



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Date: 07/07/06 and 07/17/06

Place: Washington, D.C. (phone)

Person Interviewed: Chris Mackin

Interview Conducted By: Liam LaRue,
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

INTRODUCTION

Chris Mackin was interviewed by phone in conjunction with the Marine Board of Investigation concerning the *Massachusetts*. The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. It has been developed from my handwritten notes of the conversation and is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

INTERVIEW

Chris Mackin is a pilot for the marine unit. He has been working for the Boston Fire Department since 1986 (20 years). He is a graduate of Massachusetts Maritime Academy. He holds two Coast Guard Licenses – 100 ton Near Coastal pilots license, and a 3rd Engineer Unlimited License.

They received a call from Fire Alarm of a boat fire and departed on Marine unit #1 within 2-3 minutes. Normal SOP would have been to launch Marine unit #2 and wait for land companies to arrive before getting underway on Marine unit #1 (if necessary depending on the size of the fire). Marine unit #2 was out of service due to an electrical problem involving shore power that had drained the batteries the night before – they were waiting for new batteries at the time of the accident. It's probably better that they launched unit #1 right away because of the size of the fire and the better capabilities of unit #1.

They had been underway 8-10 minutes (in the vicinity of buoy 13) when they learned

that the fire was major and they would need additional personnel. They stopped at Connolly Terminal, which was on the way out to the fire, to pick up land companies and a fire chief. It took 12-15 minutes to get to Connolly Terminal from Burroughs Wharf. The land companies arrived as they pulled up. The fire chief arrived as they were loading the vessel. It took 10 minutes to get everyone loaded on the boat. It then took 25-30 minutes to get to the *Massachusetts*.

They tied up to the *Massachusetts* and began fighting the fire immediately. They used water and foam. They used around 20-25 gallons of foam. They did not use any dry chemical extinguishers on the engines. They filled the port fuel tank with water, and possibly the starboard. They fought the fire through the two engine room access ladder/hatches aft initially and were not successful in putting out the fire. They then removed the deck hatch and were able to put it out from above. The engine compartment was filled with water – tough to estimate the height but it was above the engines. After the fire was out they dewatered to ensure stability.

The marine units are called out probably 400-500 times per year, with very few of those being for large boat fires. They are often used to take out divers, when there are jumpers on bridges, and for rescue operations. They get underway with additional land companies very infrequently.

Marine unit #1 was delivered in 1971 and is very slow. It has a max speed of around 9-10 knots. The boat has a lot of maintenance issues due to its age.

END OF INTERVIEW

Liam LaRue