

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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 IN RE :
 :
 THE FIRE THAT OCCURRED ON : NTSB Accident No.
 THE CARIBBEAN FANTASY ON : DCA16FM052
 AUGUST 17, 2016 :
 :
 ----- :

INTERVIEW OF: PERFECTO SANCHEZ

Sunday,
August 21, 2016

Conference Room
USCG Sector San Juan
Puerto Rico

BEFORE

MICHAEL KARR, NTSB
 E , NTSB
 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] USCG

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by the National Transportation Safety Board.

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APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of American Cruise:

CARLOS BAYRON, ESQ.
Bayron Offices

On Behalf of the P&I Club:

ANDRES PICO RAMIREZ, ESQ.

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

(8:38 a.m.)

1
2
3 MR. KARR: This is Michael Karr of the
4 National Transportation Safety Board. It's August 21
5 at 08:38 in the morning. We're in a conference room at
6 Sector San Juan. We're here for interviews with regard
7 to the Caribbean Fantasy. I'd like to have everybody
8 introduce themselves, everyone at the table introduce
9 themselves, so let's go to my right.

10 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] United States Coast
11 Guard.

12 MS. BELL: Carrie Bell, National
13 Transportation Safety Board.

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Perfecto Sanchez, Bar Manager.

15 MR. KARR: All right, thank you.

16 MS. BELL: Can you spell your name?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Perfecto Sanchez.

18 MS. BELL: Can you spell it?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: P-E-

20 MS. BELL: For the transcription, for them.

21 MR. KARR: So is it okay if we record the
22 interview?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

24 MR. KARR: Thank you, and we'll begin the
25 questioning.

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1 MS. BELL: Good morning, Perfecto. Can you
2 just give us a little bit of information about your
3 background in maritime, so what you did before you
4 started working for this company?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: What I did before I -

6 MS. BELL: How long you've been in maritime?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Oh, in maritime, I've been
8 working 10 years. I just started with my company, and
9 I just arrived here about a week ago. I mean, I just
10 had six days on the ship.

11 MS. BELL: So what did you do in the ten
12 years before?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: I started as a waiter, and
14 then I get promoted, and then I get bar manager, so the
15 year before.

16 MS. BELL: So how long were you a waiter?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Like, let's say two years.

18 MS. BELL: And so you've been a bartender, a
19 bar manager for -

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, after I grew up as a
21 bartender, then I get head bartender, and then I was
22 promoted as bar manager.

23 MS. BELL: And what kind of ships have you
24 sailed on?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Passenger, the cruise line.

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1 MS. BELL: All cruise lines?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

3 MS. BELL: And you've only been with this
4 company for six days, you said?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

6 MS. BELL: Six days. And can you give us a
7 little bit about what kind of training you had coming
8 to this company?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: With this company?

10 MS. BELL: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. SANCHEZ: So actually, when I arrived,
12 the single day, they gave me (indiscernible due to
13 accent) training, I mean, my places, my duties, what I
14 had to do in those cases or for emergency, so that's
15 all, yes, just to know the places and that's it. So
16 any (indiscernible due to accent) drill training or
17 something like this, no, I didn't.

18 MS. BELL: I'm sorry?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Any drill of training,
20 training drill, I didn't get it. I mean, what to do in
21 those cases of emergency, I did, but I don't do it
22 exactly with other people.

23 MS. BELL: Okay, so -

24 MR. SANCHEZ: It was some of us, the new
25 ones.

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1 MS. BELL: Okay, so just so I understand,
2 you had kind of a one-on-one training. Someone showed
3 you around the ship.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

5 MS. BELL: Did they show you where you would
6 go in an emergency?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

8 MS. BELL: Okay, but you had not done a
9 drill?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, I had not.

11 MS. BELL: Okay.

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Because I just arrived, so.

13 MS. BELL: So was that six days before the
14 accident, or six days from today? How long had you
15 been on the ship?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: On the ship only six days.

17 MS. BELL: You were on six days?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

19 MS. BELL: And we have someone who just
20 joined us. Go ahead and introduce yourself.

21 LT. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the
22 Coast Guard.

23 MS. BELL: Thank you. So can you tell us
24 what your duties are with regard to emergencies?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: So -

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1 MS. BELL: Actually, I'm sorry, let me go
2 back, your duties in general, what you do for the
3 company as a bar manager?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Ah, as bar manager, I'm in
5 charge of to (inaudible) the people to the bar, to take
6 care of all of the bar costs, I mean, to see all of the
7 (inaudible) conditions to see that the inspection of
8 the cleaning of all of the bar areas (inaudible),
9 inventories, make the schedules for the people to see
10 their working hours, etcetera.

11 MS. BELL: And do you know what your duties
12 are in an emergency?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

14 MS. BELL: Can you explain that to us?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: So I had a number of 76. I
16 mean, all of us, we have a number, a safety number, so
17 I am the 76.

18 MS. BELL: 76?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, so my duty place is
20 on deck seven, the staircases. I have to send the
21 people to their stations, evacuate stations, I mean, to
22 guide the people and to say, "Okay, you must go this
23 way. You must go that way," like this.

24 MS. BELL: The passengers?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Everybody.

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1 MS. BELL: Everybody?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

3 MS. BELL: To their muster stations?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

5 MS. BELL: Did you know that before the
6 emergency or did you learn that? Did you know that
7 already?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, as I told you, the single
9 day that I arrived on the ship, they gave me all of
10 those instructions that I had to do and described this.

11 MS. BELL: So on the day of the fire, did
12 you go to your station and do this?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

14 MS. BELL: Can you describe that to us?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Since the beginning, I wake up
16 as normal. I go to the office, start to make my
17 duties. I heard the alarm, so I start to
18 (indiscernible due to accent), then I received the
19 order by the hotel manager to start to evacuate the
20 people, to close all of my areas, I mean, the bars that
21 was open at that time.

22 So I start to take out the people from the
23 bars and to close all of the area, to check, and I
24 notice nobody was there. So when I get sure that
25 nobody is there, I close the rooms and I go to my

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1 position, my station. And then in my station, I stayed
2 waiting there until when I hear the announcement that
3 we had - I mean, not an announcement, we have signals.

4 So I hear the one long blast signal, so
5 everybody starts to evacuate, and me too. I start to
6 send the people from their muster stations. So in the
7 muster station, they are - we were waiting there for a
8 few minutes until the order of abandon ship. And the
9 order was abandon ship, so people was in charge of
10 putting the people in safe into the lifeboats and start
11 to evacuate the ship. That's all.

12 MS. BELL: Okay, we'll go a little bit more
13 into that in a few minutes. I just want to make sure
14 I've covered all of my questions about training. You
15 had - you said you've been in the industry for 10
16 years, so have you ever seen the MES, the -

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Never.

18 MS. BELL: You have never seen it -

19 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

20 MS. BELL: - inflated?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

22 MS. BELL: No?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, when I was training,
24 yes, but then, no.

25 MS. BELL: So you have taken all of the

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1 basic safety training and all of that?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, exactly. I took it when
3 - because before, I mean, (inaudible) knew that.
4 Before to come to work on a ship, we have to train
5 about not everything, but at least to know something
6 about to fight a fire, about how to free the life raft,
7 about survival. I don't know. There were many things
8 we have to learn before to (inaudible).

9 MS. BELL: Okay, so do you - are you
10 familiar with the company's safety management system?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: If I'm comfortable with that?

12 MS. BELL: Are you - yes, are you familiar
13 with it?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, yes.

15 MS. BELL: Okay, do you know where - what -
16 how it applies to you?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: What applies? What do you
18 mean?

19 MS. BELL: In the safety management system,
20 are there certain things that apply to your job? I
21 know you've only been with the company for a week. I
22 mean -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

24 MS. BELL: So, but do you have to go through
25 the safety management system?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

2 MS. BELL: Read through it and understand?

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

4 MS. BELL: And have you done that already,
5 or is that something that you work with the company to
6 do? Is there a plan?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no, I learned, because
8 as I told you, they gave me some information, and
9 that's also they gave me (inaudible) on the ship, so I
10 know exactly what was my positions.

11 MS. BELL: Okay, and so do you have a copy
12 of the safety management system?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Not a copy. Actually, I have
14 only one safety card, and they describe all of the
15 things that they have to do.

16 MS. BELL: Okay, have you seen the safety
17 management system?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

19 MS. BELL: The SMS?

20 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

21 MS. BELL: Okay, thank you.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: You're welcome.

23 MR. [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] of the United
24 States Coast Guard. I'd like to first off congratulate
25 you on a very successful evacuation of the ship.

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Thank you.

2 MR. [REDACTED] As you played a very pivotal role
3 in the emergency plan on the station bill. So you said
4 - so you signed on board on what day, a Monday, a
5 Tuesday?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, Thursday.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Thursday?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so you signed on board on
10 Thursday, and then you had mentioned that you received
11 some familiarization?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

13 MR. [REDACTED] They showed you where to go to
14 abandon ship?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

16 MR. [REDACTED] What are some other things that
17 they showed you on your familiarization besides where
18 your abandon ship station was?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, I just know the
20 places, my emergency places.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: So it wasn't (inaudible), for
23 example, where I can find the fire extinguisher or the
24 fire hose, so those sort of things, actually I know it
25 because as I told you before, I was working on another

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1 ship, and so -

2 MR. [REDACTED] Right.

3 MR. SANCHEZ: I know the types of
4 extinguisher, for example, and everything like this.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Right.

6 MR. SANCHEZ: But exactly the places around
7 the ship, I didn't know it.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

9 MR. SANCHEZ: As I told you, it was I came
10 like a new, and it was my first day to work there, so,
11 but as experience (inaudible) follow, I tried to know
12 my places to know where I am in those cases because I
13 never expected that something happen, but it can
14 happen, so that's why I always take care about
15 emergency exits, about where are the emergency places,
16 I mean, where can I find some - the breathe equipment
17 or another fire extinguisher.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Right.

19 MR. SANCHEZ: So, but I did it by myself.
20 Maybe, I don't know, I just had to wait because
21 normally, they make some trainings by groups, yes? I
22 mean, no daily training, no weekly training, but at the
23 time, they take some people for each department and
24 they start to read the - to distribute the (inaudible)
25 that we have there for the safety. So, but in this

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1 case, I just knew the ship and my duties.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you. So you said you
3 signed on board on Thursday.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

5 MR. [REDACTED] What day did you begin doing your
6 job as a bar manager?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: As just I came, I started to
8 do it.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Immediately?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Immediately.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, and then this
12 familiarization that you said they gave you -

13 MR. SANCHEZ: The next day.

14 MR. [REDACTED] The next day.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, in the morning.

16 MR. [REDACTED] And it was - the only thing it
17 included was just, "This is where your abandon ship
18 station is."

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

20 MR. [REDACTED] Was there any familiarization on
21 safety card number 76?

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

23 MR. [REDACTED] So they walked you through what
24 your safety duties were -

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

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1 MR. [REDACTED] - and etcetera?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

3 MR. [REDACTED] What's your country of origin?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: My country?

5 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, where are you from?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Honduras.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Honduras. In Honduras, did you
8 go through a manning agency to be hired, or were you
9 hired directly by the company?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: I had some subcontractor
11 there.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, and did that subcontractor,
13 did they handle all of your STCW certification?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

15 MR. [REDACTED] What other certifications did you
16 receive through that company? I'm sorry, let me
17 rephrase that question. What other STCW certifications
18 did you receive from that company?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: So I have crew management. I
20 have lifeboat, how do you say it? I mean, fast or
21 light boat, something like this, the duties, and the
22 basic (inaudible).

23 MR. [REDACTED] Yep.

24 MR. SANCHEZ: And so, I mean, I had, like, a
25 six - because the basics are already four or five,

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1 right, and then I got another two or three more.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, I don't remember
6 exactly the names now.

7 MR. [REDACTED] So when you got hired with this
8 company, did you have to go and redo all of your STCW
9 training, or did they accept all of the previous
10 training that you had on the ships from the last 10
11 years?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, for us, we had to
13 (inaudible) our course, our training -

14 MR. [REDACTED] Yep.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: - each (inaudible) years.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

17 MR. SANCHEZ: So actually, mine was in
18 order.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Yep.

20 MR. SANCHEZ: And, because I had it on the
21 sort of that (inaudible) so they did receive it. They
22 start to check and -

23 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

24 MR. SANCHEZ: - they say, "They are okay,"
25 so.

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1 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: They are valid.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, thank you. All right, so
4 you then with - you'd been on the Caribbean Fantasy for
5 six days. Prior to that, you have 10 years of
6 experience on passenger ships.

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

8 MR. [REDACTED] In your previous 10 years on
9 passenger ships, what other safety positions have you
10 held on the ships? So for example, on this ship, you
11 are the deck seven staircase evacuation, okay?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Previous ships, similar type of
14 positions or other?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Sort of the same.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Normally the same?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Sure, evacuate and to be
18 leader of the muster stations.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Almost always did the same.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Because normally they put us
23 as, I don't know how to say that, as the - to say
24 something to the driver of the lifeboats or something?

25 MR. [REDACTED] Yep.

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: So normally, the (inaudible)
2 or the engine, or for, I don't know. But for the hotel
3 department, we are almost always doing the same,
4 sending people to the stations.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, all right, now, for the
6 general emergency alarm, you do the deck seven
7 staircase stuff. What is your job for the abandon ship
8 alarm?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: For the abandon ship alarm?

10 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

11 MR. SANCHEZ: I must be in the life raft
12 number 14.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Life raft number 14?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

15 MR. [REDACTED] And what is your position in life
16 raft number 14?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Leader.

18 MR. [REDACTED] You're the commander of life raft
19 14?

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, did you take command of
22 life raft 14?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

24 MR. [REDACTED] No, okay, explain to me your
25 evacuation process.

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, it was not so simple
2 because, how to explain you, first, we must evacuate as
3 normal all of the passengers, right, so then, but I
4 start to evacuate the crew members after the
5 passengers, all of them were out.

6 I start to evacuate the crew member
7 (inaudible). I feel that it was a possibility to start
8 to send the people who was underneath my care. So when
9 almost everybody was outside, I mean, was in the
10 lifeboats or the life rafts, then I get the (inaudible)
11 for evacuation as well.

12 So on that time, what I did, I start to
13 organize the people, I mean, the passengers, start to
14 keep them calm, to talk with them in order to don't
15 make a panic of them because one of them was screaming,
16 another was crying, another was, you know, a mess, so I
17 tried to calm down the situation, explain to them, "No,
18 it's okay. Nothing is going to happen. Anyway, if
19 something happen, if the ship go up, so we can go to
20 put on the life jacket and go swimming, you see? There
21 is the water, I mean, there is the coast, no problem."

22 I mean, things like this, I was trying just
23 to get the passengers and to calm them down so none of
24 them - they agree, they get happy, so I start to
25 organize, so woman and child first, and then state by

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1 state, (inaudible) or it was okay.

2 Actually, I never do something like this,
3 but I feel that I did my job. And once I (inaudible)
4 people, they follow us. They follow the things that -
5 they trust (inaudible) on our decisions, so that's all.

6 MR. [REDACTED] All right, so did you end up - so
7 you went down the MES slide, yes?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

9 MR. [REDACTED] No, you went into a lifeboat?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

12 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I mean, sorry, sorry, I
13 was down just on the platform.

14 MR. [REDACTED] You went down on the platform?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

16 MR. [REDACTED] On the starboard side MES?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Was that your assigned MES was
19 the starboard side?

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

23 MR. [REDACTED] So on the station bill, on your
24 card that they gave you, it says that at abandon ship,
25 you report to the starboard side MES and you take

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1 command of raft number 14?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

3 MR. [REDACTED] No?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, explain that to me. I need
6 to know what your abandon ship job is.

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, people, I mean, they
8 throw all of the life raft on the sea in order to
9 inflate, but in that moment that we stay to evacuate
10 the ship, we don't follow those things. We don't - I
11 mean, we (inaudible) but in order to make groups, no,
12 no. It was like a line, and the further this is going,
13 the further it was going. So, but, one by one is
14 logical, right? But not in order to get, "I am 14 and
15 you are 13," so you go in front of me, no. It was a
16 line, but everybody think they're the one who's going
17 first.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, maybe I didn't ask the
19 question clearly. So, but, I'm saying so your card,
20 under your number 76 emergency card -

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

22 MR. [REDACTED] - where it says, "At abandon
23 ship, you go to the starboard side MES."

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

25 MR. [REDACTED] And whatever order you go down,

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1 that's not addressed. When you get down to the
2 platform, then you take command of raft number 14, is
3 that correct?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: To be, but it wasn't.

5 MR. [REDACTED] That's what your card says and
6 that's what the plan says, but that's not what actually
7 happened?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, so what actually happened?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay, I will tell you from my
11 story, right? So when I get to the platform, one, I
12 don't know, who, I mean, someone, they pick it up in
13 one small boat, one motorboat, the (inaudible), so and
14 then they bring us. They pick it up. Actually, we was
15 only seven in that boat, and the bring us to another
16 lifeboat, one of the bigger ones, and then they bring
17 us here on that pier.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

19 MR. SANCHEZ: So I never had been on the
20 life raft.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Right, okay, so the raft never
22 got inflated. You never got on it.

23 MR. SANCHEZ: No, some of them got inflated,
24 but -

25 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, but not yours?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Not yours, okay.

3 LT. [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
4 Just to clarify, when you say you got on a lifeboat,
5 you are referring to the Coast Guard boat that picked
6 you up?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, I don't know who,
8 because I can't recognize -

9 LT. [REDACTED] Oh, okay.

10 MR. SANCHEZ: - the people.

11 LT. [REDACTED] But -

12 MR. SANCHEZ: So I took one small boat, yes,
13 only bringing seven people because it was smaller. So,
14 and then they bring us on a lifeboat, I mean, the
15 biggest one.

16 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, but the boats that you
17 got on were not part of the Caribbean Fantasy boats?
18 Those weren't those lifeboats? They were safety assist
19 -

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

21 LT. [REDACTED] - external vessels?

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

23 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

24 MR. [REDACTED] All right, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] United
25 States Coast Guard. All right, so my last question for

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1 you is can you just kind of - you have a lot of
2 experience. You have 10 years of doing this, or maybe
3 close to 10 years of doing this kind of job, right,
4 being in charge of evacuating a section of a ship,
5 right?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

7 MR. [REDACTED] So you've done this drill -

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

9 MR. [REDACTED] - who knows how many hundreds of
10 times, right?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

12 MR. [REDACTED] In your experience during the
13 last 10 years of what you've seen, how was the overall
14 evacuation, not necessarily your performance as the
15 evacuation person, but how did your team respond
16 because you have a deputy and you have some people that
17 help you out too, correct?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

19 MR. [REDACTED] How was your team during the
20 evacuation process? So I guess it's a two-part
21 question. How would the team normally react in an
22 emergency? Like if you were doing it during a drill
23 and you were treating that like a real emergency, how
24 would that crew report to you, and how would you divvy
25 them up, and then - do you know what I mean by divvy

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1 them up? I'm sorry, how would you - so, "You go do
2 this. You go do this. You go do this."

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

4 MR. [REDACTED] And then how did it happen in the
5 real emergency versus how you trained to do it in the
6 past?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: As I told you, so on this ship
8 I didn't have a -

9 MR. [REDACTED] Right.

10 MR. SANCHEZ: - a lot of notice, but the
11 people follow. The crew member follow the teams. Some
12 of them I say to them, "Okay, you are going to stay
13 here, and you are going to send the people there. You
14 are going to be there, and you are going to send the
15 people like this," and everybody follow, really care
16 for the crew members. I think they was in that
17 position to follow and to hear what to do, and they
18 know what to do as well, yes.

19 I saw one girl who had been up to the bar.
20 She was inside of the lifeboat sitting people,
21 arranging people, "Okay, Senora, you stay there. You
22 stay there and be quiet," and she was always smiling.
23 She was giving to the people, I don't know, something,
24 confidence, and I think, I say, "Wow, this girl, she
25 had the power how to do it."

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1 And actually, I stayed like three minutes to
2 see what she was doing, and I say, "Yes, she's on team
3 here," but I wasn't in a place to see what's going on.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: And one of them - and I saw
6 many people, they're helping, helping, forgetting
7 about, "What about me?" No, actually all of the people
8 that I see, they were trying to save everybody.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

10 MR. SANCHEZ: I don't know. It was
11 something amazing to me because everybody was trying to
12 do his job. I don't know how to describe it like this.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, that's okay.

14 MR. SANCHEZ: But it was okay with leaving.

15 MR. [REDACTED] I think you painted a pretty good
16 picture, I really do. I see what you're saying. Did
17 you have any questions for me?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

19 MR. [REDACTED] No? All right, I don't have any
20 other questions.

21 MR. KARR: This is Mike Karr. When you
22 received your familiarization training, who was it that
23 gave you the training?

24 MR. SANCHEZ: The safety officer.

25 MR. KARR: Thank you. When - can you

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1 briefly - where were you standing when you were at your
2 position to direct people to muster stations?

3 MR. SANCHEZ: What on that?

4 MR. KARR: Where were you - can you just -
5 where were you located -

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Oh, yeah.

7 MR. KARR: - when you were directing people?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: At the first, I was in the
9 office as I told you, before I heard the alarm. Then I
10 heard it, so I start to do the thing that I was doing
11 just to (inaudible) right now. Then I hear the alarm
12 and the hotel manager said to me, "So, close your area
13 and send everybody to their station because we have to
14 evacuate," (inaudible) control room.

15 So then as I told you, as I said to her,
16 that I go around to my area so I be sure that no one
17 was inside, then I start to close the area, I mean, to
18 close the fire doors in order so that nobody goes
19 inside, then I go to my position, deck five - deck
20 seven, sorry, the staircase of deck seven, and I start
21 to send the people there. It was actually -

22 MR. KARR: Where exactly on deck seven?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: The staircases, I mean -

24 MR. KARR: The staircase - are there one or
25 two staircases?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: There's only one, the center
2 one.

3 MR. KARR: All right.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

5 MR. KARR: The center staircase.

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

7 MR. KARR: All right, thank you. And how
8 did you know where to route the passengers?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, I don't know. I
10 just have to - because from downstairs, I mean -

11 MR. KARR: Well, no, well, here's the thing,
12 I mean, passengers were -

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

14 MR. KARR: - passing by you.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, but -

16 MR. KARR: What did you tell them?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, to go ahead, and to go
18 to the muster station, I mean, to the assembly station
19 there that's beside of the lifeboats on deck seven, so
20 because I know that there are the muster stations, so
21 logically, everybody must go there to -

22 MR. KARR: So all of the muster stations are
23 on -

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Deck seven.

25 MR. KARR: - deck seven?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

2 MR. KARR: So you told everybody to -

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

4 MR. KARR: Well, tell me what you - tell me
5 what you told the people to do.

6 MR. SANCHEZ: No, it's - okay, "So now we
7 are in an emergency."

8 MR. KARR: Pardon?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Now - you asked me what I tell
10 them, right?

11 MR. KARR: Correct.

12 MR. SANCHEZ: So I answer you. "Now are in
13 an emergency. I don't know what has happened. Do not
14 ask me because I just know it's an emergency."
15 Actually, if I know, I don't want to tell them because
16 they're going to get in panic. "But everything is
17 under control. I don't know if we're going to go
18 downstairs, I mean, in the lifeboats, but everything is
19 under control, so people are trained to do that, so
20 please follow us and let's see what is going on."

21 MR. KARR: All right, what - so people asked
22 you questions. What questions did -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Some of them.

24 MR. KARR: Yeah, can you just rattle off
25 questions that they asked?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Normal, "What has happened?"

2 MR. KARR: Okay.

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, (inaudible) said to me
4 that something is burning down there. "Do not ask me
5 what because I don't know what it is exactly, but as I
6 told you, so everything is under control."

7 MR. KARR: Okay.

8 MR. SANCHEZ: "So now we do that for safety
9 reasons."

10 MR. KARR: The people that were coming to
11 the muster station, tell me - you know, I wasn't on the
12 ship - how did they know that they should be doing to -

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay.

14 MR. KARR: - deck seven?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, because while we were on
16 the ship, we have the crew members sending people as
17 normal for evacuate of - we was to be everybody, I
18 mean, the passengers had to be at the muster station.
19 So since the cabins, since all of the passengers' area
20 and everywhere where there are the passengers, there is
21 someone, because his duties is like this, someone - for
22 example, the (inaudible) I don't know.

23 Somebody had to be there, and he going to
24 start to say to the people, "Okay, you go," (inaudible)
25 "then you want to find the staircases winding up, and

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1 then follow the crew members and they're going to send
2 you to the muster stations."

3 MR. KARR: All right, thanks. Do you recall
4 - you know, I'm hoping you looked at your watch. Do
5 you recall when the order was given to abandon ship?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly the - I mean, the time
7 exactly, no, but I - let's say for a safe number 7:25
8 just to say something.

9 MR. KARR: At what time?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: 7:25 or -

11 MR. KARR: 7:25. Well, let me ask you this,
12 Mr. Starlight -

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

14 MR. KARR: - we've heard was announced at
15 about 7:25.

16 MR. SANCHEZ: No, Mr. Skylight -

17 MR. KARR: Skylight, okay.

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, Mr. Skylight was around,
19 if I remember, five minutes before 7:00.

20 MR. KARR: Okay.

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

22 MR. KARR: All right.

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Because I start to work in the
24 office, and normally I start to (inaudible) to do my
25 things, and I remember I just went out from my cabin,

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1 yes, like 10 or five minutes before 7:00, then I start
2 to hear the Mr. Skylight.

3 "Oh, something's happened," I said, but no
4 (inaudible) because Mr. Skylight would have to
5 (inaudible) after. So I go to my office, like waiting
6 what is going on, and then I start to hear the alarms,
7 so I said, "Okay, this is serious."

8 MR. KARR: All right, what time do you wake
9 up - did you wake up that morning?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Around 6:10.

11 MR. KARR: 6:10.

12 MR. SANCHEZ: In the morning.

13 MR. KARR: All right, so what was the next
14 alarm? About what time did you hear the next
15 significant alarm -

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

17 MR. KARR: - after you heard Mr. Skylight?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: I will say like ten, just like
19 ten minutes after.

20 MR. KARR: Ten minutes after?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: After Mr. Skylight. I mean,
22 (inaudible) because I don't know exactly the time.

23 MR. KARR: Correct, and what was that that
24 you heard?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Which alarm I heard?

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1 MR. KARR: Yes.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: A one alarm blast, I think.

3 MR. KARR: And what did that mean to you?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: To abandon, I mean, not to
5 abandon, to go wait by for the muster stations.

6 MR. KARR: Muster stations, okay.

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Abandon ship is (inaudible)
8 for the muster.

9 MR. KARR: Okay, so that was the muster
10 station, all right, and then what was the next
11 significant announcement or alarm after that?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no, only that signal,
13 only that signal and like they make it like a - I don't
14 know, I wasn't - (inaudible) at that time because I
15 start to get (inaudible) what to do, but maybe three
16 times or four times they made that signal.

17 MR. KARR: All right, so that, but that was
18 the order -

19 MR. SANCHEZ: That I hear.

20 MR. KARR: That was the order to go to the
21 muster stations?

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

23 MR. KARR: All right, so then how did you
24 know that it was time for people to get in the
25 lifeboats and life rafts?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Well, when the captain said by
2 the PA, "Abandon the ship."

3 MR. KARR: The captain - you heard the
4 captain on the PA?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

6 MR. KARR: And do you remember -

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, really, I don't know
8 if I heard him by the radio or by the PA, but I hear
9 the captain say that.

10 MR. KARR: Were you carrying a radio?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

12 MR. KARR: And what channels were you on?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: To work or the emergency?

14 PARTICIPANT: Emergency.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: In an emergency, six.

16 MR. KARR: Six. And do you recall how soon
17 that abandon ship drill came, or, excuse me, the
18 abandon ship message came?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: How -

20 MR. KARR: You know, I'm looking at time, so
21 can you tell me about what time or how soon after the -
22 you know, how soon after you were ordered to the muster
23 stations did you hear the captain say, "We should
24 abandon ship?"

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Quickly. Actually, I don't

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1 know the time exactly, but it was quickly.

2 MR. KARR: It was quickly?

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

4 MR. KARR: Okay, when you were on the radio
5 on channel six -

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

7 MR. KARR: - do you recall overhearing the
8 captain summarize the fire?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

10 MR. KARR: Okay.

11 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I just, because the
12 captain turned into the - told everybody to be calm and
13 to don't start to (inaudible) because some of them,
14 they made cross conversation, right, so I want to say
15 something, and then everyone wants to say something, so
16 then the signal is lost.

17 So he said to them, "Okay, everybody want to
18 speak something, but let's start to speak one by one,"
19 like that is going to be everything organized, so it
20 was calm. He was - I mean, he tried to keep the calm
21 for everybody as well, yeah, and like this. He was
22 like this about the indication with the lifeboats was
23 quickly, quickly, I don't know, five, ten minutes, I
24 don't know, but it was quickly.

25 MR. KARR: Did anyone - did you overhear

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1 anybody else, when the captain asked for any - when the
2 captain asked for people to talk to him, did anybody
3 say anything that you heard on channel six?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: To talk to him about, about
5 that?

6 MR. KARR: Yeah.

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, everybody is saying,
8 "Okay, life raft three, we are ready for
9 disembarkation." "Okay, disembark," like this.

10 MR. KARR: All right.

11 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, because actually, I
12 had to be everywhere, so that's the moment that I don't
13 hear even my breath because really, I had one of my
14 first experiences in my life. I had one time of choke,
15 was kind of choking for myself. I tried - I almost
16 lost my patience. Believe me, I almost lost my brain.

17 So it was one time that I don't hear
18 anything. It was like I feel like, I don't know, I may
19 be dying, the life - I don't know how to say it. So I
20 said to myself, "Okay, breathe. Be calm and try to
21 follow because there are people that need to be saved
22 as well, and also me." But believe me, some - wait.

23 MR. KARR: It's okay. I mean, we -

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Sorry.

25 MR. KARR: You know, you're -

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1 MR. [REDACTED] It's all good. It's okay. Do
2 you want to take a moment? Stop the recorder.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
4 off the record at 9:15 a.m. and resumed at 9:17 a.m.)

5 MR. KARR: All right, we're back on at 9:17.
6 So I'll start out with a new question. All right,
7 again, if you can remember the exact time, great, but
8 if you can summarize whether it was quickly or a long
9 time, when did you actually abandon ship?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: When I actually what?

11 MR. KARR: When did you actually get on the
12 slide to leave the ship?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Ah, I think about -

14 MR. KARR: A long time?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

16 MR. KARR: So -

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Like, let's say four hours.

18 MR. KARR: Four hours?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: After the incident. Yeah,
20 actually I started to be aware because it was taking -
21 I was actually starting to be aware because I say,
22 "Okay, this is a fire and everything downstairs is
23 closed. This could be an explosion. This could
24 explode," so I start to feel fear.

25 I mean, because I said, I mean, "More than

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1 three hours here or more, and we are here still. What
2 is going on?" I mean, something has happened because
3 as I know when it's an abandon ship, it at least had to
4 be 12 minutes, but for us, it was like almost four
5 hours. That's, believe me, that (inaudible) because I
6 actually don't know what's expected.

7 And, I mean, everybody that's going down
8 that's - I think that it took a lot of time to
9 disembark everybody. I mean, it was only 400 and
10 something people. It was not full, the ship. I don't
11 know what happened that moment, yeah.

12 I mean, when you have four hours in a
13 burning ship, it's not easy to be calm. It's not easy
14 to have the control and, yes, all of the people, they
15 start to make questions to himself. "What's going on?
16 What happened? Why we are sitting here? Why not so
17 fast," things like this.

18 MR. KARR: And can you describe how - I want
19 to get an idea of how long it took you to get down the
20 MES. I've never gone down a slide, so can you tell me
21 how you -

22 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, you mean since I
23 stayed there by the water (inaudible), so quick.

24 MR. KARR: You went down quick?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: No, not for me, myself, no.

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1 MR. KARR: Yeah.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: I start to brake with my feet

3 -

4 MR. KARR: Okay.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: - because when I start to go
6 down, almost everybody (inaudible).

7 MR. KARR: Oh, all right.

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Almost everybody - this is a
9 ship signal.

10 (Laughter)

11 MR. SANCHEZ: (inaudible) all the people
12 that would see the mark.

13 MR. KARR: Yes, we have, yeah.

14 MR. SANCHEZ: And okay, because this
15 plastic, I don't know, (inaudible) so it's burning, so
16 then I start to go quick, I mean, not quickly, but
17 slowly, so make brake with the feet like this, and to
18 put yourself (inaudible) like that until you get down
19 to the platform, then the platform, to wait for these
20 guys to pick it up, so I start to - I sit down. I
21 wait, and you see everybody embarking and wait.

22 MR. KARR: When you got down to the
23 platform, were there any rafts?

24 MR. SANCHEZ: No - I mean, yes.

25 MR. KARR: But were there any rafts attached

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1 to the platform at the bottom?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, it wasn't a raft of
3 the ship, as I told you. It wasn't some small boat, so
4 I don't know for it belonged to who, but they had some
5 boats that they pick it up from the platform and bring
6 us to the other people.

7 MR. KARR: Correct, but my question is when
8 you got down to the platform -

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

10 MR. KARR: - if you had been one of the
11 first people, there would have been rafts attached to
12 the platform?

13 MR. SANCHEZ: No, which kind of raft? What
14 do you mean with raft?

15 MR. KARR: Do you want to help explain?

16 MR. [REDACTED] So the life rafts.

17 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Right, like you're a life raft
19 commander.

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

21 MR. [REDACTED] But those life rafts, they were
22 not attached to the -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: I didn't see that.

24 MR. [REDACTED] You didn't see that?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I saw that on the sea, but

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1 I didn't see that with passengers, I mean, with people,
2 I don't. I saw, as I told you, a small boat. It
3 belonged to, I don't know, Coast Guard, or I don't know
4 to who, that they picked it up and bring us on the big
5 boat, and the big boat bring us to the pier. But
6 (inaudible) belong to the ship, I saw it inflated. I
7 saw when they drove us to the sea, but I didn't see
8 someone get inside the life raft.

9 MR. KARR: Let me ask you this question.

10 Did you see the MES inflate?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

12 MR. KARR: Were there rafts at the bottom of
13 the MES when it first inflated?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Oh, no, no. The MES is that
15 thing that we slide?

16 MR. KARR: Yes.

17 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I didn't see that. When I
18 - because at the time, I was embarking the passengers
19 on the lifeboats. So when I was almost finished with
20 the passengers, I take a look at my back, and I saw
21 that inflated.

22 MR. KARR: I'm going to push pause a second.
23 When you went down the MES, was there anyone else on
24 the slide at the same time you were?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

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1 MR. KARR: In your same lane?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no, I mean, there are
3 two lines, so we go down two by two because, yeah, more
4 or less (inaudible). So they had one line divided. It
5 can be one on the left side and one on the right side,
6 so we go like this.

7 MR. KARR: Right, but was there anyone on
8 the slide - was there anyone in your lane -

9 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

10 MR. KARR: - at the same time you were?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

12 MR. KARR: All right, thanks.

13 MR. SANCHEZ: One by one.

14 MR. KARR: One by one.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: (inaudible).

16 MR. KARR: Your - you have people working
17 with you. People work under you during the mustering
18 part of the assignment.

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

20 MR. KARR: Did you ever meet with them prior
21 to the fire?

22 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

23 MR. KARR: Okay.

24 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

25 MR. KARR: Did you meet with them when the

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1 announcement was made?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

3 MR. KARR: All right.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

5 MR. KARR: Since the evacuation took a long
6 time to get everybody off the ship, how did passengers
7 - how did you handle the fact that some passengers may
8 have to use the bathroom on the ship?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Really, I don't - for me,
10 there is not - how to say it? No one asked me. Nobody
11 asked me about that.

12 MR. KARR: Did you notice -

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Maybe they forget about to use
14 it.

15 MR. KARR: All right, did you notice anyone
16 using the bathroom?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

18 MR. KARR: Okay, all right. Do you know of
19 any crew members that got injured?

20 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

21 MR. KARR: Okay, anybody else with
22 questions?

23 LT. [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with
24 the U.S. Coast Guard. So for your duties, you report
25 to deck seven, center staircase, to ensure that your

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1 spaces are fully evacuated. Once your people, you
2 know, they go and check the space for evacuated, that
3 the space is evacuated, who do you report to? Who do
4 you report that your space that your space is
5 evacuated?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, I don't report to
7 anybody because I then, until all the passengers and
8 all of the people are outside of the ship. So when I
9 heard on the radio that the ship is clear, that nobody
10 is inside, so at the time, I was out, but we must
11 report to the hotel manager.

12 LT. [REDACTED] So did you radio the hotel
13 manager to say that your space was clear, or did you
14 not?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: No, actually, my spaces was
16 almost in the lanes, I mean, the exits, so they start
17 to say that from down to up. So for example, deck five
18 available, is clear, no one here, okay, like this,
19 until then. So at the end, I don't need anymore to
20 report to anybody because there wasn't (inaudible) the
21 entrance.

22 LT. [REDACTED] So you're telling me that when
23 your space was clear -

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

25 LT. [REDACTED] - you did not relay or pass

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1 that information on to someone else, you just went?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, I just went outside
3 as well with everybody, with all of the last people, I
4 mean, with the officers and -

5 LT. [REDACTED] Where did you go?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Deck seven, starboard side.

7 LT. [REDACTED] Starboard side, where is that
8 on the ship? So after your space is clear, you went to
9 the deck seven starboard side. Is that near the
10 lifeboat?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, yeah, (inaudible) you
12 were in the muster station, and also at the muster
13 station, there are the lifeboats.

14 LT. [REDACTED] So there are three muster
15 stations, A, B, C. A is what's - where is A located?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, on the port side,
17 yeah, port side. A, B, C, there are three stations
18 that belong to the lifeboat, and they just - deck
19 seven.

20 LT. [REDACTED] So A is port deck seven?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, port side.

22 LT. [REDACTED] And then B is -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, port side is, let me
24 see, like this? Starboard side, sorry.

25 LT. [REDACTED] A is starboard, so you went to

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1 A?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Sorry?

3 LT. [REDACTED] Which muster station did you
4 go to after you evacuated?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I had to - supposed to.

6 LT. [REDACTED] Supposed to, yeah.

7 MR. SANCHEZ: I had to go on the starboard
8 side, life raft number 14.

9 LT. [REDACTED] Mm-hmm.

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, but I didn't. I went
11 actually also on the starboard side, but we didn't use
12 the life raft.

13 LT. [REDACTED] Right.

14 MR. SANCHEZ: So everybody was on the port
15 side, and the number of the people in back on the
16 lifeboat, they go out, but it wasn't enough, so then
17 they start to send the people by the - I don't know how
18 to call it.

19 LT. [REDACTED] The slides.

20 MR. SANCHEZ: The slides.

21 LT. [REDACTED] Right.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, and some passengers
23 disembark like this because I don't know if they used
24 the port side or the other side lifeboats. I don't
25 know. I didn't pass by them.

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1 LT. [REDACTED] So my question is you said
2 that it took four hours for you personally to get off
3 the ship, right -

4 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

5 LT. [REDACTED] - the time?

6 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no. I mean, yes, so
7 at that time, we was on the open deck. Yes, we were
8 waiting (inaudible).

9 LT. [REDACTED] So where were you physically
10 located? Where were you waiting during those four
11 hours?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: There on deck seven on the -

13 LT. [REDACTED] On the starboard side.

14 MR. SANCHEZ: - starboard side, yes.

15 LT. [REDACTED] Near the slide?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, the slides, it was on
17 deck seven, right? So we come one deck up at the open
18 area because we need to breathe something because it
19 wasn't possible to breathe, and we stayed there under
20 the sun and everything waiting for that call then when
21 they say, "Okay, we will go."

22 LT. [REDACTED] Did you have a number of
23 people in your group that was told, "Okay, you may now
24 proceed to the slide," or were they just individually
25 calling one by one?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, so when - we were
2 supposed to have a number of people for each life raft,
3 but that wasn't true. So, I mean, I don't know, it may
4 be natural for the people. Nobody wants to have an
5 accident. So everything was organized, so another
6 group would slide, then another group, but everybody
7 okay.

8 For example, the hotel manager said, "Okay,
9 let's start to evacuate. Everybody go." So make a
10 line. Everybody by themselves, make a line one by one,
11 and start to (inaudible).

12 LT. [REDACTED] And the hotel director was
13 directing one by one, or was there someone else?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no, he only said,
15 "Okay, let's start to evacuate ourselves."

16 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

17 MR. SANCHEZ: He said like this, and he also
18 put in the line. I mean, almost to the last one,
19 right, but he stayed with us until almost the end as
20 well. And yes, when - he don't give the order to
21 evacuate. The order he gave me for - I mean, to
22 evacuate the rest, it was the safety office, which he
23 said, "Okay, let's finish with that," so the hotel
24 manager started to press us to go.

25 LT. [REDACTED] And who was at the top of the

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1 slide directing who to send the people down?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: The safety officer.

3 LT. [REDACTED] The safety officer?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, and also - who is the
5 other? I don't know actually his name, but he was help
6 us, his position, someone for the engine. I think - I
7 don't know really his position there.

8 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, so they were, you know,
9 monitoring people going down and people exiting the
10 platform at the bottom?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

12 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, and at the bottom of the
13 MES platform, so after the slide, you go onto the
14 platform.

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

16 LT. [REDACTED] Were there people of the crew
17 helping to put people onto the -

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

19 LT. [REDACTED] - rescue boats? Who were
20 those people? Do you know?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Crew members.

22 LT. [REDACTED] Just crew members?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

24 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Crew members. We helped each

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1 other like this. We helped each other. So I can say,
2 "he." I can say, "she." I can say me.

3 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, I didn't know if you
4 knew.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

6 LT. [REDACTED] If you might have known, okay.

7 MS. BELL: This is Carrie Bell. I've got a
8 couple of extra questions. You mentioned that the
9 hotel - you didn't contact the hotel manager or
10 director when your space was clear. Did he ever
11 contact you to ask?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

13 MS. BELL: He did?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

15 MS. BELL: So he called you on the radio?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, we was, because we
17 was in the same line, in the same places almost, and
18 always when I meet him, I mean, I met him many times,
19 and he always ask me, "Everything okay? Is something
20 wrong? What happened?" so always gave me support, yes,
21 always.

22 MS. BELL: So when you said the space was
23 clear, or when the space was clear, you did not, you
24 did not tell him, or you didn't contact him to let him
25 know, but did he contact you and specifically ask about

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1 the space being clear at any point?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

3 MS. BELL: Okay.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

5 MS. BELL: And when you were evacuating, did
6 you ever see any smoke?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

8 MS. BELL: In the stairwell, in the
9 staircase?

10 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

11 MS. BELL: How was that affecting your -

12 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, no, no, no, no, in the
13 evacuate? No, no, no, no. I saw the smoke in the
14 corridors after when we were passing.

15 MS. BELL: Okay, so -

16 MR. KARR: Let me ask a question. This is
17 one of the questions that Tom asked that we ask, and
18 please follow up with it. Did smoke impair your
19 ability to move around the ship?

20 MR. SANCHEZ: Something more clear. I don't
21 get it.

22 MR. KARR: Oh, I thought -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: I don't get it.

24 MR. KARR: All right, did smoke - so from
25 the time - did smoke, at any time, keep you from going

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1 somewhere that you wanted to go?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, not the smoke, but
3 the smelling, yes. So we was in one place, exactly the
4 place was under the slides. It was one corridor that
5 we had to pass by there, and it was something, not
6 smoke, but the smell like burning, yes. And for sure
7 the smoke is going somewhere around because if you feel
8 and you smell that, and you feel it in your eyes, it's
9 because there is some smoke. So but to see the smoke
10 directly, no. To see some corridor with smoke or
11 something like this, no.

12 MR. KARR: Okay, but did you feel it in your
13 eyes?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes. Actually, I breathe it.

15 MR. KARR: You breathed it?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, in that corridor as I
17 told you.

18 MR. KARR: All right, and that was in the
19 vicinity of the corridor by the plat - by the ship - by
20 the MES?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

22 MR. KARR: All right.

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

24 MR. KARR: All right.

25 MS. BELL: So the smoke, was the smoke

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1 affecting you when -

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

3 MS. BELL: - when you were in the stairwell,
4 in the staircase when you were evacuating?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

6 MS. BELL: You couldn't smell it or feel it
7 then?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

9 MS. BELL: It was not until you got up
10 there?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

12 MS. BELL: Okay, okay, and what time do you
13 start work on a normal day?

14 MR. SANCHEZ: Normally, as I told you, 7:00.

15 MS. BELL: You start at 7:00?

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

17 MS. BELL: And that's every day when you're
18 on the ship?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: 7:00 or 7:30, it depends, but
20 normally at 7:00.

21 MS. BELL: Okay.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

23 MS. BELL: And so -

24 MR. SANCHEZ: But -

25 MS. BELL: What time do you usually go to

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1 bed at night when you're on the ship?

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, around 2:00.

3 MS. BELL: 2:00?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

5 MS. BELL: So you get about how many hours
6 of sleep a night?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Let's say five, maybe less.
8 Yes, because as I told you, I just, I enjoy the ship,
9 so I want to know it, I mean, to know all of my job
10 because in this company, it's the first time, so I took
11 some time to read, to take note, to see what's going
12 on, to (inaudible), to start to do my job, and for
13 that, I had to take some times.

14 And also, I had to be there - aware of what
15 is going on in all of the ship, I mean, all of my
16 areas, so I had to push myself at least just those
17 first days to accommodate, to accommodate, to see
18 what's going on, to see where I am. So for that
19 reason, I take a few times to rest for that reason.

20 MS. BELL: So do you take a nap in the
21 daytime when - do you have any time during the day to
22 rest if you stay up until 2:00 a.m.?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah, yeah, sometimes. I
24 mean, on this time, we were working on the one day
25 before, and I report because he wants to change the

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1 system, I mean, for the (inaudible) systems. We work
2 on the computer with one system that they call it
3 Aloha, so it's for the (inaudible) for till, right? So
4 we start to change the system and to make it a little
5 bit more better to get better control, and so one day
6 before, I had to work all day long because I had to
7 make a report for that one.

8 MS. BELL: You had to -

9 MR. SANCHEZ: To make a report, I mean, to -
10 they asked me about the quantities about an item that
11 we use, about the recipes, the quantity of the recipes.

12 MS. BELL: Oh.

13 MR. SANCHEZ: All of the items that we have,
14 all of the things that we use, things like that, so it
15 took some time for me. And I think that day before,
16 yes, I worked all day long, but normally, normally I
17 take a lunch around 12:00, and I finish lunch, and take
18 a rest until 2:00 in the afternoon.

19 MS. BELL: So what is your schedule during
20 the day then? What are your hours that you work?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: So let's say 7:00 to 12:00,
22 then 2:00 to finish.

23 MS. BELL: What time is finish normally?
24 What are you scheduled to work? So you're probably
25 required to work a certain amount of hours per day?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Actually, as I told you, like
2 a supervisor, like a manager, so we don't have a
3 schedule.

4 MS. BELL: Oh.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Because, I mean, we have to be
6 aware. I don't have an assistant here. I don't have
7 nobody to help me on my team, so I have to be aware
8 about what's happened. So my schedule, I do it by
9 myself, so I report it. And actually, if I feel tired,
10 I go sleep half an hour, one hour, then I come back up
11 and go again, and like this.

12 But as I told you, those days, those days
13 before, I couldn't. I mean, those six days that I
14 stayed there, I couldn't, because I have things to do.
15 So maybe for this week I had already, I mean, for those
16 days, I have already all of the schedule for everybody,
17 even for me, just in order to work and take a rest, but
18 those first days were a little mess for me.

19 MS. BELL: Right, understood, and one more
20 question and then I'll pass it on. You said you were
21 reading. So you're reading manuals and things like
22 that just to understand what's -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

24 MS. BELL: - happening, and what your duties
25 are, and -

1 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

2 MS. BELL: And so what is the language that
3 the documents are written in?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Well, it's Spanish and
5 English.

6 MS. BELL: Both?

7 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

8 MS. BELL: What do you normally read?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: It depends the managers
10 prefer, so, because we have some files, some files, I
11 mean, the - let's say for schedule files, for example,
12 and they are the specifications of what each person do.
13 So the previous bar manager, he write in Spanish. I
14 wrote in Spanish, but other ones he wrote in English.
15 The previous was Colombian and the other was
16 (inaudible) I don't know, so that's why they had the
17 files in what language.

18 MS. BELL: Okay, okay, thank you.

19 MR. [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] of the United
20 States Coast Guard. The Aloha system, is that
21 specifically for the hotel department, or is that for
22 hotel -

23 MR. SANCHEZ: Whole ship.

24 MR. [REDACTED] The whole ship?

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

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1 MR. [REDACTED] Can you just give me the quick -
2 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay.
3 MR. [REDACTED] - a quick and dirty 30 seconds,
4 what is Aloha?
5 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay, actually I don't know if
6 it's all the ship.
7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.
8 MR. SANCHEZ: But I will tell you for hotel
9 because that is my department. So Aloha is one system,
10 the one you made the sales and report the sales.
11 MR. [REDACTED] It's a sales system?
12 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.
13 MR. [REDACTED] Oh, I thought you said it was a
14 maintenance system.
15 MR. SANCHEZ: No, no, no.
16 MR. [REDACTED] Oh, I apologize. So it's like
17 where you swipe their cards and they pay for their
18 drinks?
19 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.
20 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.
21 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.
22 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you. You said that when
23 you were down with the MES, you said it wasn't possible
24 to breathe, right, and then later on you said there was
25 a really bad smell with the smoke and the flame. So,

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1 and just for the recorder, I drew a small diagram of
2 the top view of what it would look like for the MES
3 stations with the corridors. So this is the port side
4 corridor.

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

6 MR. [REDACTED] This is the starboard side
7 corridor, and this is the fork ship corridor that
8 connects the two. Do you know what I'm referring to?

9 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

10 MR. [REDACTED] There's a fire screen door here
11 and a fire screen door here. Was it on the port side,
12 the starboard side, or the fork ship corridor where the
13 strong - the smell was so strong that you couldn't be
14 there?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah. No, actually, no. So
16 downstairs -

17 MR. [REDACTED] This was the MES that failed to
18 operate, the port side one.

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

20 MR. [REDACTED] All right, so do you remember if
21 it was this corridor, this corridor, or this corridor
22 where the smell was strong and you had to relocate up
23 one deck?

24 MR. SANCHEZ: So one deck up is the open
25 area, right?

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1 MR. [REDACTED] Yep.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: So we must go one deck down,
3 and there is one corridor on this side. Yeah, but -

4 MR. [REDACTED] Right here?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly, but it's like this
6 room.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Let's say like this room, not
9 so big. So we must pass by this corridor first in
10 order to take the slide.

11 MR. [REDACTED] In order to get to here?

12 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

13 MR. [REDACTED] And that corridor is on this
14 side? It's forward or aft of this diagram that I've
15 drawn? This is aft. This is forward.

16 MR. SANCHEZ: Aft.

17 MR. [REDACTED] It's the aft? So it's a corridor

18 -

19 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

20 MR. [REDACTED] - on the starboard side aft?

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

22 MR. [REDACTED] So for the recorder, the corridor
23 on the starboard side aft of the starboard marine
24 evacuation system is the corridor that he's referring
25 to.

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1 MR. KARR: Let me take that picture.

2 MR. [REDACTED] I'll leave that up there for you.

3 MR. KARR: Keep it up there.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you for that.

5 (Simultaneous speaking)

6 MR. [REDACTED] You may want to repeat that,
7 Mike. I talked over you for the recorder.

8 MR. KARR: Yeah, at minute 64. [REDACTED] can
9 you point to it with your finger? That was where the
10 smoke was where the finger is pointing. Thank you.

11 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] United States Coast
12 Guard. So you said that - did you have an opportunity
13 to meet your deputy and your team members for your
14 emergency team prior to the incident happening?

15 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

16 MR. [REDACTED] So that was the first time that
17 you had met them?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Do you know any information like
20 how long they had been on board, how long they were in
21 that position?

22 (No audible response)

23 MR. [REDACTED] No? So you just had to go on
24 blind trust that they knew to do what you were going to
25 tell them to do as their leader?

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1 MR. SANCHEZ: Exactly.

2 MR. [REDACTED] And it worked.

3 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, good, thank you. Did you
5 have - all right, so you went down the slide. You got
6 onto the platform. From the platform, you went into
7 the boat. From the boat, they took you ashore.

8 MR. SANCHEZ: No, from the boat -

9 MR. [REDACTED] Once you got into the boat -

10 MR. SANCHEZ: A lifeboat, yeah.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, then you got into another
12 boat, and then they took you ashore.

13 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Did you have any responsibility
15 as the life raft commander for life raft number -

16 MR. SANCHEZ: 14.

17 MR. [REDACTED] - 14 for any crew or passengers
18 once you were ashore?

19 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

20 MR. [REDACTED] No.

21 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

22 MR. [REDACTED] And just - I just want to
23 clarify. Earlier, you had stated that they had rang an
24 alarm two, or three, or four times. Were you referring
25 to the general emergency alarm of seven short and one

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1 long, or were you referring to the abandon ship alarm
2 which is just one long blast on the ship's bells and
3 sirens?

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Only one long blast.

5 MR. [REDACTED] So you heard one long blast -

6 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

7 MR. [REDACTED] - multiple times?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, there was never a time when
10 you heard seven short blasts followed by -

11 MR. SANCHEZ: No.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay, thank you very much. I
13 don't have any other questions.

14 MR. KARR: All right, and my last question,
15 as life raft commander, do you have any tasks that
16 you're supposed to do on the ship?

17 MR. SANCHEZ: No. On this ship, no.

18 MR. KARR: No, well -

19 MR. SANCHEZ: But for - I mean, for the
20 experience in the other companies, yes, I know more or
21 less how to manage that.

22 MR. KARR: And what is that?

23 MR. SANCHEZ: I mean, to disconnect from the
24 ship, to (inaudible), to take the (inaudible) line
25 until the end, and it's going to be inflated, so how to

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1 go there. I mean -

2 MR. KARR: Well, let me ask you this.
3 You're the life raft commander.

4 MR. SANCHEZ: Yeah.

5 MR. KARR: All right, how do you know who is
6 in your life - how do you know what passengers are
7 assigned to your life raft?

8 MR. SANCHEZ: I don't know really.

9 MR. KARR: How do you know where your life
10 raft is?

11 MR. SANCHEZ: Where my life raft is?

12 MR. KARR: Yeah.

13 MR. SANCHEZ: I don't know. I mean, because
14 -

15 MR. KARR: Okay, all right.

16 MR. SANCHEZ: No, I mean, yes and no. So to
17 be port to starboard side, aft, in the point that they
18 are - let's say one case of all life raft. Let's say
19 that is. So they throw it, because of the ship, if
20 they threw it one by one, and they (inaudible) when
21 they inflate should be it's a group of that life raft
22 go in that raft, in that one. For example, life raft
23 number seven, so (inaudible) of that life raft go in
24 there, and then the next one is like this. But
25 exactly, we don't follow it.

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1 MR. KARR: Do the passengers - are the - do
2 you know if the passengers have a particular lifeboat,
3 or excuse me, a life raft that they're supposed to get
4 into?

5 MR. SANCHEZ: I don't know.

6 MR. KARR: Okay, all right, thanks. All
7 right, and it is now 9:51 and this concludes the
8 interview.

9 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
10 off the record at 9:51 a.m.)

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