

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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M/V *CONTI PERIDOT* COLLISION WITH

\*

THE M/T *CARLA MAERSK* IN THE

\*

HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL

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MARCH 9, 2015

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Docket No.: DCA-15-MM-017

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Interview of: RODRIGO ALLEN PELAYO

Houston, Texas

Thursday,  
March 12, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: ROB JONES  
Senior Marine Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

ROB JONES, Senior Marine Investigator  
Deck Operations Group Chairman  
National Transportation Safety Board

BARRY STRAUCH, Ph.D., Supervisory Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

CARRIE BELL, Marine Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

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MIKE USHER  
Board of Pilot Commissioners for  
Harris County Ports


MIKE MORRIS  
Houston Pilots Association

HENNING PULMER  
BBG

DAVID BETTS  
(On behalf of *Conti Peridot*-Liberia Flag)

DAVID ANDERSON  
(On behalf of Maersk Tankers)

JOHN UNGER, Esq.  
Royston Rayzor  
(On behalf of Mr. Pelayo)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Rodrigo Allen Pelayo:		
By Mr. Jones		5
		20
By Mr. Morris		20
By Mr. Usher		22
By Mr. Jones		23
By Mr. Anderson		23

1 I N T E R V I E W

MR. JONES: This is Rob Jones. I'm the lead investigator for the Deck Operations Group with the National Transportation Safety Board. We're here today investigating the collision between the *Conti Peridot* and the --

MR. PELAYO: *Carla Maersk.*

MR. JONES: -- *Carla Maersk*.

MR. PELAYO: Okay, sir.

MR. JONES: All right. Thank you. And I'm going to go around and everyone is going to introduce themselves in the room. And we have today with us the helmsman, and your name, sir?

MR. PELAYO: Allen Rodrigo, sir.

MR. JONES: Okay, thank you.

DR. STRAUCH: Okay. I'm Barry Strauch with the NTSB.

MR. MORRIS: Mike Morris, Houston Pilots.

MR. PULMER: Henning Pulmer, BBG.

MR. UNGER: John Unger, Royston Razor.

MR. JONES: Your name again?

MR. PELAYO: Allen Rodrigo, sir. Helmsman.

MR. JONES: Okay.

MR. USHER: Mike Usher on behalf of the Board of the Port Pilot Commission for Harris County Ports.

MR. BETTS: David Betts, Flag State, Liberia.

1 MR. ANDERSON: David Anderson, owner's rep for Maersk  
2 Tankers.

3 MR. JONES: Okay, Allen -- oh, go ahead, sorry, guys.

4 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

6 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

8 MS. BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB.

9 MR. JONES: All right, Allen, I'd like to -- this is Rob  
10 Jones again. I'd like to get a little bit of background of your  
11 sea-going career and experience first.

12 MR. PELAYO: Okay.

13 INTERVIEW OF RODRIGO ALLEN PELAYO

14 BY MR. JONES:

15 Q. So if you could start out with, when did you first start  
16 going to sea?

17 A. 2011, sir. I don't know exactly.

18 Q. Okay, you don't know exactly the month?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. So -- and was that as a cadet or an ordinary seaman?

21 A. Ordinary seaman, sir.

22 Q. Okay. And where did you receive your paperwork or your  
23 first training?

24 A. For AB, sir?

25 Q. For ordinary even.

1           A.   Originally, in the Philippines, sir.  International --  
2 the ship is International.

3           Q.   Okay, and how long have you been an ordinary?

4           A.   About 3 years, sir.

5           Q.   So in about 2013 or late 2012, you went --

6           A.   Yes, sir.

7           Q.   When did you become an AB?

8           A.   Six month -- about 1 year, sir.  Not exactly one year.  
9 A little bit more.

10          Q.   Okay.

11          A.   I was promoted, was last (indiscernible).

12          Q.   All right.  And how long have you been on board this  
13 vessel?

14          A.   Five months more, sir.  We coming 6 months now  
15 March 20.

16          Q.   And have you ever been on board this vessel before?

17          A.   This vessel, sir?

18          Q.   Yes.

19          A.   Sorry, sir, but --

20          Q.   Have you been on this vessel before this last trip, or  
21 is this the first time?

22          A.   This isn't the first time, sir.

23          Q.   Okay.  And have you had AB experience on other vessels?

24          A.   Yes, sir.

25          Q.   All right.

1 A. I was promoted other vessel. Also had BBG.

2 Q. And how long were you on that vessel?

3 A. Six months, sir, as on AB.

4 Q. Okay. And on that vessel, did you have -- get  
5 experience steering? Were you --

6 A. Yes, sir. When I was on OS, have training for AB.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Because you -- if you don't qualify to being an AB  
9 captain, you don't (indiscernible). You make a position as a  
10 helmsman.

11 Q. All right. So what watch have you -- were you on on  
12 this ship? What watch time?

13 A. 1200 to 1600, sir.

14 Q. Okay. And have you -- for the 5 months that you've been  
15 on here, have you steered the vessel -- how many times have you  
16 steered coming in and out of port?

17 A. In Australia, sir, China, Japan (indiscernible).

18 Q. Okay. Have you been to Houston before?

19 A. New Orleans, sir.

20 Q. New Orleans.

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Did you steer in the river in New Orleans?

23 A. Yes, sir. It was a seven-cargo hold go New Orleans.

24 Q. I'm sorry?

25 A. Seven-cargo hold vessel.

1 Q. Seven-cargo hold vessel?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So it's bigger than this one or --

4 A. Bigger than this.

5 Q. -- smaller? Bigger.

6 A. Bigger than this one.

7 Q. All right. How do you think you are as a helmsman?

8 You. Good? Average?

9 A. Very good, sir.

10 Q. Very good. Okay. That's good.

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. How did you steer the other ship up in New Orleans in

13 the Mississippi? No problems?

14 A. No problems, sir. The pilot -- if he don't like to

15 steer, you send to go down. They send another AB to operate the

16 helmsman.

17 Q. So has a pilot ever sent you below?

18 A. No, pilot no send me.

19 Q. Okay, because you're very good.

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Okay. All right. I appreciate that. So did you steer

22 at sea too, or automatic?

23 A. Automatic, sir.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. They (Indiscernible) coming closing situation sometimes,



1 officer he make --

2 Q. Alter course?

3 A. Hand steering.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Because we are in situation of crossing (indiscernible)  
6 fishing boats, so we make hand steer.

7 Q. Okay. So let's talk about the day of the accident.

8 A. Okay, sir.

9 Q. When did you come on watch?

10 A. 1150, sir. Because we are relieving other helmsman.

11 Q. Okay. And you relieved the other helmsman?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. He's an AB?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay. Tell me about the exchange between you and the  
16 other helmsman.

17 A. At the time, sir, is -- pilot is commanding. Then we  
18 have -- only turnover, sir, or (indiscernible) --

19 Q. Yeah, just the turnover between you and the helmsman.

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Did he mention anything? Was the ship steering good,  
22 taking a lot of rudder, or just -- did he say -- did you relieve  
23 where their helm was and listen to the pilot?

24 A. He turned over everything, sir. With this maneuvering  
25 maybe the current going to port, he turn over to me.

1 Q. He told you?

2 A. Yeah, because --

3 Q. Okay. Information?

4 A. Yes, sir, information.

5 Q. Okay. And when you relieved the other helmsman, you  
6 felt comfortable?

7 A. Yes, sir, comfortable.

8 Q. All right. Did the other helmsman let the pilot know  
9 that you switched, or did you let the pilot know that you switched  
10 helm?

11 A. Other AB turn over -- give permission to the pilot to  
12 have (indiscernible) on the wheel.

13 Q. Okay. So now, at about 11:50, a little later, after  
14 you've got the wheel now, by yourself, you -- the helmsman has  
15 given you orders, what kind of order -- how is he giving you those  
16 orders to steer the ship?

17 A. The helmsman, sir?

18 Q. The pilot.

19 A. The pilot?

20 Q. When he talks to you. Left 20, right -- starboard 20?

21 A. Starboard 20, port 10.

22 Q. Okay. Midship?

23 A. Midships.

24 Q. How about courses?

25 A. Courses, 315, watch your heading. Sample, 315 okay.

1 Start to 316. Only one degree because the small channel.

2 Q. Okay. And at any time, no -- did the pilot say  
3 anything?

4 A. No, no problem, sir.

5 Q. No. When you were steering, was -- every time the pilot  
6 gave you an order, port 20, starboard 20, midships, did the rudder  
7 respond correctly?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. How do you know?

10 A. Because of an indicator, sir.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. (Indiscernible) for steering.

13 Q. All right. Is that indicator up on the bulkhead, on the  
14 console, one place or both?

15 A. Three place for the steering indicator. We have one on  
16 the front, we have one on the center. We have one under  
17 (indiscernible).

18 Q. Okay. When the pilot gives you an order, do you respond  
19 right back to the pilot or the mate?

20 A. The mate first he gave port 20, when the rudder, you see  
21 the rudder coming to port 20, then repeat again to -- report to  
22 the pilot.

23 Q. Okay. Does the -- is that mate in the middle between  
24 pilot, mate, to helmsman, or just you and the pilot?

25 A. Me and the pilot. I don't listen to other, because we

1 are inside on the bridge. If the pilot is in the outside, maybe  
2 need repeater if you don't here.

3 Q. Okay. All right. When you first came up on the bridge,  
4 did you notice the weather outside?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Well, describe it to me.

7 A. Very bad visibility.

8 Q. How bad?

9 A. Maybe -- I don't know exactly the distance of this  
10 visibility, sir.

11 Q. Okay, could you see the bow of your ship?

12 A. A bow of the ship?

13 Q. Your ship, could you see the bow?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. So you could see at least all the way to the bow?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Okay. How much do you think you could see beyond the  
18 bow?

19 A. The distance, sir?

20 Q. The distance beyond your bow, visibility?

21 A. Visibility about --

22 Q. Estimate.

23 A. -- 189 -- about 150, sir.

24 Q. 150 --

25 A. From the bridge to the bow.

1 Q. Okay, the bow to the -- the bridge, the distance --

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. -- between the bridge and the bow was 150 meters?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Okay. Could you estimate how far you could see beyond  
6 the bow?

7 A. Beyond the bow?

8 Q. Up river, past the bow. If you can. If you can't,  
9 don't worry about it.

10 A. I don't know, sir.

11 Q. Okay. As you're steering, can you see the buoys going  
12 by? Do you know?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. No. You're just steering?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. All right. Tell me -- now, you're at the wheel, you're  
17 listening to the pilot. Tell me anything you can remember now  
18 about the accident, from when you took over. Just tell me what  
19 you remember.

20 A. Repeat again, sir.

21 Q. Tell me what you can remember about the incident, the  
22 accident. You're at the wheel steering, the pilot is giving you  
23 orders. And what did you see and what can you remember that --  
24 you know, I'd like to hear.

25 A. Only I'm listening to pilot, sir. I don't -- I'm not

1 responsible for local, only for steering. We have (indiscernible)  
2 because really difficult being a helmsman.

3 Q. Okay. So is -- all your concentration is on the helm?

4 A. On the helmsman, sir.

5 Q. Did you see a vessel go by shortly before the accident,  
6 by any chance?

7 A. Yes, sir, because he passing the front. We have a small  
8 distance between us.

9 Q. Okay. Did it look normal to you between -- from your  
10 experience in the Mississippi or this river or did it look closer?

11 A. This, sir, is very closer.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Than Mississippi River.

14 Q. Can you estimate how far away?

15 A. The Mississippi River?

16 Q. This one, how close?

17 A. How close.

18 Q. Well, you're talking about -- sorry, my mistake. Let's  
19 just go back. When you say close, do you mean the river itself or  
20 the channel? Are you talking about --

21 A. The channel, sir.

22 Q. Okay, the channel --

23 A. The river is wide.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. The channel is small.

1 Q. All right. Do you have any trouble steering?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. No? Is this an easy ship to steer or a hard ship to  
4 steer?

5 A. On the steering, sir, it's -- depends of the current.

6 Q. The current?

7 A. If the current is strong, you -- the response of  
8 steering may be not faster. (Indiscernible) current where is the  
9 direction.

10 Q. Okay. So when you were up there with this pilot that  
11 morning --

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. -- before the accident, did he give you any courses to  
14 steer, like 315, or like you mentioned? Or was it all rudder  
15 orders?

16 A. We have -- we gave some courses, but not (indiscernible)  
17 coming up there, 410, 420, starboard, midship, starboard 420.  
18 Like this.

19 Q. Okay. So did he ever -- did the pilot ever give you a  
20 course steady?

21 A. Yeah, he gave steady.

22 Q. Okay. And after he -- when he says steady, what do you  
23 -- do you repeat the course?

24 A. Yes, sir. Report again.

25 Q. Okay.

1           A.    He gave 315, you -- 315 then you execute. After  
2 execute, when he give response 315, execute, then I tell you  
3 coming to 315. Then report again. (Indiscernible).

4           Q.    Okay.

5           A.    Yes.

6           Q.    When the pilot gave you courses and you steadied on that  
7 course --

8           A.    Yes, sir.

9           Q.    -- did it need -- take a lot of rudder to steady or was  
10 it hard to steady on that course, or was it easy -- normal?

11          A.    We have indicator rate of turn, sir. If the steering,  
12 she move, you need to stop. Not -- only the rudder still on the  
13 midship. Because if you still on the midship, the rate of turn  
14 pushing on the starboard, you need to stop.

15          Q.    Right. Okay, well, that's -- you use the rate of turn  
16 indicator a lot?

17          A.    Yes, sir.

18          Q.    To help you steer?

19          A.    Yes, sir.

20          Q.    Okay. Good practice. But did you need a lot of rudder  
21 that morning to steady on the course given to you by the pilot?

22          A.    No, sir.

23          Q.    Okay. So it steadied up easily for you?

24          A.    Easily to steady, sir.

25          Q.    Okay. Do you remember the collision?



1           A.    Ask the captain, sir.

2           Q.    Ask the captain.  Well, we will.

3           A.    Yes, sir.

4           Q.    But I want to hear your opinion.  I know you're  
5 concentrating on the helm.

6           A.    And the pilot, sir.

7           Q.    And the pilot.  But at some point, you probably  
8 recognized something was going a little bit --

9           A.    After incident maybe.

10          Q.    But before, did you look up and see that you were  
11 heading right for a ship?

12          A.    Yes, sir.

13          Q.    Okay.  Just tell me about it.  What do you remember?

14          A.    This --

15          Q.    Do you remember what you were doing with the wheel?  
16 What was the last command to the rudder?

17          A.    Last command, sir, hard starboard.

18          Q.    Okay.  And how long did you hold hard starboard?

19          A.    I don't know, sir, because that is the last command of  
20 the pilot.

21          Q.    Would you hold -- were you holding hard starboard up to  
22 the collision?  Was the rudder still hard starboard when the  
23 vessels collided?

24          A.    Yes, sir.

25          Q.    Okay.  Did the vessels start to turn back to starboard

1 at all?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Was it still swinging to the left?

4 A. No, sir.

5 Q. It was steady?

6 A. (No audible response.)

7 Q. Could you tell by the rate of turn indicator? What was

8 the rate of turn indicator doing when the vessel struck?

9 A. Turning indicator, sir?

10 Q. The rate of turn.

11 A. Rate of turn?

12 Q. Right. When you used the rate of turn to steady your

13 vessel --

14 A. Coming to starboard, sir.

15 Q. So the rate -- as you struck the vessel, the rate of

16 turn indicator was going to starboard?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay. Did you feel the impact when you hit the other

19 ship?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Did you have to hold on?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Did you fall down?

24 A. Fall down?

25 Q. Did you fall?

1           A.    No, sir.

2           Q.    Did you get -- did you fall over the helm at all, or you  
3 just held on?

4           A.    Hold on, sir.

5           Q.    Okay. Did anything fall down off the chart table, or  
6 binoculars off a stand or just --

7           A.    No.

8           Q.    Okay. What was -- do you remember what happened next  
9 after the ship struck? Do you remember what the next command was  
10 or --

11          A.    No more command, sir.

12          Q.    No?

13          A.    The last command is only hard starboard.

14          Q.    Okay. Eventually though -- did you stay at the wheel  
15 the whole time?

16          A.    Sir?

17          Q.    After the collision, did you stay at the wheel?

18          A.    Yes, sir.

19          Q.    Okay. So the pilot didn't relieve you. You didn't get  
20 relieved by another helmsman, right?

21          A.    No, sir.

22          Q.    So do you remember the next command the pilot gave after  
23 the collision and things maybe settled down a little, you were  
24 still at the wheel?

25          A.    Only the command of the pilot to recently only hard

1 starboard.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. No more.

4 MR. JONES: Okay. All right. That's all I have right  
5 now.

6

7 Q. [REDACTED]. When you had the  
8 exchange between yourself and the off-going helmsman, did he give  
9 you any indication of what the weather was expected in the area?

10 A. No, sir.

11 Q. Is that typically done or not? When you're exchanging  
12 the helmsman, do they say, listen, we expect some bad weather, we  
13 got to report. Would he give you that type of information?

14 A. No (indiscernible) sir.

15 Q. And what about your equipment on the bridge, the things  
16 that you're responsible for, whether you would know whether it was  
17 working properly or not, was all that equipment working properly?

18 A. It was working good, sir. Working properly.

19 Q. How about the compasses? Were the compasses working  
20 properly, to your knowledge?

21 A. Were working properly, sir.

22 [REDACTED] I have no other questions right now.

23 MR. JONES: Okay, Morris?

24 BY MR. MORRIS:

25 Q. Mike Morris, Houston Pilots.

1           A.    Yes, sir.

2           Q.    You said the ship sometime -- or the helmsman that you  
3 relieved said that sometime there was current and she wasn't  
4 steering good. Is that -- did I understand that?

5           A.    Yes, sir.

6           Q.    And did you experience some of that?

7           A.    Some problem of the steering?

8           Q.    When you steered, did you feel any current that needed  
9 work to steer?

10          A.    That time, sir, is very good for steering, because no  
11 current or pushing.

12          Q.    But I'm asking before you had said there was -- he was  
13 having a hard time with it, isn't that what you said?

14          A.    Sorry, sir. Repeat again.

15          Q.    The quartermaster that you relieved when you come up at  
16 1150, he had told you that there was some current and it was hard  
17 to steer?

18          A.    No, no, sir. (Indiscernible).

19          Q.    Oh, I thought you -- I thought that's what you had said.

20          A.    Yeah, only pushing -- the current coming -- not hard --  
21 only the current pushing to port or pushing to starboard, only  
22 (indiscernible).

23          Q.    So what happens when the current is pushing you one way  
24 or the other? You just apply more rudder?

25          A.    Yeah, you need to stop because you see on the rate of

1 turn if the vessel is still moving because the pilot give you a  
2 steady. So you must be steady on the course.

3 Q. Okay. So when there is current, would you say that you  
4 probably needed more rudder to make her steady or get her back on  
5 course?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. You need to steer.

9 MR. MORRIS: Okay, that's all I have.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no questions.

11 BY MR. USHER:

12 Q. Mike Usher, Houston Pilot Commission. The conning  
13 order, the command given to you for hard starboard rudder --

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. -- do you know what was the command order given by the  
16 pilot before that?

17 A. Before that accident, sir?

18 Q. Okay, well what heading -- where was your rudder at  
19 before the hard --

20 A. Midship, sir.

21 Q. Midship. Okay. Do you recall what heading you were on,  
22 what course you were steering?

23 A. I don't know, sir.

24 Q. Do you recall the draft of your ship at the time of the  
25 incident?

1 A. Draft, sir?

2 Q. The draft.

3 A. I don't know the draft, sir.

4 MR. USHER: Okay. Okay, that's all I have. Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions. No, thank you.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

7 DR. STRAUCH: Barry. No questions.

8 BY MR. JONES:

9 Q. It's back to me. This is Rob Jones. Mike Usher asked  
10 you about the -- you were midships before --

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. -- the hard starboard. Do you remember -- what was --  
13 was there any port rudders before that, were there any hard port  
14 rudders before the midships?

15 A. Before the midships, sir, is only steady.

16 Q. Steady?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 MR. JONES: Okay. That is all I have. We'll go around  
19 one more time, although that was a quick round.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have nothing more.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing more.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing more.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing more.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, thank you.

25 BY MR. ANDERSON:

1           Q.    I -- David Anderson (indiscernible). Do you remember if  
2   the foghorn was on auto during -- before the collision, or there  
3   was a ship's whistle being used at any time?

4           A.    Repeat again, sir.

5           Q.    Yeah, the ship's foghorn, was that being used prior to  
6   the collision? Do you remember hearing the ship's whistle being  
7   blown?

8           A.    I heard the horn, but I don't know exactly.

9           MR. ANDERSON: No further.

10          MR. JONES: Okay, that's it. All right. Thank you.  
11   That concludes the interview.

12          MR. PELAYO: Thank you, sir.

13          (Whereupon, 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:           M/V *CONTI PERIDOT* COLLISION WITH  
                                  THE M/T *CARLA MAERSK* IN THE  
                                  HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL  
                                  MARCH 9, 2015  
                                  Interview of Rodrigo Allen Pelayo

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-15-MM-017

PLACE:                   Houston, Texas

DATE:                    March 12, 2015

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.

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Katie Leach  
Transcriber