water, and did you say you saw smoke?

10          A.    Yeah.

11          Q.    Okay, what color was the smoke?

12          A.    (Through interpreter) A white.

13          Q.    A white smoke?

14          A.    (Through interpreter) White smoke.

15          Q.    How long did the -- was there smoke? Did it continue  
16 after they stopped the boat?

17          A.    (Through interpreter) The smoke continued for a little  
18 bit after the boat stopped.

19          Q.    Did the captain tell you what was going on?

20          A.    Uh-uh.

21          Q.    Okay, you said that you grabbed -- or what made you grab  
22 a life jacket? Did someone tell you to grab a life jacket, or --

23          A.    (Through interpreter) She just grabbed it. I don't  
24 know.

25          Q.    Okay, where the other people were grabbing them?

1 A. (Through interpreter) Yeah.

2 Q. When you grabbed the life jacket, had you seen the barge  
3 yet, or did you grab a life jacket and then see the barge?

4 A. (Through interpreter) She saw it before.

5 Q. She saw the barge, and then you grabbed the life jacket?

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. Okay. Was it -- did you have any problems or issues  
8 grabbing the life jacket?

9 A. (Through interpreter) There was just one left, and she  
10 had no problem.

11 Q. Okay. Did you -- were you hurt at all? Did you have  
12 any injuries?

13 A. (Through interpreter) A scratch.

14 Q. Did you go to the hospital?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Did you -- can you swim?

17 A. (Indiscernible)

18 Q. Did you see anyone on the barge or the tug?

19 A. (Through interpreter) No, she did not see anyone.

20 Q. How long from the time the boat stopped until when the  
21 barge hit the boat?

22 A. (Through interpreter) At least five minutes, possibly  
23 more.

24 Q. Did you stay in your seat the whole time?

25 A. (In English) Yes.

1 Q. And I'm going to -- I know it's hard, but I'm going to  
2 ask you to think back. Do you remember who was sitting nearby?  
3 Like who was sitting in front of you?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I say it?

5 MR. LARUE: You can help her, yeah.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think in front of -- yes, in  
7 front of us, in front of Renata, Laura Kennedy. And in front of  
8 me, I don't know her name, and Emily or Amanda. No, I think  
9 Emily. I think Emily. And in the other side next to Emily, there  
10 were -- so, I don't know exactly whether we were the 10th or the  
11 12th. So, when we were the 10th, then here Laura and Emily. Here  
12 Peter, Peter Farkas.

13 MR. LARUE: So, across from them was Peter on the --  
14 Peter on the aisle?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, Peter and Mirtill Milasin  
16 next to her.

17 MR. LARUE: And one more time, what was that name?

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mirtill Milasin, Mirtill Milasin.

19 MR. LARUE: How do you spell that?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: M-I-R-T-I-L-L, it's her last  
21 name.

22 MR. LARUE: Yeah, that's her last name?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's her first name, and --

24 MR. LARUE: We should be able to find it from that.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Because --

1 MR. LARUE: Yeah, we'll check it out later. Mirtill  
2 Milasin, the last name, okay. So that -- how about behind you or  
3 across from you?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Behind us I think only one  
5 person, Seth. He was quiet.

6 MR. LARUE: His name was --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know his name. And next  
8 to me on the other side of the boat --

9 MR. LARUE: Across, across?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, Jackie Kennedy, and next to  
11 her by the outside, another, an older lady who wasn't part of our  
12 group.

13 MR. LARUE: Okay, that's great. Perfect. Thank you. I  
14 think that's all the questions I have. I'll pass it around and  
15 let them go next.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ask this one question about --

17 MR. LARUE: Oh yeah, you're right. I didn't write it  
18 down.

19 BY MR. LARUE:

20 Q. Your two friends that are missing, do you know if they  
21 can swim, or if they were able to swim?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I --

23 MR. LARUE: No, we'll ask you on the next --

24 MS. HEGEDUS: (In English) I think -- I'm quite sure  
25 that they could, because the boy must have. I'm sure he could,

1 because he was very athletic and he was -- he did a lot of sports,  
2 and the other girl, although it wasn't long, but she played  
3 handball and basketball, and so I think she could have swam.

4 MR. LARUE: Thank you.

5 BY MR. BLUMENTHAL:

6 Q. When the boat was anchored -- this is Greg from Ride the  
7 Ducks. I'm sorry. That's who I am, I always forget to -- I  
8 apologize for that. When the DUKW was anchored, could you see the  
9 captain? What was he doing? No? So, you're -- just from your  
10 position, anything -- did you hear anything that he was saying?

11 A. (No audible response.)

12 Q. No? Okay.

13 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

14 Q. This is John Lawrence. When you grabbed the life  
15 jacket, almost grabbed the life jacket, did you say anything to  
16 anybody else? Did you yell out for any -- or did you talk to  
17 anybody else around you at that time? Or did you just take a life  
18 jacket and go?

19 A. (Through interpreter) She just went on her own.

20 Q. And the reason I asked is one of your friends said that  
21 they heard other girls yell grab life jackets.

22 A. (Through interpreter) She didn't hear it.

23 Q. Thank you. That's all I have.

24 BY CWO LAWS:

25 Q. Shane Laws with the Coast Guard. When the boat was just

1 sitting there and you were waiting, did another DUKW boat ever  
2 come up to your boat?

3 A. (Through interpreter) Yes.

4 Q. Yes, and what did they do then?

5 A. (Through interpreter) They went on their way. They went  
6 away.

7 Q. Did they talk to the captain?

8 A. (Through interpreter) No, they just went.

9 Q. Did they actually come alongside, or did they just pass,  
10 they were just passing by?

11 A. (Through interpreter) They just went on, went by.

12 Q. And I don't recall if this was asked already, but before  
13 the collision, did you hear the boat you were in, did it make any  
14 horn signals or bells or anything like that?

15 A. (Through interpreter) Nothing.

16 Q. No? Did you hear anything from the barge or towboat?

17 A. (In English) No.

18 MR. LARUE: Any questions?

19 BY MR. LARUE:

20 Q. Okay, is there anything else that you can think of that  
21 might be useful that we didn't ask you about?

22 A. (Through interpreter) Nothing.

23 Q. Nothing? Okay, well, thank you very much. We  
24 appreciate you talking to us. Is it okay that we recorded this?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. All right, thank you very much.

2 (Whereupon, at 1:09 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:                   DUKW 34 AND M/V CARIBBEAN SEA  
Interview of Renata Hegedus

DOCKET NUMBER:                   DCA-10-MM-025

PLACE:                               Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE:                                 July 9, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to  
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

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Debbie Mizell  
Transcriber