

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ANDREW J. BARBERI
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

* Docket No.: DCA-10-MM-017
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Telephonic interview of: MICHAEL MARTINSEN

Staten Island Ferry Facility
Staten Island, New York

Tuesday,
May 11, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,
at 4:02 p.m.

BEFORE: MICHAEL KARR
Chairman, Preparedness and Response Group

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL KARR, Chairman
Preparedness and Response Group
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20594
(202) 314-6455
Michael.karr@ntsb.gov

MAX GREEN, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20594

LENNY KINNEAR
United States Coast Guard

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:02 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. KARR: This is Michael Karr with the National
4 Transportation Safety Board. It's about 4:02 in the afternoon.
5 We're on Staten Island, New York on a telephonic conversation with
6 Patrolman Martinsen of the New York City Police. And I'm
7 Michael Karr with the NTSB and in the room is Lenny Kinnear with
8 the U.S. Coast Guard, and Max Green with the NTSB.

INTERVIEW OF MICHAEL MARTINSEN

BY MR. KARR:

10
11 Q. And, Mr. Martinsen, could you give us your first and
12 last name, please?

13 A. Michael Martinsen, M-a-r-t-i-n-s-e-n.

14 Q. All right, thanks. And, Mr. Martinsen, you are aware
15 that we are recording this interview?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Thank you very much. You know, since you're a
18 policeman, not only do I want to find out about, you know, what
19 happened to you and your injury, but I'm also going to ask you
20 some other things about, you know, your police work on the ferry
21 and some of the things that you saw because I know you also -- did
22 you interview some folks after the accident?

23 A. No.

24 Q. No. Okay. All right. Well, anyway, let me ask you to
25 tell the story, you know, why you were on board the ferry, you

1 know, what your job is, and then go ahead and describe to me, you
2 know, what you remember, what you perceived of the accident.

3 A. Okay. Basically, I'm just -- we patrol the ferry just
4 to -- you know, for local law and actually against any terror,
5 terrorism, and any crimes on the boat. And that morning, it was
6 just -- it seemed like a light load. I know it said like 250
7 people, but like a boat that big, when it takes that many people,
8 you just -- you know, that's like a small amount of people. It
9 seemed like not a lot of people on the boat.

10 And before that time, it's just any -- like a normal,
11 like an early morning trip without, like, a rush hour because it
12 was the weekend. So we were just in the back of the boat because
13 it's tactically better for us, I mean, to be in the back and if
14 there's a problem to go into it than fight our way through a crowd
15 from the front. So actually, we -- I think we were on the saloon
16 deck, which would be the middle deck, and we were, like, leaning
17 on the handrails of the back stairs there.

18 And it was just a normal trip and it didn't seem --
19 there was nothing eventful going on and it was just, out of the
20 corner of my eye, I saw the dock coming up, the wood planks, and
21 you could see through the window that it was going by pretty fast.
22 At that point we knew we weren't going to stop in time because
23 right there, the terminal's, like, right there and the speed we
24 were going at, it definitely wasn't going to stop in time. So I
25 just told my partner, I said, you know, we're going to crash and

1 we're not going to stop, so just hold on, grab on. So we grabbed
2 the banisters that we were leaning on and braced ourselves for the
3 impact, and there was no one else really around us to even like
4 warn. So, I don't know, there was really no warning up to then
5 except right before the impact, it was -- I heard over -- I think
6 it might have been a loudspeaker, but it didn't sound that loud;
7 it was, like, "Brace, brace, brace."

8 And my partner thought he heard something else. I think
9 he thought he heard, like, "break, break." And that was it. The
10 impact was right after that.

11 And then from there, it was just -- you know, we called
12 -- put it over the radio to try and get the ambulance there,
13 figuring that people will definitely be hurt from that, and went
14 around to see who was like the most severe -- like, the worst
15 injuries and who we could get help to the fastest. And that's
16 really it.

17 Hello?

18 Q. Okay, good. I'm listening.

19 Tell me about exactly where you were. I've got a
20 diagram in front of me. So you were on the saloon deck on the New
21 York end.

22 A. New York end of the saloon deck, leaning up against,
23 like, the handrails.

24 Q. And --

25 A. Of the staircase.

1 Q. And which staircase? Now, I -- from this --

2 A. The rear -- the New York end, the rear staircase right
3 in the middle of the boat. Like, it's not the -- like --

4 Q. I know. It's the wider -- it's the staircase that
5 goes --

6 A. Yes, like the center staircase. It's not the -- and
7 there's two railings. So I was probably on the one on the Jersey
8 side. My partner was leaning, was standing by the one on the
9 Brooklyn side. And that's actually what we grabbed on to, to
10 brace ourselves for the impact.

11 Q. And were you both in the -- in between the rails?

12 A. I think we -- no. We were in front of the rails. We
13 were on the deck, but just, you know what I mean, like --

14 Q. Yes, I do.

15 A. Yes, like we were standing on the deck. I don't know if
16 I'm leaning on it, or whatever, but we were close enough where
17 when we saw we were going to hit, just grab something and that was
18 right there and that was like something to hold, really hold on
19 to.

20 Q. Okay. Do those stairs go up or down, that center
21 stairs?

22 A. From that part, they go down --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- from where the (indiscernible) would go down. And
25 then, if you wanted to go up, you would have to actually wrap

1 around the wall there to go up a different set.

2 Q. Got you. All right, thanks. Now, which way -- did you
3 fall to the ground?

4 A. No. No.

5 Q. Okay. Now, I read something that said you were injured.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So --

8 A. But I don't think the injuries were a result from the
9 impact. It was more of carrying -- it was someone that weighed a
10 lot that we carried off on a stretcher and when we were carrying
11 him off, I got stuck on the outside handrail, where it would've
12 been better if I was, like, inside the stairwell, and it was just
13 the weight, a lot of the weight fell on me. So that's where -- I
14 just, like, strained my back and knee. I don't think it's
15 anything from the impact of the crash.

16 Q. Okay, got you. Okay.

17 A. The back of the boat, I think it was probably a little
18 less. It felt a lot less than the people in the front of the
19 boat.

20 Q. Yeah, give me your impressions about that.

21 A. Hello?

22 Q. Yeah. I'm trying to think of a question I can ask you.
23 What kept you and your partner from falling down?

24 A. Holding on to the railings.

25 Q. And would you say you held on very tight?

1 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, definitely. It was just the speed that
2 it was coming in, it looked fast. Like, the wood was going by
3 fast. And I ride those boats all the time and it kind of like --
4 it was just a lot faster at that -- at the -- you could see the
5 wood in the window and I'm at the back of the boat, so for me to
6 see the wood in those windows, I know we're right about at the
7 terminal to dock and --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- the speed that that wood was going past us, it was --
10 I grabbed on to that banister. I didn't think I was going to be
11 able to hold on when we hit. I thought I would be thrown off, but
12 I was able to hold on. So I had, yes, a hard grasp to the
13 banister.

14 Q. All right. Any -- tell me what -- tell me how you --
15 tell me how -- what you did, you know, immediately after the
16 accident.

17 A. I think we -- well, immediately after I put it on the
18 radio that we hit the dock hard and send some ambulances, and from
19 that point, I -- we proceeded to the front of the boat. My
20 partner went down; I went up. Like, she was going to check the
21 bottom; I was going to check the top for injuries. And I
22 approached -- there was a lady laying, like, on the ramp of the --
23 in-between the saloon deck and the level above that.

24 And there was a lady there who was laying down and
25 someone said she hit her head from falling and the person helping

1 her said he was a doctor. I asked him if he minded staying with
2 her. He said no problem, go on. And I saw another lady who was,
3 like, bleeding from her head. So at that point I wanted to get a
4 first aid kit. So I didn't know where the crew was; I ran down to
5 the next level. I saw a couple of the mates. I said we need a
6 first aid kit; I got a lady bleeding from the head.

7 Then I ran off and I got a defibrillator from inside one
8 of the staircases there and brought it over by the Asian lady that
9 was, like, laying down. She was a little elderly. I wasn't sure
10 how bad she was. She was with the doctor.

11 And then, I think from there just everyone else started
12 arriving, showing up, and then it was just going around helping,
13 getting people off the boat.

14 Q. All right. Do you have -- do you, as a -- do you and
15 your partner, as patrolmen, have a certain procedure that you're
16 supposed to do after an accident like this or if it was a bomb or
17 you know, whatever, to go around and check for people?

18 A. Well, yeah, I think it's just -- in that case, it was --
19 procedure-wise?

20 Q. Yeah, is there a standard operating procedure for you
21 guys going around and looking for, you know, injured people?

22 A. Well, yeah. I mean, basically, we knew it was an
23 accident and a crash and we just -- you know, you want to see
24 who's really hurt at that point, to try and help them out. I
25 mean --

1 Q. Well, I guess here's my question. I mean, do you know
2 to do that just because that's a good thing to do or have you been
3 trained that that's your job?

4 A. We're trained, but, I mean, as police officers, I mean,
5 I knew it wasn't, like, I wasn't looking for -- at that point
6 going around looking to arrest anyone, so we're going to provide
7 aid. Because that's what, you know, we're trained to do that.

8 Q. Well, that's my question. Are you trained to provide
9 aid?

10 A. Oh, yes. Yes, yes.

11 Q. Do you know where that standard is located in what
12 police book or, you know, where you learn that?

13 A. I don't understand what this question has to do with the
14 crash.

15 Q. Oh. Well, it has to do with -- my work, my group is
16 concerned with preparedness and response.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. So, you know, when an accident happens, how do people
19 respond to it in an effort to mitigate the effects of that
20 accident?

21 A. All right. What does -- I don't really understand the
22 question where it's -- like, how you want me to explain it, like,
23 what book I read it in -- like a manual?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Every -- like, every year, once a year, we go, we get

1 trained on certain things. It could be covert training, which is
2 more of dealing with, like, explosives or a terrorist attack. And
3 then we get defibrillator and CPR training every year and so it's
4 -- I guess it depends on what training we get and it's in those
5 manuals on how to handle it.

6 Q. But, well -- and I'll say have you ever had specific
7 training on how to handle a crisis on the Staten Island Ferry
8 after an event? And that is, you know, how to assist people after
9 an event.

10 A. Well, for the ferry itself, that would be the last
11 training, the mock drill they did a couple of years ago with all
12 the agencies involved, like the Coast Guard and NTSB. I'm sure
13 you guys were involved, too.

14 Q. Okay. Did you participate in that?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And did you do anything in that training similar to what
17 you did after this accident?

18 A. The training, I saw how they administered aid to
19 everyone, but at that point I think I was in the -- my position
20 was in the pilothouse. I was in the pilothouse for that. But
21 that was just the role I had for that training.

22 MR. KARR: Okay. Now -- all right. Let me see what
23 other questions I have for you.

24 BY MR. KINNEAR:

25 Q. While he's got -- I have a question. This is

1 Lenny Kinnear, sir.

2 Right before the impact, do you remember -- or do you
3 remember you said you rode the ferry a long time and everybody
4 gets a feel for the boat. Did you hear or feel the engines
5 vibrating or did you hear other noises besides "brace, brace,
6 brace"?

7 A. Honestly, I don't remember any of that. If you -- I
8 want to say no. I want to say it just -- it felt like we were
9 just riding in smooth, but, I mean, I'm not confident. You know
10 what, I didn't feel -- it's hard to explain.

11 Q. So you felt like you were just gliding in except a
12 little too fast?

13 A. Definitely a little too fast. I want to say -- I don't
14 know at what point they probably slowed down, but it didn't seem
15 like anything was out of ordinary. It felt like a normal ride in.
16 And as soon as I saw the dock, I saw the speed we were going at,
17 and from that point on, that's when we were, like, you know
18 something's wrong, something's different. And I didn't feel
19 anything from there, like when we were approaching the dock, like
20 I didn't feel any engines, vibration, or anything like that.

21 Q. Then you heard the "brace, brace, brace" and then you
22 really knew something was wrong?

23 A. Well, that was right before impact. So at that point as
24 soon as you're done hearing that, it was just a big, big loud
25 noise and, you know, like, the impact.

1 Q. Okay.

2 BY MR. KARR:

3 Q. This is Mike Karr again. And back to that announcement
4 of "brace, brace, brace," do you have any idea why -- you told us
5 that it wasn't very loud.

6 A. I think maybe because at the -- because of the deck I
7 was on, I think it tends to be a little louder in that area, like
8 the lower you go the louder it is from the engines. And it almost
9 sounded like -- it sounded like it came from in front of the boat.
10 It didn't sound like it came from, like, a speaker around me. You
11 know what I mean?

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. If I can explain it. It just seemed like it came from
14 the front; it didn't come from, like, every speaker or maybe it
15 came from a crew's radio, not the intercom. I'm not sure.

16 BY MR. KINNEAR:

17 Q. You say the front of the boat, that's the Staten Island
18 end at this point?

19 A. Excuse me?

20 Q. When you say front, you're saying Staten Island side?

21 A. From, like, where I heard it coming from?

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. Yeah, that would be the Staten Island end.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I was on the Manhattan end.

1 Q. Okay.

2 BY MR. KARR:

3 Q. And then about -- you said you helped get people off the
4 boat. Do you have any idea how many folks you helped get off the
5 boat?

6 A. No. No, I'm not really sure. Just -- no. I don't
7 know.

8 Q. An estimate: one, two, five, six?

9 A. Well, maybe two. Maybe two, definitely. Definitely one
10 that I carried down, like, on the stretcher all the way until we
11 got to like the metal plank, to get them off. From there, before
12 that, I'm not really sure. I don't really recall.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. It was a lot of, like, just seeing who needed help or --
15 you know. Just maybe like getting people's names, but I really at
16 that point -- when you go to like -- you're trying to get
17 someone's name and then you're trying to get them help at the same
18 time, so it was enough.

19 Q. Yeah. Can you tell me -- we're having trouble
20 identifying people that were just on the boat but not injured.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Can you tell me why we don't have those names?

23 A. You know what, probably because at whatever time -- you
24 got to realize there was a lot of -- the fire department and cops
25 and when they got there, I guess as soon as they could getting

1 people off that wasn't hurt, they started getting off. So as far
2 as like who went their own way once they got off, I mean, I can't
3 really explain that, you know.

4 Q. Well, I'm wondering if you -- that's what I think
5 happened is, you know, if you weren't injured, you know, you were
6 probably anxious to get to wherever you were going.

7 A. Yeah. Because when we hit, in the initial -- like, you
8 know, we went off to the front and there's people standing around
9 going, oh, how can I get off; when am I going to get off this?
10 Because they really do, they want to get off right then. And
11 that's when, you know, I'm saying, look, if you're not hurt, go
12 grab a seat. Like, you know, please, like, make room for us.
13 There's people here that are hurt. They're going to need, you
14 know, medical attention. Let's leave room for them and, you know,
15 you'll get off as soon as you can. So at this point, if you're
16 okay, grab a seat and hang on; we'll get you out of here as soon
17 as we can. That was it, you know.

18 Q. Understood.

19 MR. KARR: Lenny, any questions?

20 All right. Anything else?

21 MR. KINNEAR: I can't think of anything.

22 MR. MARTINSEN: Hello?

23 BY MR. GREEN:

24 Q. Yeah. Did you hear a whistle just before the collision?

25 A. I don't recall that.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I heard, like -- like, the horn? You mean the horn of
3 the boat?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. See, that's -- I've heard that horn a million times and
6 they're loud and I don't remember hearing it. I really don't.
7 That's -- because like I said, we were already in the slip when I
8 realized we were going to hit, and from that point, I mean, impact
9 might've been probably less than 10 seconds after seeing the slip
10 that we were pulling into, that we were going to crash. And to
11 that point, I don't remember hearing the whistle. So there really
12 was no warning for me besides the "brace, brace," and then hit.
13 Maybe they hit a horn after that. I remember hearing bells going
14 off after that and a lot of smoke came on the boat and -- so I
15 really didn't hear the big horn whistle.

16 Q. Yeah. Did you actually see smoke on the boat?

17 A. Yeah. But after the impact, I think that might've been
18 -- there was definitely smoke on the boat but I'm not sure if that
19 was from the crash that it, you know, it just was a lot of dust
20 that kicked off and everything. But it was definitely smoke,
21 yeah, for sure, especially the lower you went on the boat.
22 Because at one point I was -- after everybody was on the boat, I
23 was going through the boat trying to see, all right, if there's
24 any, like, clear the boat, like, who's on the back, if anyone's
25 unconscious that's laying down. It was smoky where I started

1 opening the doors to try and let some smoke out because it was --

2 Q. Oh, wow.

3 A. -- smoky.

4 Q. Which doors were those that you opened?

5 A. What's that?

6 Q. Which doors were those that you opened?

7 A. The rear doors.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. On the Manhattan end.

10 Q. And how far forward do you think that smoke was?

11 A. You know what, I'm not sure, but it was smoky on that
12 boat. It was definitely smoky, you know?

13 Q. Yeah. What level was that of the --

14 A. Not overwhelming but, you know, enough where it was a
15 little uncomfortable, you know?

16 BY MR. KINNEAR:

17 Q. Okay. I was just going to ask you -- did it smell like
18 engine smoke or like antifreeze smoke or like wood smoke?

19 A. I want to -- you know what, I'm not, like, a mechanic,
20 but if I can take a guess, it was either stuff that was kicked up
21 or it could've been engine smoke, but I didn't -- you know what, I
22 actually opened one of those doors up to, like, see if there was
23 any crew down there and I didn't see that much smoke in there, you
24 know, so it might not have been engine smoke.

25 MR. KARR: Oh, that's good. I'm glad you mentioned

1 that.

2 BY MR. KINNEAR:

3 Q. I'm just asking because wood has a certain smell, you
4 know. I mean, I understand what you're saying, when it hit the
5 piling and it hit the ramp, I would assume that smoke would be
6 coming from that piling.

7 A. Yeah, because actually the cops I talked to that were in
8 the terminal, they thought a bomb went off and I think they said
9 there was smoke in the terminal, as well, so it did kick up a lot.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. You know?

12 MR. KINNEAR: Okay.

13 MR. KARR: I'm writing notes.

14 MR. MARTINSEN: All right.

15 BY MR. KARR:

16 Q. Which door -- when you said you opened the door on the
17 lower level, which door was that? Or which deck level was that?

18 A. I think that was the main level. I might've been around
19 both sides just to, like, give a little shout and see if anybody
20 was there, you know, because I know -- I know they have engineers
21 down there and being that there's no windows, I didn't know if
22 they knew -- like, you know, at least I was able to, like, brace
23 and a lot of people were able to brace for the impact; they
24 wouldn't even see it, you know?

25 Q. Yeah. And which -- when you opened the doors to let the

1 smoke out --

2 A. There was no lights on. It was completely, like, black,
3 you know?

4 Q. Okay. Well, did you open a door -- I thought you opened
5 a door to let smoke out of the --

6 A. Yes. That was the rear doors on the upper deck. Like,
7 see the -- on that boat, the doors in the back, it would either be
8 the lower doors -- it wasn't those. It was the upper row, like,
9 the top level, the saloon deck, I guess, doors because they --
10 actually, the two levels converge into one.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. So it would be the rear top level.

13 Q. Okay. Do you have any recommendations on how to prevent
14 injuries to passengers when there's a hard stop like that?

15 A. Let's see, I would say take the seats, if you could sit
16 down, you know. I think, from what I heard, like, read in the
17 newspapers, I think the people that were sitting really -- you
18 know, like, I saw somebody said they were in a seat and they
19 really didn't, like, move much. So if that's the case, just stay
20 in the seats, you know.

21 Q. Okay. Well, let me ask you this. As a patrolman on the
22 Staten Island Ferry -- this is just a hypothetical, but what do
23 you think about a rule that would say five minutes before landing
24 at Staten Island, everyone would have to come in off the decks and
25 not be in any of those platform or stairs?

1 A. The stairs, I could see that being, like, pretty good if
2 -- I think those people are more -- like, they could easily go
3 down on a hard hit like that. But this is New York and I think
4 that would be a hard rule to enforce the --

5 Q. Yeah, but what if you guys give out a \$250 summons?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. We could balance the budget.

8 A. I walk around, you know, out of hate look from them
9 enough.

10 But, yeah, that would -- it would be pretty tough,
11 but --

12 Q. Okay. Well, you know, I -- yeah, I kind of agree with
13 you, but that may be something we're looking at.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. All right. Is there any -- okay, we're about ready to
16 wrap this up. Is there anything that you want to tell us that we
17 have not asked you?

18 A. No. Really, that was it. I'm sorry if I can't help you
19 out really. It was --

20 Q. No, we're -- you know, one of the things we're doing is
21 we're looking at where people were on the boat that, you know,
22 were not injured.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. So you told us about being in the back, and just for
25 your information, most of the injured people we're talking to were

1 standing up.

2 A. Yeah, that's -- I would think that, yeah.

3 Q. Yeah. Yeah.

4 A. Right.

5 Q. Okay. All right. How long have you been on the police
6 force?

7 A. Seven years.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Just about seven.

10 Q. I got you. Got you.

11 MR. KINNEAR: So if Bloomberg starts making cuts, you're
12 above the cut?

13 MR. MARTINSEN: I hope so.

14 MR. KARR: Oh, boy.

15 MR. MARTINSEN: Yeah, I hope so.

16 BY MR. KARR:

17 Q. All right. Well, Max had to step out, so let me give
18 you my phone number in case you want to call us with any other
19 information.

20 A. Okay. (indiscernible).

21 Q. All right. It's -- my business phone -- this is Mike
22 Karr, K-a-r-r, and it's area code 202-314-6455.

23 A. 6455. Okay.

24 Q. Okay. And we appreciate you taking the time to spend
25 with us.

1 MR. MARTINSEN: All right, guys. Good luck with your
2 investigation.

3 MR. KARR: Okay. Well, good luck. Keep serving us well
4 on the water.

5 MR. MARTINSEN: I'll try.

6 MR. KARR: All right.

7 MR. KINNEAR: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. KARR: Thank you.

9 MR. MARTINSEN: Bye, guys.

10 MR. KARR: Bye-bye.

11 MR. MARTINSEN: Bye.

12 (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: ANDREW J. BARBERI
 STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK
 Interview of Michael Martinsen

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MM-017

PLACE: Staten Island, New York

DATE: May 11, 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.

Karen D. Martini
Transcriber