

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

\*

*KRISTIN ALEXIS/BARGE MR. ERVIN* \*

ALLISION WITH THE SUNSHINE BRIDGE \* Accident No.: DCA19FM003

DONALDSONVILLE, LOUISIANA \*

OCTOBER 12, 2018 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: EUGENE PICQUET  
Captain

Lamar Dixon Expo Center  
Gonzales, Louisiana

Tuesday,  
May 7, 2019

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(8:04 a.m.)

CDR MESKUN: Good morning. This hearing will come to order.

Today is Tuesday, May 7th, 2019, and the time is 8:04. We are continuing at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales, Louisiana.

Convening and Purpose of the Investigation. I am Commander Matthew Meskun of the United States Coast Guard, Chief of the Inspections and Investigations LANT-541 at Coast Guard Atlantic Area, Portsmouth, Virginia. I'm the lead investigating officer of this formal investigation and the presiding officer over these proceedings.

Commander Sector New Orleans has convened this investigation under the authority of Title 46 United States Code, Section 6301, and Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the allision of the Sunshine Bridge by the *Mr. Ervin* crane barge being pushed by the towing vessel *Kristin Alexis* on October 12th, 2018, while transiting on the Mississippi River.

I am conducting this investigation under the rules in 46 C.F.R. Part 4. The investigation will determine as closely as possible the factors that contributed to the incident so that proper recommendations for the prevention of similar casualties may be made, whether there is evidence that any act of misconduct, inattention of duty, negligence, or willful violation of law on

1 the part of any licensed or certificated person contributed to the  
2 casualty, and whether there is evidence that any Coast Guard  
3 personnel or representative or employee of any other government  
4 agency, or any other person, caused or contributed to the  
5 accident.

6 Parties in Interest. I have previously determined that the  
7 following organizations or individuals are parties in interest to  
8 this investigation: Marquette Transportation, represented by  
9 Mr. David Reisman; Cooper Consolidated, represented by Mr. Ford  
10 Logan. These parties have a direct interest in the investigation  
11 and have demonstrated the potential for contributing significantly  
12 to the completeness of the investigation or otherwise enhancing  
13 the safety of life and property at sea through participation as a  
14 party in interest. All parties in interest have a statutory right  
15 to employ counsel to represent them, to cross-examine witnesses,  
16 and to have witnesses called on their behalf.

17 Witnesses. I will examine all witnesses at this formal  
18 hearing under oath or affirmation and witnesses will be subject to  
19 federal laws and penalties governing false official statements.  
20 Witnesses who are not parties in interest may be advised by their  
21 counsel concerning their rights; however, such counsel may not  
22 examine or cross-examine other witnesses or otherwise participate.

23 General Information. These proceedings are open to the  
24 public and to the media. I ask for the cooperation of all persons  
25 present to minimize any disruptive influence on the proceedings in

1 general, and on the witnesses in particular. Please turn your  
2 cell phones or other electronic devices off or to silent or  
3 vibrate mode. Please do not enter or depart the hearing room  
4 except during periods of recess. Flash photography will be  
5 permitted during this opening statement and during recess periods.

6 The members of the press are of course welcome and an area  
7 has been set aside for you for use during these proceedings. The  
8 news media may question witnesses concerning the testimony that  
9 they have given after I have released them from these proceedings.  
10 I ask that such interviews be conducted outside of this room.

11 Since the date of the casualty, the NTSB and Coast Guard have  
12 conducted substantial evidence collection activities and some of  
13 that previously collected evidence will be considered during these  
14 hearings. Should any person have or believe he or she has  
15 information not brought forward but which might be of direct  
16 significance, that person is urged to bring that information to my  
17 attention by emailing it to [accidentinfo@uscg.mil](mailto:accidentinfo@uscg.mil).

18 Opening Statements from Government Entities.

19 The Coast Guard relies on strong partnerships to execute its  
20 missions, and this formal investigation is no exception. The  
21 National Transportation Safety Board provided a representative for  
22 this hearing. Mr. Mike Kucharski, seated to my left, is the  
23 investigator in charge for the NTSB investigation.

24 Mr. Kucharski, would you like to make a brief statement?

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes. Good morning, Commander Meskun, and to

1 all in attendance. I'm Mike Kucharski of the National  
2 Transportation Safety Board, Investigator in Charge for this  
3 investigation.

4 The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent  
5 federal agency which, under the Independent Safety Board Act of  
6 1974, is required to determine the probable cause of this accident  
7 and to issue a report of the facts, conditions and circumstances  
8 relating to the accident. The NTSB has joined this hearing to  
9 avoid duplicating the development of facts. Nevertheless, I would  
10 like to point out that the NTSB may develop additional information  
11 separately from this proceeding if that becomes necessary.

12 At the conclusion of this hearing, the NTSB will analyze the  
13 facts of this accident and determine the probable cause  
14 independent of the U.S. Coast Guard, issue a separate report of  
15 the NTSB findings and, if appropriate, issue recommendations to  
16 correct safety issues discovered during this investigation.

17 Thank you, Commander.

18 CDR MESKUN: Thank you.

19 We will now hear testimony from Captain Eugene Picquet.

20 Please come forward to the witness table and Lieutenant  
21 [REDACTED] will administer your oath and ask you some preliminary  
22 questions.

23 LT [REDACTED] Sir, please stand and raise your right hand.  
24 (Whereupon,

25 EUGENE PICQUET

1 was called as a witness and, after being first duly sworn, was  
2 examined and testified as follows:)

3 LT [REDACTED] Please be seated. Please state your full name  
4 and spell your last name into the microphone.

5 THE WITNESS: Eugene Joseph Picquet, III. Last name P-i-c-q-  
6 u-e-t.

7 INTERVIEW OF EUGENE PICQUET

8 BY CDR MESKUN:

9 Q. Thank you, Captain. Please describe to us your maritime  
10 career, how long you've been working in the industry, different  
11 positions that you've held, different companies that you've worked  
12 for.

13 A. I started decking in 2012. Prior to that, I was a barge  
14 washer for Turn Service for 5 years. So I would say altogether,  
15 from 2009 all the way up until this point, I've been on the river.  
16 2012, I started decking for Marquette. About a year and a half, I  
17 left and went to Turn Service, which I received my mate pilot's  
18 license within that time. Promises were made, you know, which led  
19 to me leaving.

20 When I left Turn, I went back to Marquette as, you know, as a  
21 deckhand. Which I filled out for a pilot position but they were  
22 short, so I took it upon myself to help them out, you know, get a  
23 boat together, you know. And upon that, you know, they were  
24 supposed to help me out as far as me getting cut loose or whatnot.  
25 But on the side, I would do jobs, you know, with my mate pilot's



1 license to get my time, you know, River Ventures, Savage Tours,  
2 and a bunch of different companies, you know. Within that time, I  
3 received my time, so I got my master's license. And since then,  
4 I've been working for Alexis Marine.

5 Which I left and went to Marquette October of last year,  
6 worked for a total of 3 weeks, until the incident. And after, I  
7 went back to Alexis Marine, which that's who I'm employed with to  
8 this day.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you. I will have a series of questions to ask  
10 you, but before I do, could you provide us a detailed recount of  
11 everything that transpired on the day of the accident, from when  
12 you woke up, when you received the watch, and then up through the  
13 accident?

14 A. Well, I woke up that night about 11:25, went downstairs, got  
15 me something to eat, you know, made sure I was up before I walked  
16 in the wheelhouse or whatever. When I walked upstairs, you know,  
17 Desmond was on the phone with Cooper dispatcher, you know, furious  
18 about them not moving the bucket, you know. And I stood there, I  
19 listened to the conversation.

20 After the conversation was over, you know, I kind of asked  
21 him, you know, what all that was about, you know. And he  
22 explained to me, you know, when he got ready to take off with the  
23 crane, he asked the deckhands to ask the operator to move the  
24 bucket, which is stationed on the head port side of the barge.  
25 Well, I asked him, you know, what, you know, what was going to

1 come out of that, you know. And he told me, you know, that the  
2 dispatcher told us to keep going, he would send someone out.  
3 Well, they had a series of southbound tows coming, so he told me,  
4 you know, look, I'm going to get past this and I'll hand it over  
5 to you.

6 So the tows passed, you know, I asked him if he was read, he  
7 asked me if I was ready. You know, I asked him what was going on,  
8 and, you know, he just was like, everything is fine, you know. So  
9 I took the sticks and proceeding to the bridge. You know, I got  
10 my deckhands to go out, stationed on each side of the barge, on  
11 the head, you know, talking me through the bridge. And I had a  
12 southbound tow coming down at the time. I was already favoring  
13 the west bank, so we made arrangements to meet on the two whistle.

14 And as I approached the bridge, I kind of got closer and  
15 closer to the port pier on the west bank because, I mean, that was  
16 my only lane of visibility, you know. So I figured, you know, if  
17 I'm seeing out this side and I'm good on this side, I know I'm  
18 fine on the starboard side. And that's when, you know, the crane  
19 got caught underneath the bridge.

20 Q. Okay. Thank you. So we're going to momentarily ask a series  
21 of, I guess, detailed questions. And then after those questions  
22 are done, I would like to replay -- we have some video from the  
23 VTS, Vessel Traffic Service, and then we also have recovered the  
24 Rose Point, as well. So we'll replay the Rose Point. And I would  
25 like you to, when we do that, narrate essentially what you were

1 thinking when that happened and whatnot.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 CDR MESKUN: But I'll turn it over to Mr. [REDACTED] to ask some  
4 questions.

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]

6 Q. Good morning, Mr. Picquet, and thank you for coming.

7 A. Good morning. The first questions we'll ask are going to  
8 be -- go a little more in depth in your license. When did you get  
9 your master's license, approximately? It doesn't have to be an  
10 exact date.

11 A. About 2 years ago.

12 Q. Do you have any other endorsements or special endorsements on  
13 your license?

14 A. 100 ton.

15 Q. 100 ton?

16 A. Master's.

17 Q. When did you get that?

18 A. I want to say 2000 and -- between 2014 and 2015.

19 Q. Have you ever operated under that endorsement?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. About how much experience do you have? Briefly describe how  
22 much experience you have operating as a 100 ton.

23 A. I want to say a year, on and off, you know. Just I have  
24 that, you know, I have that 100-ton license, you know, worst case  
25 scenario. You know, I do spot jobs, you know, for different

1 companies when they're, you know, when they're in need.

2 Q. Okay. And so the public knows, a 100-ton license is a small  
3 passenger vessel. What about your towing, master of towing, is  
4 there any other endorsements on that?

5 A. No, it's just, it's a master of towing up on great lakes,  
6 western rivers and --

7 Q. Yeah, that's what I was --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. And to be clear, what was your position on October 11th and  
10 12th?

11 A. Pilot.

12 Q. Pilot onboard the?

13 A. Kristin Alexis.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Do you guys have any more questions about his  
15 license before I move on?

16 (Off microphone comments.)

17 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

18 Q. Good morning, Captain Picquet.

19 A. Good morning.

20 Q. Your experience as a wheelman, how much time did you spend as  
21 a wheelman, whether it was in a master capacity or as a mate or  
22 pilot?

23 A. Well, each category, you know, it has its days. You know, as  
24 the mate pilot, I held that for a total of 360 days. After my  
25 time was up with that, I submitted my information in order to get

1 my master's. And I've been having my master's license for 2  
2 years.

3 Q. So, would you say 3 years as a wheelman, 4 years as a  
4 wheelman, something in that vicinity?

5 A. Three years official, 5 years, you know, with the training  
6 included.

7 Q. Okay. And where was that -- when you were a wheelman, was  
8 any of it canal work, was it river work, was it line haul, line  
9 boats, or what was it?

10 A. Yeah, it was both. It was canal. I had to get my time on  
11 the canal. I spent about a year on the canal, from New Orleans to  
12 Houston in the canal. I've been far as Baton Rouge, upper Baton  
13 Rouge, as far as the river goes. From UBT, from (indiscernible)  
14 Donaldsonville to Baton Rouge.

15 Q. Could we pull up --

16 (Pause.)

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay, I have no further questions at this  
18 point. Thank you.

19 BY MR. [REDACTED]

20 Q. All right. Now we're going to talk a little more about the  
21 Kristin Alexis. You indicated that you worked for Marquette off  
22 and on, on various vessels?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. Could you give an estimate about how much time you have, and  
25 at what positions, working on the Kristin Alexis?

1 A. I decked on the Kristin Alexis for a while when I first  
2 started with Marquette in 2012. As a wheelman, I was only on the  
3 boat for 3 weeks.

4 Q. So about how, in 2012, about how long did you work as a  
5 deckhand?

6 A. For a total of a year and a half.

7 Q. Okay. So, would you say you were very familiar with the  
8 vessel?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. Okay. On October 11th, what was the overall condition of the  
11 vessel?

12 A. It was in fine working condition. Everything was functional.

13 Q. The steering worked good?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Propulsion?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Navigational equipment, was there anything wrong with any of  
18 that?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Do you feel that it had enough horsepower to perform the  
21 operation you were doing?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Can you give a generalized description of the vessel, size,  
24 dimensions, horsepower?

25 A. I think the Kristin is rated at a 1400. Length, I want to

1 say 65 feet. Width, don't quote me, I mean, it's been a while. I  
2 want to say maybe from 15 to 20 feet wide.

3 Q. Yep. Okay. And I think we forgot to mention this earlier:  
4 If you don't know the answer, just say you don't know. Don't try  
5 to guess.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. And if you don't understand a question, by all means please  
8 ask us to repeat it.

9 A. Okay.

10 MR. [REDACTED] I don't have any more questions about the  
11 vessel, do you, Commander?

12 (No audible response.)

13 MR. [REDACTED] Mr. Kucharski, do you have any more questions  
14 about the vessel?

15 (No audible response.)

16 BY MR. [REDACTED]

17 Q. All right. Mr. Picquet, we're going to move on and discuss  
18 the crew and your relationship with the crew a little bit. Could  
19 you tell me who was on watch with you and kind of your  
20 relationship and how well you knew each person?

21 A. Well, I knew Blaise quite well, Blaise Rudolph. The other  
22 deckhand, to be honest with you, I don't even remember his name.  
23 It's been a while. But I've worked with Blaise on and off, you  
24 know, within my time prior to coming back and, I mean, he's a  
25 grade A deckhand, you know. When they're on a tow, you know, he's

1 like, he's in charge, you know. I take his word, you know, over  
2 anything.

3 Q. Okay. What about the other crewmembers onboard?

4 A. Those guys, that was my first time meeting them. I mean the  
5 other deckhands, you know. Desmond I knew prior to this incident  
6 because I've worked with him before when I was decking for  
7 Marquette.

8 Q. About how much work experience do you have with Captain  
9 Smith?

10 A. I mean, wheelhouse wise, a week. I decked for him, you know,  
11 a couple of times when I was decking for Marquette back in 2012.

12 Q. Okay. A couple of times, like a timeframe, can you put a  
13 month, estimate a number of months?

14 A. A month, yeah.

15 Q. About a month?

16 A. Max.

17 Q. Okay. Was there anything different with what you knew of the  
18 off-going watch? Did they behave any differently than normal?

19 A. I mean, you know, like I said, when I walked upstairs, you  
20 know, he kind of caught me off guard, you know, because like I  
21 said he was highly upset, you know. And that was the reason, you  
22 know, I'm going to say things went a little different than they  
23 would normally go.

24 Q. Besides just being upset, was everything else, he seemed  
25 normal, healthy?



1 A. Right. Right.

2 Q. And did you have any interaction with the off-going  
3 deckhands?

4 A. No.

5 Q. What did you discuss when you were relieving the watch?

6 A. Well, when I came up, I mean, I had to pause, you know,  
7 because of what was going on, but, you know, after he got off the  
8 phone, you know, I asked him, you know, I kind of talked about,  
9 you know, what the conversation was about, you know. And he  
10 explained to me, you know, why, you know, why that went the way it  
11 went, you know. And after, you know, after we talked about, you  
12 know, him giving me the sticks after all the traffic passed.  
13 Because, you know, he didn't want to give it to me, you know,  
14 while all the traffic because, I guess, he made arrangements with  
15 those guys already and he was going to foresee (ph.) until that  
16 was over.

17 So, before he gave me the sticks, you know, I asked him, you  
18 know, what was going on, like, you know, am I amble to foresee  
19 this voyage the right way, basically, you know. And I mean, he  
20 told me everything was fine. So after he told me everything was  
21 fine, I took over.

22 Q. Okay. You said he -- you asked why and he told you why. Can  
23 you be more descriptive? What did he describe to you of what was  
24 going on?

25 A. Well, I asked him what the conversation was about, you know,

1 and he told me that, you know, like I said, he asked the deckhands  
2 to ask the operator to move the bucket. Which, you know, that  
3 crane barge, you know, it's already -- it's hard to see. You  
4 know, you favor one side of the barge, which, in that case, it was  
5 the port side of the barge.

6 Well, they had the bucket stationed on the head of the port  
7 side, you know, about 15, 20 feet high, 15 feet wide, you know.  
8 It's not really, you know, a big of a difference, but it helps out  
9 a little bit, you know. Like I said, your visibility is already  
10 blocked, and then you have that making matters even worse.

11 So he told me, you know, the operator said that he wasn't  
12 moving the bucket, whatever happens, happens. So he said the  
13 dispatcher would send someone out by crew boat to move the bucket.  
14 Which, I mean, it never happened. So that's basically what the  
15 conversation was about far as the phone call goes.

16 Q. Okay. He said somebody was coming. Did he ever talk to you  
17 about you following up on having somebody come?

18 A. No. He told me, you know -- I said, you know, when I asked  
19 him, you know, what does that mean, he said they said for us to  
20 keep going, they would send someone.

21 Q. Okay, I'm starting to get off topic here. Did you feel  
22 comfortable operating the boat the way it was?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Besides that, did you do any other, follow any -- or not  
25 follow. Did you do anything else to relieve the watch?

1 A. What you mean in specific like?

2 Q. Did Marquette have some policies as far as procedures you're  
3 going to follow when you relieve the watch?

4 A. Yeah. They have, you know, they have the watch-end protocol.  
5 I mean, you have the stop work authority, you have the bridge  
6 transit, you know.

7 Q. You discussed the crane, but was there a change-of-watch  
8 checklist that you should have followed or did follow?

9 A. I mean, in that sense, you know, when you take over, you  
10 know, it's kind of like, you know, he was -- you know, not to  
11 point the finger or anything, you know, but all those things, you  
12 know, in relation, you know, with the situation, it should have  
13 been went over already.

14 You know, I mean, it's my job to get my information from him.  
15 Which in that situation, I wouldn't have had enough time, you  
16 know, to go over all that paperwork in the midst of everything.  
17 You know, it was kind of like a hectic night, you know, and a lot  
18 of things that we would normally do -- well, I know a lot of  
19 things that I would normally do I didn't.

20 Q. Could you tell us what those things that you would normally  
21 do that you didn't do are?

22 A. I should have double-checked, basically.

23 Q. Double-checked what?

24 A. Double-checked to make sure, you know, that he went over  
25 everything that he was supposed to. I mean, basically, with

1 everything that was going on, you know, I should have made sure,  
2 you know, I should have asked what the air draft on the crane was.  
3 That's something that, you know, I should have did, took it upon  
4 myself to do by him not telling me.

5 Q. Okay. Was there any forms or anything that you filled out  
6 that described your tow and your voyage?

7 A. No. The only form that I went over was the -- man, what's  
8 the name of that form? It's a form, you know, it's like a risk  
9 form. You know, like, you know, like your deckhand experience,  
10 you know, your weather, you know, the safety of your tow. That  
11 was the only form that I had to fill out.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Can we bring up Exhibit 44? Or no, 48,  
13 page 22.

14 BY MR. [REDACTED]

15 Q. Could you look at this form and briefly describe what it is?

16 A. It's a crew change protocol form.

17 Q. Is this the form that you were referring to?

18 A. No, that's not.

19 Q. Do you recall doing a form, this form, that evening?

20 A. Yes. Yes, I do now.

21 Q. When during the evolution of you taking over the watch did  
22 you fill out this?

23 A. Prior to.

24 Q. Prior to? About how long?

25 A. When I first came up, I filled that out. Between 11:30 and

1 12 o'clock.

2 Q. Did you discuss any of these items with Captain Smith?

3 A. No, I discussed those with my hands.

4 Q. So, like where it says weather conditions, can you tell me  
5 what you do besides -- it's got a check, but what did you check  
6 for weather conditions?

7 A. Basically, you know, was it a clear night, no fog, rain, you  
8 know, things of that sort.

9 Q. Did you notice anything different with any of the equipment  
10 onboard, navigation equipment?

11 A. Like?

12 Q. Was everything operating fine?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And then I know this is redundant but, so, you never  
15 discussed any of these items with Captain Smith?

16 A. No, sir.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Do you guys have any more questions about  
18 changing watch? Do you have any more questions about changing  
19 watch?

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yeah.

21 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

22 Q. Captain Picquet, you mentioned there about the air draft of  
23 the barge.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did you know what the air draft was before you hit the

1 bridge?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. No?

4 A. No.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: No further questions.

6 BY MR. [REDACTED]

7 Q. All right. I mentioned the weather off of that. Can you  
8 describe the weather that evening?

9 A. It was a clear night.

10 Q. What was the -- can you describe where you were going and  
11 what your purpose of moving the crane was?

12 A. Well, we were headed to 170 fleet.

13 Q. Was there any other instructions? Was there a time that you  
14 were supposed to be there or anything?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Did you have any issues with -- or you did mention  
17 visibility. Can you describe in detail what your visibility  
18 obstacles were?

19 A. Well, I mean, like I said, you know, you have different tools  
20 to use. You have your aids to navigation tools. Well, I mean,  
21 I'm not using it as an excuse, you know, but my visibility was  
22 already a short window, you know. And by, you know, the bucket  
23 being there, it blocked my visibility even more. But still, you  
24 know, with that, I was fine long as, you know, I go up the west  
25 bank. If I can see on this side, I figured if I can see on this

1 side of me, I was fine.

2 Q. Can you describe in degrees how much of your visibility was  
3 blocked?

4 A. I had about maybe a 10- to 15-foot window, you know. I mean,  
5 width wise, you know what I'm saying?

6 Q. On which side?

7 A. On the port side.

8 Q. What about the starboard side?

9 A. I had no visibility on my starboard side, zero.

10 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Can we bring up Exhibit 51, page, start  
11 on page 30?

12 BY MR. [REDACTED]

13 Q. Is this an accurate picture of what your visibility looked  
14 like?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. What is that right in, I guess, the middle of the pilothouse  
17 there that's blocking visibility?

18 A. You mean on the barge?

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. It's the cabin. It's the swivel, I guess swivel block on the  
21 crane, I want to say.

22 Q. That's good. Was there any navigation equipment that was  
23 affected by the Kristin Alexis being connected to the Mr. Ervin?

24 A. The radar was distorted.

25 Q. Distorted how much?

1 A. I mean, in that situation, there was no use to it. It was a  
2 big echo, you know, sounding off on the radar.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Can we slowly flip through pages -- well, let  
4 me -- go to 43. And then 42.

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]

6 Q. And, Mr. Picquet, as we flip through these pictures, I just  
7 want you to look at them and tell me if this was accurately how  
8 the Kristin Alexis was connected to the Mr. Ervin on that evening.

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 MR. [REDACTED] 29.

11 BY MR. [REDACTED]

12 Q. This picture is from the bow. Is that bucket where it was on  
13 that evening?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 MR. [REDACTED] 27.

16 BY MR. [REDACTED]

17 Q. And this one's from a distance from the bow, from the middle  
18 of the vessel. Does everything on deck appear to be as it was on  
19 that evening?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 MR. [REDACTED] What number are we on, 27? 18.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]

23 Q. That one's kind of zoomed in. Can you describe what you see  
24 on deck and tell me if everything was there that evening?

25 A. You have a series of buckets. I mean, the one that's laying



1 out on the side was the only one that I could see.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And then 11. And we'll just stay on  
3 that one.

4 BY MR. [REDACTED]

5 Q. Does anything appear to be different, or is everything the  
6 same as it was the evening you --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. So, with the visibility that we discussed, you felt it was  
9 safe to proceed up river?

10 A. I was confident enough, you know, that I can do it. I mean,  
11 like I said, my visibility was short, you know. Certain things  
12 made it even shorter, but, you know, long as I went up that side  
13 of the river, I could have gotten it done.

14 Q. Did you know the size and dimensions of the Mr. Ervin?

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. Had you moved the Mr. Ervin before?

17 A. No. I've moved over Cooper cranes, but that was my first  
18 time dealing with that one.

19 Q. It was your first time? Did you ask the captain for the  
20 size, Captain Smith for the size and dimensions of the vessel when  
21 you took over the watch?

22 A. No, sir.

23 Q. What other cranes have you moved -- or with the other cranes  
24 that you moved, were any of them comparable to this one?

25 A. I mean, height, air draft wise, it's not close, you know.

1 The other ones I pushed, they were all in the same area of 130 to  
2 135 far as the air draft goes. And I mean, in that case, you  
3 know, which I made a mistake, I went off of assumptions. You  
4 know, by me pushing, you know, Cooper cranes before that, the bi-  
5 frame (ph.), you know, different ones, I kind of figured that they  
6 were in the ballpark of, you know, the same as far as air draft.

7 Q. So, when you say assumptions, what were you basing your  
8 assumptions off of?

9 A. Prior experience dealing with Cooper cranes.

10 Q. Cooper cranes? Did you ever talk to anything about the  
11 height of the crane?

12 A. Of that one?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you talk to them about the height of other cranes?

16 A. I mean, past situations. You know, this, I'll break it down  
17 to you like this: Like, with this crane, this situation, you  
18 know, I've never been in a situation where I had to take over  
19 after already being underway. All my past experience, you know, I  
20 initially leave with the crane barge and I get all my information,  
21 you know.

22 With everything happening that night, you know, and me taking  
23 over after already being underway, it was a different situation.  
24 And I mean, I didn't take my proper steps with the situation being  
25 that way. But I always, you know, every time I leave with a

1 crane, I make sure I have all my numbers.

2 Q. Okay. So the other cranes that you pushed, about how many  
3 times have you pushed the cranes for any company?

4 A. I want to say a total of 15 to 20 times.

5 Q. Fifteen to 20 times? But once again, none as big as this  
6 one?

7 A. No.

8 Q. And you never asked Captain Smith any information on this  
9 crane?

10 A. No, sir.

11 Q. Is there any other thing you could have done to find out how  
12 big the crane was?

13 A. I mean, since this has happened, I've went into a precaution  
14 mode. I mean, I've done a bunch of different things to make sure  
15 that this doesn't happen to me again, you know. I could have  
16 called Harvey. Possibly, you know, he would have known. Probably  
17 could have asked the dispatcher what the size of the crane, you  
18 know. I mean, when I asked Desmond, you know, was everything  
19 good, you know, for me to foresee my voyage, once he told me  
20 everything was fine, you know, I didn't take in consideration, you  
21 know, to double-check. I kind of just went off of his word.

22 Q. Okay. Do you feel that the crane could have been towed in a  
23 manner that would have made it --

24 A. Safer?

25 Q. Safer, yes.

1 A. I mean, my thoughts on it, you know, one thing that probably  
2 could help that this doesn't happen again, you know, and this is  
3 just me, welding our painting the air draft on the back of the  
4 crane.

5 Q. But as far as like positioning the towing vessel, the Kristin  
6 Alexis onto the barge in a different way, is there any -- would  
7 that have made it different?

8 A. I don't think so. I don't think it would have made a  
9 difference.

10 Q. Do you feel that the Kristin Alexis was an adequate tow boat  
11 to move the Mr. Ervin?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Was there any Marquette policies that you know of that could  
14 have been utilized to make the transit safer?

15 A. Bridge transit.

16 Q. Bridge transit? Any other ones?

17 A. Bridge transit, your voyage plan. I want to say that's the,  
18 you know, that's the two most important policies pertaining to  
19 this situation to where you could have -- you know, information  
20 could have been gotten to probably avoid the situation.

21 Q. You had mentioned that you had no visibility on the starboard  
22 side. Did you feel that transiting with no visibility on the  
23 starboard side was a factor that should have made you maybe not  
24 transit?

25 A. Well, when pushing those cranes, those situations are always

1 the same. You're going to favor one side of the barge to see, you  
2 know, to get a clear lane on either side. So, I mean, barge  
3 already being underway, you know, I don't know if you would have  
4 faced up to the starboard had the lane been the same. I'm just  
5 going off of, you know, what I walked into. But my past  
6 experience, you know, I face up on those crane barges the same  
7 way: I favor one side. Because you can't get in the middle  
8 because it will block your visibility on both side.

9 Q. Okay. You had mentioned normally -- this was your first time  
10 that you've taken over already underway with a tow. Would you  
11 have gotten that two underway from the pier under the conditions  
12 that it was in?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. Well, did Marquette have a policy that you could have  
15 utilized not to get underway?

16 A. They have the stop work authority.

17 Q. Can you describe what the stop work authority is?

18 A. I mean, basically, you know, it gives us authority to stop,  
19 you know, if we feel as though the situation is unfit. But, you  
20 know, if you feel as though it's safe to do so, I mean, you know,  
21 in that situation, I kind of, you know -- the captain of the boat,  
22 you know, to me, is like my head dispatcher or my head chief, you  
23 know.

24 And I mean, with me taking over responsibility and stopping  
25 after, a lot of things, you know, came to mind. You know, if I

1 stopped, everyone else is still moving. You know, just stopping  
2 with a big crane barge in the middle of the river. It was a lot  
3 of different things going through my mind at the time. But I  
4 still felt as though, with all those obstacles against me, you  
5 know, the route that I was taking, I felt as though it was the  
6 right and safest thing to do even though I had all those things  
7 against me.

8 Q. Could you have used the stop work authority when you took  
9 over the watch?

10 A. I could have.

11 Q. Okay. Have you ever used the stop work authority?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. At Marquette?

14 A. No.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Before I get into too much of the  
16 approach on the bridge, do you guys have any more questions?

17 Mike, want to go first?

18 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

19 Q. Captain Picquet, I do have a bunch, basketful of questions  
20 now. You said in previous times when you started out with a tow  
21 like a crane barge or something, a high profile like that, you  
22 left the dock, you were in the situation where you actually took  
23 it off the dock?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How did you know the air draft of those vessels?

1 A. It was just me getting -- you know, asking who was in charge  
2 of the crane what was the height and width and draft on the barge.

3 Q. Okay. And those were -- so, who is in charge, the foreman of  
4 the crane?

5 A. Employees, you know, of the operator.

6 Q. Okay. And they will actually give you the air draft of that  
7 particular crane?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Great. Have you ever calculated the air draft?

10 A. Up on a bridge?

11 Q. Of a particular crane or anything like that?

12 A. I don't -- it's no way. I mean, it's no way for me to  
13 calculate the air draft on a crane. All I can do, you know, is  
14 just take someone's word from it who was in charge.

15 Q. Okay. So you've never calculated it before, somebody has to  
16 give that to you?

17 A. Yes.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Could we call up Exhibit 80 -- I'm  
19 sorry, 37, please? And we're going to go to page 2.

20 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

21 Q. So, Captain Picquet, this is a Towing Officer's Assessment  
22 Record. It says great lakes inland. Could you tell us what that  
23 was for, what you were being assessed for?

24 A. Those specific things, you know, locate and demonstrate file,  
25 you know, I had to do all those things in order for me to get

1 signed off on.

2 Q. Okay. And was that to get your pilot license at that time?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. The dates are in 2014. Was that to get your pilot mate's --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Go down to -- take a look at Section B-2, where it  
7 says, "Allow for draft and clearance in navigation of vessel." Do  
8 you see that?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Did you have to -- were you told how to do this or did you  
11 have to demonstrate how to do this?

12 A. I had to demonstrate all those things.

13 Q. So, great. How would you then determine if you had enough  
14 clearance to get under something?

15 A. Well, each bridge has a formula. It's the initial number  
16 minus the river stage. So in that case, Sunshine Bridge is 168  
17 feet at dead water, minus the river stage at the time was 18 feet.  
18 So you had a clearance of 150 feet.

19 Q. Okay. And you mentioned the Sunshine Bridge. You went  
20 through these figures for us now. Did you know those figures  
21 beforehand?

22 A. I knew the formula, I just didn't know the river stage at the  
23 time.

24 Q. You didn't. So you didn't actually know what the vertical  
25 clearance was for that particular bridge?



1 A. No. I went off of my Rose Point and my charts, which said  
2 133 feet.

3 Q. Okay. Great. And so this brings me into some similar  
4 questions then. You went off of the Rose Point. Was it on the  
5 center span that you looked at or the -- I should say the channel  
6 span, or was it the western span?

7 A. The main span had 133. The alternate had 132.9.

8 Q. Great. Okay. And did you have any other publications  
9 onboard that boat that would tell you the actual height of that  
10 bridge?

11 A. You have the Rose Point and you have the river charts.

12 Q. The river charts? Is that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
13 river charts or --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- you're talking about the NOAA charts?

16 A. No, the geographical charts.

17 Q. Okay. Do you see on the -- I think we have it as an exhibit.  
18 Do you see that back wall there?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Are those the navigational charts you're talking about?

21 A. Yes, sir. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. Were there any Army Corps of Engineers charge that  
23 you're aware of, or just the NOAA charts?

24 A. No, that's the only ones that I was fond [sic] of.

25 Q. Okay. So I guess the burning question in my mind is, if you

1 didn't know the air draft of the vessel, how did you know you  
2 could actually make it under the bridge?

3 A. I mean, he asked -- like I said, you know, I asked him was  
4 everything fine, he told me yes, and I acted on previous  
5 experience with those cranes.

6 Q. But you hadn't towed that actual crane before?

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. Okay. Did you look at that to see, either while you were  
9 towing it or afterwards, do you think you could have faced up on  
10 the starboard side of that barge?

11 A. I mean, I don't remember after, you know, how the starboard  
12 side looked. I mean, he could have, you know, he could have faced  
13 up on the starboard side, I guess. I don't know exactly because,  
14 you know, we had done already left. So I don't know what the  
15 starboard side would have looked like.

16 Q. Did you discuss at all with Captain Smith which channel you  
17 were going to take?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Did you discuss with Captain Smith about holding up, holding  
20 up if Cooper didn't come out and move that bucket?

21 A. No, he just kept me to keep going.

22 Q. You know that section of the river fairly well?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Is there anywhere you could have held up?

25 A. I mean, you can always hit the bank anywhere.

1 Q. Let me go back to an earlier question. Who are you working  
2 for right now?

3 A. Alexis Marine.

4 Q. And I don't know if this was asked: Did you stand a 12-hour  
5 watch on that boat?

6 A. On the Kristin Alexis?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. And that was what, from midnight to noon each day?

10 A. Mm-hmm. Well, different. I worked both shifts, but that  
11 particular night I was on from midnight to 12 noon.

12 Q. Did you ever take the draft of a tow boat while you were on  
13 there? The draft of the vessel, do you ever record it anywhere?  
14 Do you ever look at the drafts?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. How about the tows? Do you ever look at the drafts of a tow?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did you ever have a question about a particular barge in tow  
19 previous to this incident?

20 A. Like in reference to what?

21 Q. You know, a question about the barge, whether it's -- you  
22 know, the draft, the height, or anything like that, did you have  
23 that?

24 A. Do I have that information?

25 Q. Did you ever have that question to ask somebody? Did you

1 ever have a question about it?

2 A. No. It's always been me, you know. I would ask, you know,  
3 like I said, I would ask the workers for whatever I'm pushing, if  
4 that's what you mean.

5 Q. Okay. Have you ever refused to move a barge?

6 A. Yeah, I have before, for different reasons.

7 Q. So, when you navigate on the river, okay, do you actually use  
8 the charts, the NOAA charts, the ones like that are posted up  
9 there on that back wall, or are you using Rose Point?

10 A. I use both.

11 Q. And how do you use the actual paper charts to navigate with?

12 A. I mean, you know, the numbers particular. The numbers, you  
13 know, each point for that sort.

14 Q. This is good. What numbers do you use on that chart?

15 A. The heights, which mile markers at which point, you know,  
16 different things.

17 Q. So the heights, would you look at that particular chart to  
18 see the vertical clearance of a bridge?

19 A. I actually, I did.

20 Q. Before the accident?

21 A. Yes. It was 133 feet.

22 Q. Great.

23 A. In the main, and it was 132.9 in the alternate. The same on  
24 the Rose Point.

25 Q. Great.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: [REDACTED] could we pull up that -- I've asked  
2 that before. I forget the exhibit number. That's the map book,  
3 the Army Corps of Engineers map book.

4 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

5 Q. Have you ever seen that picture before, before this accident?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Do you know if on the Kristin Alexis, besides the charts, do  
8 they have notice to mariners on there?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do they have light lists?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Ghost pilot?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Have you had any formal training in Rose Point?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And tell us about that.

17 A. It's a software. You know, anyone can get it. I mean, I had  
18 the software prior to that. I just used the one on Marquette's  
19 boat, but when I go on boats that doesn't have it, I use my own  
20 software.

21 Q. So, were you trained in how to use that at any school or  
22 anyplace you've attended, or you just picked it up on your own?

23 A. I just picked it up on my own.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Can we look at Exhibit 86 -- I'm sorry, 46,  
25 please.

1 (Off microphone comments.)

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: Huh? Oh, sure.

3 I think Mr. [REDACTED] has a question on this.

4 BY MR. [REDACTED]

5 Q. Since this exhibit's already up, I wanted to jump in here.

6 Can you read that exhibit okay?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. What's it say about vertical and horizontal clearances?

9 A. Vertical clearance 171 feet.

10 Q. For what span?

11 A. Channel span, main span.

12 Q. The main span, channel span? And what span did you take that  
13 evening?

14 A. The west span.

15 Q. And what's it say about that?

16 A. 147 feet.

17 Q. Is there any notes? Is that a note underneath it?

18 A. Minimal vertical clearance 111.

19 Q. At?

20 A. Donaldsonville gauge 36.

21 Q. So this chart, do you know and understand how to get the  
22 actual air gap?

23 A. Yeah. You would subtract the gauge from the vertical  
24 clearance. That would determine your final clearance.

25 Q. Okay. And you've had training on how to do that?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. But is this the chart you were using?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay.

5 MR. [REDACTED] I'll let Mike get back to where he was going.  
6 Just since that exhibit was up, I wanted to ask those things.

7 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

8 Q. Captain, I believe you said you decided to use the west span  
9 for traffic because you were already there?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You were already on that side?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. On the west side?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. I need to be clear on this: Did you choose the west  
16 span because of the visibility or was it because of the traffic?  
17 That's the key.

18 A. Visibility.

19 Q. Visibility. And why did you go ahead and go on the west  
20 side? Explain in a little detail for us, for those who haven't  
21 actually navigated a vessel.

22 A. I mean, I took the west side because that was the only side  
23 that I could see. You know, I figured, you know, if I can see on  
24 this side, you know, and I'm close enough or a good off of  
25 everything on the west side, my starboard side should be fine

1 because, you know, it's basically the (indiscernible). It's a  
2 wider range, you know. And upon approaching the bridge, you know,  
3 my hands told me that I was lined up center, you know. And as I  
4 approached the bridge, I kind of got closer to my west side  
5 because I knew that I could see on that side. So, I mean, it's  
6 750 feet wide, you know. So if I'm good on my west side, I'm good  
7 on my starboard side.

8 Q. Great. That's very helpful.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'm going to hold here now. Do you have  
10 further questions?

11 CDR MESKUN: The time is now 9:03. We will now recess for 15  
12 minutes.

13 (Off the record at 9:03 a.m.)

14 (On the record at 9:25 a.m.)

15 CDR MESKUN: It is now 9:25. We are back on the record.

16 BY CDR MESKUN:

17 Q. Captain, we're going to play the video for the VTS playback,  
18 and then we're going to go into the VTS -- I'm sorry, the Rose  
19 Point playback after that.

20 CDR MESKUN: If you would open up Exhibit Number 55?

21 On the VTS video, this was received from the Vessel Traffic  
22 Service in New Orleans. If you could advance to minute 8:30 on  
23 the VTS video?

24 BY CDR MESKUN:

25 Q. We're at Mile Marker 166, and the local time is approximately



1 0123. And we'll help use this as a demonstrative aid to kind of  
2 help walk through the timeline and talk about what happened and  
3 what you were thinking about. So I'll ask you a few questions as  
4 we play the video.

5 (Whereupon, a portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

6 CDR MESKUN: You can pause the video.

7 BY CDR MESKUN:

8 Q. Was that you that made that radio broadcast?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. What were you saying?

11 A. I got with the vessel that was southbound and made -- well,  
12 hold on. Could you play it back for me to make sure I heard it  
13 right?

14 CDR MESKUN: Minute 8:30.

15 BY CDR MESKUN:

16 Q. There was actually two radio -- this was just like a regular  
17 broadcast, and then later on there's communication with the  
18 southbound traffic.

19 A. Okay. Well, you don't have to play it by you telling me  
20 that. It's just something I do. You know, every so many feet or  
21 so many miles, I just put my position on traffic and basically,  
22 you know, let them know what I'm pushing, you know, how I'm  
23 looking, things of that sort.

24 Q. And how did you characterize that voyage in that broadcast?

25 A. Kristin Alexis northbound, lining up on the Sunshine Bridge,

1 restricted on visibility, Kristin Alexis.

2 Q. So you felt like the barge configuration that you were in,  
3 you were under a condition of restricted visibility?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Okay.

6 CDR MESKUN: And then can you advance to minute number 11:44?  
7 And we'll let that play through to, roughly, a minute or so.

8 BY CDR MESKUN:

9 Q. And this is for a big picture image on the chart to see where  
10 you are in the river in relation to the bridge.

11 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

12 BY CDR MESKUN:

13 Q. What are your thoughts now? Back in the day when this  
14 happened, on the 11th, the morning of the 12th, what are some of  
15 the thoughts going through your mind right now?

16 A. Once I see (indiscernible) southbound, I got with them, you  
17 know, to make meeting arrangements. And by me already being on  
18 that west side of the river, I made arrangements to meet him on  
19 the two whistle, you know, which would have been my starboard  
20 side. I mean, he has the right of way because he's the southbound  
21 vessel, but sometimes, you know, they yield to your situation.

22 But in that sense, you know, I was already there, you know.  
23 I felt as though it would have been a lot of hassle for me to try  
24 to cross over in front of him, you know. And I really didn't  
25 think it was a problem for me to take the west span, because I

1 have in previous times, you know. And I mean, by me not being  
2 able to see, you know, I took that west span and hugged that west  
3 pier because, like I said before, I mean, I figured, you know, if  
4 I'm good on the port side where I can see, I have more than enough  
5 room on my starboard side.

6 Q. Okay. Thank you.

7 CDR MESKUN: If you could advance to minute 17:30 on the  
8 video?

9 This is where the communications with the *Nedra Kay* (ph.)  
10 take place and the local time is 0132, as you can see on the  
11 bottom right-hand corner of the video.

12 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

13 CDR MESKUN: You can pause the video.

14 BY CDR MESKUN:

15 Q. Can you describe -- it was kind of hard to hear the *Nedra Kay*  
16 in the background, but can you just describe that conversation  
17 that just took place?

18 A. Yeah. I mean, I got with him, you know, and let him know  
19 what my situation was and basically, you know, asked him, you  
20 know, would it be a problem if I seen him on the two whistle. And  
21 he agreed to it, it was no problem.

22 Q. Okay. So there's some common language used on the rivers  
23 like meet me on the two. Can you describe to me what that means?

24 A. We'll be passing starboard to starboard, basically.

25 Q. Okay. Did you know where in the river you guys were going to

1 meet, above the bridge, below the bridge?

2 A. No, I didn't see -- I mean, our meeting point was right  
3 around the bridge.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Basically, once he -- you know, we were going to be passing  
6 through at the same time, basically.

7 Q. Was there any thoughts as to which span you would take at  
8 this point in time?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Did you know which span the Nedra Kay was going to take?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Which one was that?

13 A. He was taking the main span.

14 Q. Okay. And then tell us about the traffic density. I see it  
15 looks like maybe there's a pier or something on the port side?

16 A. Yes, there's, I want to say it's like a little refinery that  
17 Weber, you know, Weber works. It's basically just like a little  
18 chemical dock.

19 Q. Okay.

20 CDR MESKUN: If you could advance to minute 20?

21 This is right around Mile Marker 167, and the time, local  
22 time would have been 0134.

23 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

24 BY CDR MESKUN:

25 Q. Is anything significant going through your mind now, at this

1 point?

2 A. Yeah. I mean, at that point in time I was just concerned  
3 about not hitting on the sides, you know. I didn't figure the top  
4 was a issue.

5 Q. Okay.

6 CDR MESKUN: Can you advance to minute 26:30?

7 This is roughly when you're abeam of the Nedra Kay, and the  
8 local time is 0140. And we'll let this video play out. At about  
9 minute 27:45 is when the allision occurred.

10 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

11 BY CDR MESKUN:

12 Q. Do you know what that vector line is coming off the center of  
13 the Kristin Alexis?

14 The arrow pointing, is that representative of your speed and  
15 direction?

16 A. Hold on. You said the line coming off the side where the  
17 writing is?

18 Q. No, forward, up river.

19 A. The line that's pointing straight up? Yeah, that represents  
20 the speed.

21 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

22 BY CDR MESKUN:

23 Q. It appears right around this time is when the tow stopped.  
24 Did you make any radio transmissions, or what happened now, after  
25 the crane got stuck?

1 A. I got with Traffic and notified them of the situation.

2 Q. Did you make any other phone calls?

3 A. Yes. I called the Coast Guard, and I also called the port  
4 captain.

5 CDR MESKUN: If you advance to minute 31:20, there's a  
6 broadcast that was made at 0145 local time.

7 (Whereupon, a further portion of Exhibit 55 was played.)

8 BY CDR MESKUN:

9 Q. Okay, and we will now shift over to Exhibit 54, IO Exhibit  
10 54, which is -- this may be a little bit more familiar of a view  
11 for you. It's probably what you saw when you were looking at the  
12 Rose Point image.

13 CDR MESKUN: Can you advance to minute 50?

14 BY CDR MESKUN:

15 Q. This also was 0123 local time on the morning of the 12th.  
16 This was when the vessel is right around Mile Marker 166. Would  
17 you characterize this as the center of the channel at this point  
18 in time, or are you still considering this to be like a western  
19 side -- are you hugging the bank?

20 A. I was still on the western side of the river at that time. I  
21 mean, I was probably, you know, lined up in the middle of that  
22 alternate channel at that time.

23 Q. Okay. Does this look like the Rose Point image you had  
24 onboard?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Can you describe what we're seeing on the right-hand side of  
2 the screen? What do these different numbers mean?

3 A. It's just, you know, your miles per hour. You've got your  
4 degrees, longitude and latitude, different boats you're going to  
5 be passing and meeting, and your mile, you know, your mile marker  
6 where you are, and your miles per hour.

7 Q. So, what would you say the speed is that you're making right  
8 now?

9 A. About 4 knots.

10 Q. And then what is the gauge? There's like a gauge there.  
11 What is that?

12 A. Towing meter.

13 Q. That's the electronic swing meter?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. And then on the bottom right-hand corner, what is in  
16 the information display there?

17 A. The ASI logistics.

18 Q. Of, like, other vessels?

19 A. Of the other vessels, yeah.

20 Q. Information of other vessels?

21 A. Right.

22 CDR MESKUN: Can you advance to minute 58?

23 BY CDR MESKUN:

24 Q. This also is 0132 local time. This is when the  
25 communications with the Nedra Kay took place. Is that that other

1 pier that we were referencing before? Is there a ship at the  
2 pier?

3 A. No, it wasn't. I don't recall anything being there.

4 Q. Because we don't have the vantage point that you had of  
5 looking out the window, how much other traffic density was there?  
6 Were there other boats, other fleet boats working different  
7 fleets?

8 A. I mean, if my memory serves correct, I think there was one  
9 boat that was shoved in on the bank at that time, on the west  
10 bank.

11 Q. In that vicinity where we're talking?

12 A. Yes.

13 CDR MESKUN: Can you advance to minute 105?

14 BY CDR MESKUN:

15 Q. This is 1 mile further up the river, Mile Marker 167, as  
16 previously discussed, at 0134 local time. Would you consider  
17 yourself pretty far to the left side, to the west bank, as well?

18 A. Well, approaching the bridge, my deckhands told me I was  
19 lined up on the green.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And I was center at one point in time.

22 Q. So at this point in time, can you see the bridge?

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. Out the window?

25 A. Oh, yes, yes. Yeah, out the window, yes, I can see the



1 bridge.

2 Q. And you --

3 A. I was lining up on the green until I approached it, but, you  
4 know, by my window being short, you know, I cheated over a little  
5 bit, trusting my own eye, you know, knowing at least I'm good on  
6 my starboard side by my deckhands talking to me.

7 Q. And at this point you did have deckhands out on the bow?

8 A. Yes, I had one on the head of each. I had one on the port  
9 side and one on the starboard.

10 Q. And they were serving as lookouts, calling off distances?

11 A. Yes.

12 CDR MESKUN: And then can we advance to minute 110?

13 BY CDR MESKUN:

14 Q. This is 0140 local time. This is when the Nedra Kay is  
15 approaching. Can you describe to us, what is that yellow line  
16 across the river, that spans across the river?

17 A. That's the bridge.

18 Q. I'm sorry, immediately where the bow of your barge is.

19 A. The bow? Oh, that's the line far as the other boat, you  
20 know, the other boat goes.

21 Q. So is that describing how close it's going to be and where  
22 you're going to meet it?

23 A. No, it's just letting me know the speed.

24 Q. Okay. Immediately to your port and starboard, the chart  
25 indicates the number 1 and an A. What are those? They're yellow

1 in color.

2 A. Where are they located?

3 (Pause.)

4 I mean, if I had to guess -- I don't know for sure. I would  
5 say those are buoys.

6 Q. Okay. Do you remember seeing any buoys on the river that  
7 night?

8 A. Yeah. I mean, they were on the upside. I remember the ones  
9 on the upside of the bridge, on the northern side.

10 Q. Okay. If we can just play this out for a few more seconds,  
11 you'll see the speed drop off.

12 (Pause.)

13 And it looks like that is right around the time when the  
14 barge got stuck underneath the bridge.

15 CDR MESKUN: So, can we maybe drop back just a couple  
16 minutes, maybe minute 112?

17 Go back to 110.

18 BY CDR MESKUN:

19 Q. At any point in time, did you seek to find out what the  
20 bridge clearance was by using Rose Point?

21 A. I don't even know if there's a way you can find out on the  
22 Rose Point. Other than, you know, at the bridge it has the  
23 numbers.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Right? In each span, they have a number where it's like I

1 said, in the alternate the number was 132.9, and in the main it  
2 was 133.

3 Q. Can you see that on the Rose Point display there now?

4 A. I see a number in the alternate. I don't know what it is.  
5 But, you know, I can see a number there.

6 CDR MESKUN: Can you zoom in on that?

7 No?

8 BY CDR MESKUN:

9 Q. Does that read 132.9?

10 So that number is automatically displayed on that bridge  
11 span? Is that what you're indicating?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay.

14 CDR MESKUN: Mr. [REDACTED] or Mr. Kucharski, do you have any  
15 questions specifically while we have the video up?

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Just a quick question.

17 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

18 Q. Are you saying that the two different spans, the two  
19 different channels, there's different numbers on Rose Point for  
20 them? One was 132-9 and one was 133?

21 A. Yes.

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: Does that show on the video?

23 CDR MESKUN: No, it does not.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Then we'll take this offline. Okay, thanks.

25 BY MR. [REDACTED]

1 Q. Do you know what the display that is displayed, do you know  
2 where Rose Point gets that input, what you're actually looking at  
3 as far as, like, the bridge and the information on the bridge?

4 A. You're asking me what is the point of it?

5 Q. No, no, what that -- so is that like a map or a chart from  
6 something?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Do you know what chart it is?

9 A. I mean, it's the Mississippi River.

10 Q. It's the Mississippi River. Do you know who makes or designs  
11 the chart?

12 A. Oh, no. No, I don't.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, and I'll follow up later offline.

14 CDR MESKUN: Okay, that's all the questions I have for these  
15 two exhibits at this time. I'll turn it over to Mr. [REDACTED] for  
16 more questions.

17 BY MR. [REDACTED]

18 Q. Okay. So we just saw the video of your approach, and we kind  
19 of discussed the video. The time you made contact with the Nedra  
20 Kay, can you walk us back through the approach to the bridge? And  
21 be descriptive in detail. Where was your focus? What were your  
22 deckhands doing?

23 A. I mean, upon my approach, my main concern was not hitting,  
24 you know, the two piers on the side, you know. That was the only  
25 thing at the time that I thought, you know, was an issue, you

1 know. And I mean, I took those steps in order to prevent that  
2 from happening.

3 And I mean, they were talking me down the whole time. I  
4 mean, like I said, Blaise was on my starboard side, which was my  
5 main concern, you know. And by him having so much experience, I  
6 would rather him on that side that I couldn't see. And I mean, I  
7 was center, you know, I was center of the bridge at one time,  
8 because he told me I was lined up on the green.

9 But as I got closer, my window got smaller. So like I said,  
10 I cheated to that west side because I figured, you know, this is  
11 the side that I can see. You know, I know I'm far enough off of  
12 this side, so I should be far enough off of my starboard side.

13 Q. So about how far before you got to the bridge did your  
14 deckhands go out, or did you send the deckhands out?

15 A. I sent them out at least before we got to that dock.

16 Q. Okay. How far do you think that was, a mile and a half, 2  
17 miles?

18 A. Probably a half a -- between a half a mile and a mile.

19 Q. And you said at one point you were positioned center on the  
20 channel. About how far away from the bridge were you that the  
21 deckhand reported that you were getting left of the channel?

22 A. I want to say probably about 3 to 400 feet.

23 Q. Did you take into consideration the crane height at this  
24 point? Now that you know you're taking the alternate span, did  
25 you think about the crane height and the bridge height and the air

1 gap between the two?

2 A. I went off of, you know -- in this situation, like I said, I  
3 went off of prior experiences. It said 132.9. I haven't known  
4 those cranes to be over 130 feet, the ones that I pushed before.  
5 So I knew I had at least 132.9 feet of clearance.

6 Q. Okay. Then on the chart -- now, this is obviously different  
7 than the chart we looked at earlier.

8 A. Right.

9 MR. [REDACTED] And so the audience knows, this is a NOAA chart  
10 that the Rose Point is representing.

11 BY MR. [REDACTED]

12 Q. You've had training on how to read NOAA charts?

13 A. I mean, the different tools you see on the side, I've been,  
14 you know, shown and told what those are for and what they actually  
15 do, you know, and how to change from, like, day to night, you  
16 know, different things. So I've been prepped on it.

17 Q. So, would the river level make a difference to this chart?

18 A. Yes. Yes. And that's what I didn't take in consideration.

19 Q. You did take that into consideration?

20 A. The river stage I didn't take that into consideration.

21 Q. Oh, you didn't. Can you describe the training that you've  
22 had on reading charts and navigating?

23 A. Well, the charts, they go over the charts with us at school.

24 Q. Can you describe what schools you've been to?

25 A. Griffs Marine.

1 Q. Griffs? And the names of those courses you took?

2 A. I took a radar course and I took the 3-week class, you know,  
3 with navigating and deck general, you know, how to plot on a  
4 chart, things of that sort.

5 Q. Did they ever teach you how to calculate air gap on bridges?

6 A. Yes, they taught me in the class, and my captain that trained  
7 me taught me, also.

8 Q. Did they teach you anything about Rose Point and how to use  
9 it?

10 A. No, that's not a specific thing they go over with us in  
11 class.

12 Q. What type of charts did they teach you on? Did they teach  
13 you on the NOAA (indiscernible) --

14 A. The NOAA charts.

15 Q. On the NOAA charts? Did they teach you anything about the  
16 Army Corps of Engineers charts?

17 A. I can't remember.

18 Q. Do you know of there being any differences between the NOAA  
19 chart and the Corps of Engineers charts in the way of bridges?

20 A. They're all pretty, you know, pretty even, it's just  
21 different charts.

22 Q. Okay. Do you recall earlier when we had an exhibit up and it  
23 was the Corps of Engineers charts what it said the height was?

24 A. Earlier?

25 Q. Yeah, we looked at a chart. It was a (indiscernible) side

1 view of a chart and it talked about -- had a little legend with  
2 the vertical and horizontal clearances.

3 A. You're talking about the chart with just the bridge itself?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you recall what the number was for the --

7 A. 171.

8 Q. That was the main span. (Indiscernible) remember that.

9 A. 111 for the alternate.

10 Q. Well, that was minus the what gauge?

11 A. The river stage.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. So those numbers, those numbers are considering the river  
14 stage or that's the initial number?

15 Q. Well, on this chart, you take the river stage and you  
16 subtract it from the height, or it tells you at flood level what  
17 your minimal clearance would be. But the NOAA chart doesn't have  
18 anything like this.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. So I'm asking how you were taught to figure out the air gap  
21 off of the NOAA chart.

22 A. It's the initial number, which is at dead water, minus the  
23 river stage.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And I mean, that chart, I mean, is that chart, like, spot on?



1 Because the one that I have is different.

2 Q. The one that you have is a NOAA chart.

3 A. No, it's a Corps of Engineers chart, if I'm not mistaken.

4 Because my numbers have 168. I don't have it in here. I have it  
5 in my truck.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. But it's 168 for the, you know, for the main span.

8 Q. So I just want to make sure that I got this, though. Going  
9 back to the Rose Point, which was displaying the NOAA chart, and  
10 NOAA charts -- because you were trained on NOAA charts at Griffs,  
11 correct?

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Okay. When you see the -- how were you trained, when you see  
14 the number on the bridge, how were you trained to treat the river  
15 gauge level?

16 A. Subtract.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Let me have just a second.

18 (Pause.)

19 BY MR. [REDACTED]

20 Q. Had you ever transited the alternate span on that bridge  
21 before?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. With a crane?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. How many times?

1 A. At least 10 times, minimal. I mean maximum. I'm sorry.

2 Q. Through the alternate span?

3 A. Yes. But it was low river.

4 Q. Was it with the Kristin Alexis or other vessels?

5 A. No, other vessels.

6 Q. Was it while working for Marquette?

7 A. Once. And I want to say that was the Bob Crane crane.

8 Q. Were you aware of any incidents or accidents on the river  
9 that were involving cranes and bridge that recently happened?

10 A. No, sir.

11 MR. [REDACTED] I think from here I'm going to start  
12 (indiscernible) questions. Do you have anything else about the  
13 actual allision?

14 (Off microphone comments.)

15 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

16 Q. Captain, you said that you used the west span before, towing  
17 other crane barges.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What was the river gauge, what was the actual gauge readings?  
20 Did you take gauge readings to determine if you could make it  
21 under that time?

22 A. I don't remember the actual river stage. I mean, I know it  
23 was during the season of low -- you know, it wasn't during the  
24 season of high river.

25 Q. It was not. Okay. Have you towed other crane barges or

1 derrick barges or, like, hopper barges, they're quite tall barges,  
2 pushed them ahead where visibility was a problem?

3 A. When pushing cranes, visibility is always a problem.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]

6 Q. Can you tell us if Marquette had policies or procedures for  
7 making transits?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did any of those policies or procedures cover bridges?

10 A. Yes, there's one that's labeled as bridge transit.

11 Q. Did you fill out any policies or procedures on that evening  
12 for the transit?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. Do you know if Captain Smith did?

15 A. I don't think so.

16 MR. [REDACTED] I don't have it. What's the exhibit number for  
17 the voyage plan?

18 (Off microphone comments.)

19 THE WITNESS: The only thing that I'm aware that he filled  
20 out was the voyage plan, and that was the short voyage plan. And  
21 we have two voyage plans that we were supposed to fill out.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Mr. [REDACTED] you have it? Okay, there we go.

23 BY MR. [REDACTED]

24 Q. So, when would this get filled out?

25 A. Prior to us getting underway.

1 Q. Okay. Did you look at it?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. To make sure it was done?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Did you and Mr. Smith discuss it at all?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay. On the block 4, what's it say?

8 A. "Air draft under carriage on the (indiscernible) clearance."  
9 Which would -- that's the draft on the boat, basically.

10 Q. That is the boat. If you're towing something that's taller  
11 than the boat --

12 A. That, you're supposed to put the maximum air draft, meaning  
13 the highest point.

14 Q. When you reviewed this while taking the watch, did that, did  
15 it seem --

16 A. Yeah, I mean, it seemed kind of off, you know. But honestly,  
17 you know, everything, with everything going on at the time, I kind  
18 of overlooked it.

19 Q. While this evolution was going on, did you think about any of  
20 the policies or procedures that Marquette had that you could have  
21 utilized?

22 A. I mean, the ones pertaining to this situation, yeah. I mean,  
23 honestly, you know, Marquette has a lot of policies and  
24 procedures. You know, some of them I'm quite knowledged on, and a  
25 lot of them I'm not, you know. By that being my third week, you

1 know, each day I would take time out to, you know, kind of bring  
2 myself up to speed and be knowledgeable of those different  
3 policies and procedures. But at the time, it wasn't a whole lot  
4 that I was, you know, fond of, basically.

5 Q. Okay. When you were approaching the bridge, if you would  
6 have subtracted the -- I'm backing up a little bit, too. If you  
7 would have subtracted the gauge level from the chart and realized  
8 that the 130, which was incorrect, was higher than the actual  
9 bridge level, what would you have done?

10 A. I would have stopped.

11 Q. Would have stopped? Where?

12 A. I would have found, you know, I would have found the best,  
13 you know, suitable place for me to stop. I wouldn't have just  
14 stopped, you know, anywhere.

15 Q. Was there any places you could have stopped?

16 A. I could have hit the bank. Honestly, I wouldn't have took  
17 over had I, you know, did that formula. I would have overruled,  
18 you know, his decision.

19 Q. Before any of the times that you pushed a crane, did you ever  
20 calculate the bridge -- the river gauge level?

21 A. I always, you know, I always went with the number. Once I  
22 got the number from, you know, the operators or, you know, a  
23 person in charge, yes, I would calculate it.

24 Q. So, can you ever recall asking somebody for the height of the  
25 crane? Because you mentioned you thought they were all 130. Do

1 you recall how you got that number?

2 A. Which one are you referring to?

3 Q. When you thought the ones were about 130.

4 A. I got that from, you know, the workers that were on the  
5 barge.

6 Q. Which workers? What company employed the workers?

7 A. Well, I've pushed Cooper cranes, I've pushed Associated  
8 cranes. So, you know, whoever's in charge of that particular  
9 barge at the time, I would get that information from them.

10 Q. Okay. You've said you pushed maybe 10 times the cranes  
11 through the Sunshine Bridge. Did you ever talk to one of the  
12 people working on the barge to get the number that you were using?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. For Cooper?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you remember about when, a week before, month before?

17 A. No, it was that actual day.

18 Q. It was that day?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You had talked to somebody?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Do you remember about what time?

23 A. Not in this situation you're talking about. You're talking  
24 about in previous situations, right?

25 Q. Yeah. Okay, to make clear, you're talking about before when

1 you had pushed it.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. You had asked a Cooper employee and the number they gave you  
4 was -- what was (indiscernible) --

5 A. That was the number I would go off of.

6 Q. And what was the number?

7 A. I mean, 133, 132, 135. It was different numbers.

8 Q. Different numbers. Okay. And you just -- on this day, you  
9 were going off of 130?

10 A. I would say, yeah, 133, that's the number I had in my mind.

11 Q. 133? Do you recall if Marquette had any policies on air gap?

12 A. No, I don't recall.

13 Q. On bridges?

14 A. Air draft, no, I don't recall.

15 Q. So you don't know if they had like -- you don't know of a  
16 policy that required safety margins?

17 A. In reference to?

18 Q. Like how much -- a minimum amount of clearance you had to  
19 have.

20 A. No.

21 Q. How would you describe the safety culture at Marquette?

22 A. Well, every watch we have to fill out a GSB form. You know,  
23 it ranges from, you know, deckhand experience, weather, you know,  
24 and the final number, you have different colors it falls in  
25 between. I think it's, like, three different colors to determine,

1 you know, if -- yeah, that's it right there. Yep.

2 Q. So, was it -- the colors, is that assessment called  
3 something?

4 A. It's just a -- it's like levels, different levels of risk.

5 Q. Okay. So, did you fill out this form?

6 A. I don't fill them out, my deckhands fill them out. We go  
7 over them together.

8 Q. So, do you recall this form getting completed?

9 A. Yes, I do.

10 Q. And would you describe what happened, or how you and your  
11 deckhands --

12 A. Just, you know, we take the situation, you know, that's about  
13 to take place and we basically asses it. You know, like,  
14 different situations, you know, what's the number or where, you  
15 know, where it falls. You know, like visibility wise, you know,  
16 deckhand experience, you know, if you got a green guy, you've got  
17 experience, you know, you kind of level them off. Okay. So, in  
18 that situation, you would say, you know, far as the deckhands that  
19 I had, I had one green guy and one experienced. We kind of  
20 rounded it off at five, basically.

21 Q. Okay. What other things did you discuss when you were  
22 putting a score on this?

23 A. We talked about, you know, upon approaching the bridge, you  
24 know, what measures we're going to take, you know; send my guys  
25 out there, I need you all to be clear, talk to me, you know; so



1 many amount of feet, things like that, you know.

2 Q. So is there anything you should have done if you were in the  
3 amber?

4 A. I know it's something that I'm supposed to do if I'm in the  
5 red. I don't know about the amber.

6 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] can you go to the bottom and zoom in on  
7 it?

8 BY MR. [REDACTED]

9 Q. Can you read that?

10 A. In the green, low risk notification. Sections notification  
11 to the duty port captain is required.

12 Q. Have you ever seen or heard of that policy before?

13 A. Yeah, I've seen and heard of it before. That's why I said,  
14 the red, you know, I know it's a caution area and we're supposed  
15 to notify, you know, the port captain. I didn't think it was for  
16 the amber. I knew it was for the red.

17 Q. You knew it was for the red?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. By reading that, when you just read it, how did you interpret  
20 it?

21 A. I don't -- I mean, what I just read, honestly, I don't even  
22 understand that one. If your total risk -- it's -- I can't see  
23 all the words.

24 Q. Yeah, it is kind of poor. "If the total risk score is not  
25 within the green (low risk), section notification to the port

1 captain is required." So now that I've read it with all the  
2 words --

3 A. Anything other than the green, someone was supposed to be  
4 notified.

5 Q. Did you get any training on --

6 A. What that meant?

7 Q. -- on their GAR Model safety assessment?

8 A. No.

9 Q. How did you learn what to do and how to do it?

10 A. Just basically I took it upon myself to, you know, figure it  
11 out the best way I can.

12 Q. What do you think would have happened if you'd have called  
13 the port captain?

14 A. The situation probably wouldn't have happened.

15 Q. Had the port captain ever talked to you or the crew about  
16 bridge transits?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Thinking back to what policies and procedures they had, if  
19 you'd have used them, do you think the casualty would have  
20 happened?

21 A. Most policies and procedures that Marquette have, you know,  
22 it's up to the captain to foresee that those policies and  
23 procedures are performed, you know, to the exact extent, you know.

24 Q. Can you name a few of the policies and procedures you're  
25 talking about?

1 A. Like the ones pertaining to the situation, you know, like  
2 bridge transit and, you know, stop work authority, you know.  
3 Which everyone has, you know, authority to do so, but you have to,  
4 you know, pass it along with him, also. But that bridge transit,  
5 you know, if my memory serves me correctly, you know, it's up to  
6 the captain, you know, the lead captain on the boat to make sure  
7 that that's foreseen proper.

8 Q. So you mentioned the stop work authority. Do you feel that  
9 if you tried to use it that you would be pressured to perform a  
10 task anyway?

11 A. Honestly, you know, what was going through my mind at the  
12 time, you know, I had just started with this company, you know,  
13 and I didn't, you know, I didn't basically want to be a burden or  
14 cause confusion. Honestly.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Any other questions? I think I'm about done.  
16 Yeah, I know Mike --

17 BY CDR MESKUN:

18 Q. Hey, Captain. I've got a few from throughout the morning. I  
19 just want to touch base on a few different things, so I might be  
20 bouncing around a little bit. Did you feel like the Kristin  
21 Alexis had enough horsepower to handle and maneuver the Mr. Ervin?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. Were you comfortable taking over the watch from  
24 Captain Smith that night?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Even given the visibility concerns and whatnot?

2 A. Yes, because I've done it before, you know. That wasn't the  
3 first time that I was in this situation, pushing a crane barge, so  
4 I felt, you know, quite confident.

5 Q. And I think you testified to this earlier, but I just want to  
6 make sure I'm accurate. How many cranes have you pushed?

7 A. I pushed a lot. You know, I can give you a ballpark number,  
8 you know. Like I said, maybe 15 to 20 times, total.

9 Q. And those are different cranes?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. Not just the Mr. Ervin?

12 A. No, that was my first time ever pushing -- you know, I've  
13 pushed other Cooper cranes, but nothing in the area, you know, of  
14 how high that one is.

15 Q. And roughly how many of those were under a bridge?

16 A. I want to say I went through bridges with cranes maybe 5 to  
17 10 times, maybe.

18 Q. And how many of those were the Sunshine Bridge?

19 A. Prior to that, I want to say no more than five.

20 Q. And I think I heard earlier you said that some of those crane  
21 moves were under an alternate span. Was that correct?

22 A. Yes. I went through the alternate span a bunch of times.

23 Q. And you indicated that was during a period of low water?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. I'm trying to think how I want to work this question

1 here. So Cooper has the Mr. Ervin and it's a valuable resource  
2 for them, and it's not going anywhere, and it's designed the way  
3 it is, and you can't really change the way that it's designed.  
4 And my purpose here is to prevent this casualty from happening  
5 again, right? How can that barge be safely moved? Can you safely  
6 move that barge with just one towing vessel? How is the next crew  
7 supposed to move this boat and have it be safe? You can't change  
8 the visibility concern you have --

9 A. Right.

10 Q. -- being configured the way that you were.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Is there a safe way of moving this barge?

13 A. I don't quite understand, you know. In what aspect are you  
14 talking about?

15 Q. How should Cooper or the next tow boat that moves the  
16 Mr. Ervin, how should they be configured?

17 A. Be more aware of what they're dealing with, basically?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. What can be -- you're asking me what can be done to try to  
20 prevent? Well, I mean, like I said, I put a lot of thought into  
21 it, you know, since it happened and, I mean, to be exact versus,  
22 you know, taking word of mouth. You know, it would, you know,  
23 probably help if the air draft was welded or painted on the cabin,  
24 on the back of it, you know, to where, you know, when the boat  
25 faces up, I mean, it's right there in front of you. You know,

1 they'll know for sure that that's, you know, that's the draft on  
2 the crane versus, you know, I mean, taking word of mouth.

3 Because, I mean, that can go either way. You know, it can be  
4 right, then again, you know, it might not be right. But if it's  
5 stamped on there, you know, we would know for sure.

6 Q. Okay. At one point in time, you indicated earlier this  
7 morning, that you have exercised the stop work authority before;  
8 is that correct?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Can you describe the situation?

11 A. I mean, it wasn't, you know, it wasn't nothing far as, you  
12 know, pushing a crane goes, but a couple of times I had barges,  
13 you know, that were taking on water. You know, they had water in  
14 the tanks and I would get my hands to check, you know, to make  
15 sure it's not just water that's been sitting in it or if they  
16 could hear, you know, water coming in. So I didn't want to be  
17 responsible, you know, for taking a barge and it sinking on me.

18 Q. Putting yourself in the position as the pilot, if you had  
19 exercised the stop work authority, would you have had any fear  
20 that you would be punished or whatnot by the Company?

21 A. It was on my mind. It was.

22 Q. Do you think you would have been fired if you stopped?

23 A. I'm not going to say fired, you know, it's just by me jut  
24 getting there, you know, and people taking a chance with me, you  
25 know, I didn't want to be the one, you know, to do things

1 different or cause any, you know, type of havoc, basically.

2 Q. When you got hired on by Marquette, did they provide you any  
3 training, like company training?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Did they give you any card that you could carry in your  
6 wallet that had stop work authority?

7 A. They gave me a bunch of things, you know. If I can remember,  
8 I did get a card that was laminated, you know, with different  
9 rules that they have.

10 Q. Okay. Were you aware of any safety alerts that the Coast  
11 Guard issued specifically pertaining to air draft?

12 A. Come again?

13 Q. So, did you know, did the Coast Guard issue any alerts to  
14 mariners and to industry about the critical nature of calculating  
15 bridge clearances and air draft?

16 A. I don't understand what you're asking me.

17 Q. Okay. That's fine.

18 A. I really don't.

19 Q. Okay. Thank you. And just one more question to clarify.  
20 This may have been discussed, but it wasn't clear in my mind.

21 When you relieved the watch with Captain Smith, did he provide you  
22 or have any discussion with you specifically pertaining to the  
23 short voyage plan that was created?

24 A. No. I just know it's something that we're supposed to filled  
25 out. And I looked for it and I seen that he had done it, but we

1 didn't go over it.

2 Q. Okay. You indicated that you had your own personal copy of  
3 Rose Point, your own program; is that true?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And you've used that on boats before, in the past?

6 A. Yes. I mean, all boats doesn't have that software. I mean,  
7 it's a pivotal, you know, source of information, so it's a disc  
8 that I have, of software that I bought. So, when I'm on a boat  
9 that doesn't have it, you know, I use it.

10 Q. One question pertaining to that software: When you use your  
11 own system like that, do you have an ability to have the GPS or  
12 AIS inputs into your computer so it tracks along with you?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Were there levies on the Mississippi River in the  
15 vicinity of where this transit occurred?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Were both banks lined with levies?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you know what revetment is?

20 A. Revetment? No.

21 Q. Okay. So you were not aware if there's any revetment along  
22 that stretch of the river?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Do you know, is it a violation of any Army Corps laws  
25 to push up on any of those types of embankments?



1 A. I mean, that's something that was on my mind, also. You  
2 know, I thought, you know, had I pushed up on the bank with the  
3 rocks, you know, because it's -- on the west bank, there's a bunch  
4 of rocks that's lined up, you know. And I kind of put that in my  
5 mind, also. You know, had I just done, you know, that would have  
6 been something else I probably would have had to deal with.

7 Q. So if you would have pushed up on the bank to hold up, could  
8 that have caused damage to the barge?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Could that have caused damage to the bank?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And one last question: While you were approaching the  
13 bridge, did you ever try an attempt to look up, to look at the  
14 structure of the crane in relation to the bridge?

15 A. Yes. When I first came up, I looked out the door and looked  
16 up at it.

17 Q. From the position where you were at, if you had looked up to  
18 see where the structure of the crane was in relation to the  
19 bridge, do you think you could have been able to tell if you were  
20 going to make contact?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay.

23 CDR MESKUN: That's all the questions I have. I'll turn it  
24 over to Mr. Kucharski.

25 (Off microphone comments.)

1 CDR MESKUN: Yes, we'll take a recess. The time is now 10:23  
2 and we'll recess for --

3 What do you want, 10 minutes, 15 minutes?

4 (Off microphone comments.)

5 CDR MESKUN: Fifteen minutes. We're now off the record.

6 (Off the record at 10:23 a.m.)

7 (On the record at 10:40 a.m.)

8 CDR MESKUN: It is now 10:40. We're back on the record.

9 And I will turn the floor over to Mr. Kucharski for some  
10 questions.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you, Commander Meskun.

12 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

13 Q. Captain Picquet, just to be clear, on the pre-arrival and  
14 vessel voyage plan, that short form?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You did view that before you actually took over the watch?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. You said you didn't ask any questions about it, you just  
19 looked at the form, correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. How long did you sail with Marquette as a pilot?

22 A. Three weeks.

23 Q. Three weeks. Okay. Have you ever filled out one of these  
24 short voyage forms?

25 A. Every time I come on watch and we have a -- to leave from one

1 fleet to the next, we have to. It's mandatory that we fill out  
2 those forms.

3 Q. Great. And were any of those for crane barges that you can  
4 recollect in the 3 weeks?

5 A. The ones that I did?

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. No, they were never pertaining to a crane barge.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: [REDACTED] can we pull up Exhibit 47? And we can  
9 go right to page 13.

10 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

11 Q. Captain, I think you were asked questions on this before, but  
12 in my own mind, what's a GAR, G-A-R? It says job safety  
13 briefing/GAR.

14 A. Yeah, JSB, job safety briefing.

15 Q. And do you know what the G-A-R stands for?

16 A. No, I don't.

17 Q. Okay. You mentioned your crew did the job safety analysis,  
18 is that correct, and then you --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- you had a briefing of it, did you?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And that was before you took the crane barge --

23 A. Before we go on watch.

24 Q. Okay. And what about the safety huddle, what is that?

25 A. The safety huddle, we go over it -- well, the safety meeting

1 we go over every day at 12 o'clock, noon. Because you've got a  
2 crew getting off and you have a crew coming on, so everyone's up.  
3 We do those once a day.

4 Q. Once a week or once a day?

5 A. Once a day.

6 Q. Once a day. Okay. And go down to the bottom of the form  
7 where it says Comments, it says, "Was northbound and got stuck  
8 under bridge on center span." Is that incorrect?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. But you did fill out this form, yes?

11 A. Yes, I filled out the top part. I don't remember me putting  
12 it at the bottom.

13 Q. Okay. Well, if you don't remember, you don't remember.

14 A. Yeah, I don't think I did that.

15 Q. Okay. Do you know what river gauge provided information if  
16 you had to compute the vertical clearance on those spans, either  
17 the channel span or the west span?

18 A. Could you repeat that again?

19 Q. Yeah, do you know what river gauge -- we've talked about the  
20 river gauges.

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Do you know which one it was for those spans there, for that  
23 bridge?

24 A. At the time?

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. The river stage was 18 feet.

2 Q. Okay. And where did you get that information from?

3 A. I found that out after.

4 Q. Okay. So --

5 A. I have a number you can call to get the river stage.

6 Q. There's a number you can call to get the river gauge number,  
7 the actual value of it?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Have you ever called the river gauge number for that bridge?

10 A. Before, yes.

11 Q. You have. You've called that --

12 A. Not that time.

13 Q. So you've done this before for other bridges? You've  
14 actually gotten the number of feet by calling?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Okay. And I want to be clear, also, I think Commander Meskun  
17 asked you, if you had known the exact air draft of the Mr. Ervin,  
18 you would have done something differently, correct?

19 A. I would have calculated it, you know, and I would have known  
20 if I would be able to pass or not.

21 Q. Okay. Would you have taken that barge through that,  
22 underneath that bridge if you had had that air draft?

23 A. If I was able to clear, yes.

24 Q. I'm sorry?

25 A. If I was able to clear, yes.

1 Q. If you were able to clear. Well, that's what we want to  
2 determine, understand the -- I think you said that was 133 feet,  
3 and then you subtract the gauge, right?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. So 130 feet minus 15 --

6 A. That's not the right number, though.

7 Q. Okay. So let me ask the question again. If you had known  
8 the height of the -- you know, the air draft --

9 A. Right.

10 Q. -- of the Mr. Ervin --

11 A. Right.

12 Q. -- could you have taken that barge underneath that bridge,  
13 one way, shape or form, west side, the channel span, could you  
14 have taken it through there?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. How would you determine that?

17 A. You subtract the river -- the 18 feet. All right, the center  
18 span is 168 at dead water, all right? The river stage at the  
19 time, 18 feet. You would subtract 18 from 168, which leaves you  
20 150.

21 Q. And where did you get the 168 from?

22 A. Off of forms that I've gotten since then.

23 Q. Forms since then. Okay. Okay. But back when you were  
24 actually navigating that, you didn't have those forms at the time?

25 A. No, I didn't have that information.

1 Q. So all you had to go on -- I think Mr. [REDACTED] asked you how  
2 you actually calculate the vertical clearance. You said you take  
3 the NOAA chart 133, you take whatever the NOAA chart is and  
4 subtract the river gauge?

5 A. Well, at that time, with that Rose Point, I thought 133 was  
6 the actual clearance, you know, not taking -- not subtracting the  
7 river stage from that number. I thought that that was the final  
8 number.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. 133.

11 Q. But you know the river changes, the level does?

12 A. Yes. Yes.

13 Q. You know. Yeah. Okay.

14 A. Like I said, I didn't take the river stage into  
15 consideration. I just, you know, I assumed, I figured, you know,  
16 the captain of the boat took the barge, everything was fine for me  
17 to continue my voyage.

18 Q. Just a point of clarification, you said you had your own Rose  
19 Point, correct?

20 A. I have it, yes. I didn't have it at the time because --

21 Q. You didn't. Okay.

22 A. -- Marquette has that software on the boat. I only use my  
23 own when I go on a boat that doesn't have one.

24 Q. So at the accident voyage, you were using the Marquette  
25 provided -- what was on the Kristin Alexis?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: Could we -- I know we can't pull up the  
4 exhibit, but I understand the parties have the -- your interview,  
5 a copy of the interview; is that correct?

6 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

7 Q. And does Mr. Picquet have a copy of it?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. You do. Okay. Could you go to page -- I'm sorry to beat you  
10 up on this, I really do [sic], but I just --

11 A. No problem, man.

12 Q. We've had some testimony yesterday and maybe I'm just the one  
13 that's confused, okay? But go to page 44, line 25, please.  
14 Actually, go to line 24, okay?

15 A. 45?

16 Q. Page 44, line 24.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. And you can look at 25. And take a little time to review  
19 that, if you want. Or if you're ready to go, I'll ask you the  
20 question. Okay. The question was asked, "Okay. And why did you  
21 choose to go westbound on this?" And your answer was, "Because I  
22 had a southbounder taking the main span." Okay?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Then the next question, or further down -- oh, no, it says,  
25 "Okay. Why didn't you use the east?" "Because I would have had



1 to cross in front of him. I just stood on my side." So, you  
2 know, I won't ask this again, I just need to be clear. I think  
3 you -- and in all fairness, I should continue a little bit further  
4 down. At line 6 it says, "I'm on that side because that's the  
5 only side I could see on." Okay.

6 A. Right.

7 Q. But earlier, you said you took the west span because of the  
8 traffic, because of the southbounder taking the main span, so --

9 A. It was two reasons. It was because he was southbound, he had  
10 the right of way, and it was because that was the only side I  
11 could see on.

12 Q. Okay. So the traffic did play into your decision to use  
13 the --

14 A. The west span, yeah.

15 Q. The westbound. Okay. Okay. That cleared it up. Sorry  
16 again. It was just I was really confused with yesterday and then  
17 reading this.

18 A. That's no problem. That's no problem.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. That's the end of my questions. Thank  
20 you.

21 BY CDR MESKUN:

22 Q. I just have one quick line of thought to go over before we  
23 pass it on to the parties for their questioning. Can you, I  
24 guess, briefly explain the difference between your relationship  
25 between you and the captain? Like, what are your roles versus his

1 responsibility? You know, as a pilot, do you have -- what are the  
2 differences in responsibilities?

3 A. I mean, the captain is the general, basically, you know. I  
4 have to, you know, yield to him. You know, he's my boss at the  
5 time. I mean, as a pilot, you know, the only responsibility you  
6 really have is to run the boat, run the boat and make sure, you  
7 know, your crew is safe. But, I mean, with the captain, you  
8 know -- and a lot of people don't realize that, which, you know,  
9 in my career at this point, you know, I'm not ready to take on  
10 that responsibility because it's a big responsibility. Like, you  
11 know, other people can do things, you know, and it falls back on  
12 you because, you know, you're supposed to make sure that all those  
13 I's are dotted and those T's are crossed.

14 Q. Okay. And you had previously said under -- you were  
15 basically running under some assumptions after the watch relief  
16 that basically you -- and I'm paraphrasing from what you  
17 previously said -- you had assumed you were good to go, to proceed  
18 further upbound, right? And what were some of your assumptions?

19 A. Well, like I said, you know, I've pushed Cooper cranes  
20 before, you know. Let's just say the bi-frame for instance. You  
21 know, it has a total of 110 feet. I never, you know, I never  
22 pushed anything, you know, over that. They have, like, five or  
23 six that had that same number. And, you know, like I said, by him  
24 taking it, I felt comfortable because, you know, if he felt as  
25 though it wasn't right to take it, he wouldn't have took it. And

1 when I walked upstairs, you know, after the conversation he had  
2 with the dispatcher, you know, I asked him was everything fine,  
3 you know, could I do this with no problem, basically. And he told  
4 me yes, so I didn't think I had a problem other than, you know, me  
5 using my own judgment as far as me seeing what I could see.

6 Q. And did he ever tell you that you could not go under the  
7 alternate span?

8 A. No, sir.

9 CDR MESKUN: Mr. Kucharski, did you have one follow on?

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'll wait until afterwards. I lost my place,  
11 sorry.

12 CDR MESKUN: Cooper? Mr. Jenkins?

13 BY MR. JENKINS:

14 Q. Good morning, Mr. Picquet.

15 A. Good morning.

16 Q. My name is Scott Jenkins. I represent Cooper Consolidated.  
17 Thanks for being here, for your patience, and your testimony.  
18 Sorry you're having to go through this, but hopefully it winds  
19 down soon. But thanks for being here. I'm going to be very  
20 brief. They've asked you a lot of questions today. I know you've  
21 been asked a lot of questions in the past. And there are just a  
22 couple of things, a few things I'd like to just clear up with you.

23 We looked at the picture earlier that showed the view you had  
24 from the wheelhouse of the vessel. That showed the crane; it  
25 blocked the starboard view. It showed the bucket. And would you

1 agree -- okay, that's the -- thank you.

2 That's the picture that's up there now. Just to be clear,  
3 you see that -- I would ask you to please look at the screen. And  
4 there's like a little tower or something. You can see a line  
5 hanging down. There's like a tower sort of in the middle of the  
6 picture. Do you see it? The structure that's standing tall?

7 A. The crane.

8 Q. That's on an adjacent barge, isn't it? Right where the light  
9 is now.

10 A. That's on the extra barge, right?

11 Q. Right.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. That's what I'm asking you. Just to be clear, just so that  
14 somebody looking at the screen understands that that's a barge  
15 that's adjacent to the Mr. Ervin?

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Okay. And then as far as what difference this bucket makes,  
18 the bucket --

19 MR. JENKINS: Lieutenant [REDACTED] if you could just hit the  
20 button? Thank you.

21 BY MR. JENKINS:

22 Q. That's the bucket that we've been talking about, correct?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. So the only change in your view there is just what's  
25 blocked by just that bucket?

1 A. Come again?

2 Q. Your view -- in other words, the bucket being there, the only  
3 thing it obstructs is just what would be on the other side of that  
4 bucket, that small portion?

5 A. I mean, it's easy to say that, you know, but, I mean, it's  
6 far more complicated when you're up there, you know, pushing and  
7 that's all you have to go off is that side. You know, I mean, I'm  
8 not going to sit here and make an excuse, you know, but, I mean,  
9 my window was already short as it was, you know, and, I mean, it  
10 wasn't -- you know, it might not had been a big difference for me  
11 being there or not, but I really think, you know, that played a  
12 little part, you know.

13 Q. But it was there and that's a fact.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Right. And so because of that, you put somebody on watch on  
16 the other side that provided you the sight you needed on the other  
17 side of that bucket?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you felt that that was sufficient because, you testified  
20 earlier, that once that was done, you were able to safely navigate  
21 and proceed up river?

22 A. Right.

23 Q. And just in the interview that Mr. Kucharski was looking at a  
24 few moments ago when he questioned you, you made the comment in  
25 that, in your interview that -- and I'll refer to page 63, line

1 21. You said, "I would have tried my best to get that air draft  
2 on that crane. That one thing right there would have determined  
3 everything, you know. It wasn't the bucket, you know. It wasn't,  
4 you know, stopping." You said, "You know, because, I mean, we  
5 have stop work authority."

6 So you're looking at options that you had there and things  
7 that, I guess, had been addressed with you during the interview  
8 process and you said clearly there, look, it wasn't the bucket; I  
9 just didn't have the air draft to know if I had clearance. That's  
10 what it really is all about, correct?

11 A. I mean, I don't mean to stop you, but could I give you, you  
12 know -- could I clarify what I meant by saying that?

13 Q. You certainly can clarify.

14 A. I mean the bucket, you know, wasn't the reason. By me saying  
15 that the bucket wasn't the reason why I hit the bridge, what I'm  
16 saying is, you know, the air draft is the big missing factor in  
17 this whole situation. You know, had I had the air draft, I could  
18 have made my calculations and I would have knew whether or not,  
19 you know, I could clear or not. The bucket is the reason, you  
20 know, why I was so far in that west span to that port side.  
21 That's, you know, that's what I mean by that. You know, if it  
22 makes sense.

23 Q. Right. Well, even without the bucket, the crane does have  
24 limited visibility, so there are often times that you do have to  
25 adjust your course of navigation by virtue of what you're able to

1 see from the wheelhouse. Would you agree with that?

2 A. Could you repeat that one more time? You know, just let me  
3 know what you mean by that.

4 Q. Okay. And I'm not trying to trick you, I'm sorry.

5 A. No.

6 Q. So, what I'm saying is that oftentimes with certain tows,  
7 particularly crane barges, that you do have limited visibility  
8 that at times does alter your course of navigation?

9 A. Yes.

10 MR. JENKINS: Lieutenant [REDACTED] can you pull up, please,  
11 Exhibit 83? Okay. And could you please go to page 3 of 83?  
12 Thank you.

13 BY MR. JENKINS:

14 Q. And I will refer you, Mr. Picquet, to the -- this is a vessel  
15 accident incident report that you completed. Do you recognize  
16 this?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay. And I'd ask that -- you were asked this question a  
19 moment ago by the Coast Guard, but I wanted to just point you to  
20 the similar question that you were asked for purposes of this  
21 form. It says, "Recommendations for future prevention." You  
22 said, "Get more information on the crane barge before taking off.  
23 Always take the center span." And is that what today, sitting  
24 here today, is that what you think would have prevented this  
25 incident?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And as far as getting information on the crane barge, the  
3 numbers, you said, I believe you testified earlier today that when  
4 moving crane barges previously for Cooper, you asked for  
5 information on the height and were given that by the Cooper  
6 workers?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. With respect to the center span for this particular casualty,  
9 I know you had a passing agreement with the downbound, southbound  
10 tow, starboard to starboard. Would you have been able to reach an  
11 agreement with them with respect to a port-to-port passing?

12 A. I mean, I think, you know, everything is up for  
13 consideration, you know. But I could have, you know, suggested  
14 that, but, you know, he has the final say on that.

15 Q. So as a southbound vessel, he has the right of way on the  
16 river road?

17 A. Yes, sir. Yes.

18 Q. But that is subject to discussion and communication between  
19 the vessels?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. For example, he has -- he's downbound but he's got, if I  
22 remember correctly, 11 barges in tow. So he, I guess, really  
23 doesn't have a height or clearance issue, you do, and you're  
24 heading up river.

25 A. Right.



1 Q. So, would there have been anything that would have prevented  
2 you from speaking to him and communicating that, look, I've got a  
3 big tow, I've got this crane barge, I've got a clearance issue, I  
4 need to get to the center span, what can we do, can we maneuver  
5 where we can have a port-to-port passing, can I -- could you have  
6 held up?

7 A. I mean, you can say that but, you know, like I said, you  
8 know, I have a big crane barge, you know. You know, you stress  
9 stop work authority, you know, but it's not that easy, you know,  
10 as some would say. You know, I can say I could have stopped, but  
11 in that situation, you know, I can't see anything, I stop, you  
12 know, everybody else is still moving. It's --

13 Q. Right. And I'm certainly not implying that it's easy. I  
14 mean, you've got a big tow, you're in the river, you've got  
15 high -- I understand and I'm really just kind of asking you as  
16 much as anything. Because my understanding, and I'm not a  
17 mariner, is that it is easier to hold up, at least when you're  
18 facing the current. Is that true?

19 A. Yeah, I mean, you know, you're stopping and you're going  
20 against the current, it's easy to stop versus you going with it.

21 Q. You said earlier that, in discussing the stop work authority,  
22 which you understand, you knew that as company policy and you  
23 clearly had that?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And would you agree that it was company policy to take the

1 center span?

2 A. Yeah, I mean, it's not. You know, that's just preference,  
3 basically. That's the safe channel. It's not illegal or against  
4 the rules to take the alternate span. I mean, a lot of people do  
5 it.

6 Q. But it's recommended?

7 A. If you're, you know -- I would guess so.

8 Q. And we looked at a document a moment ago that you had filled  
9 out that had the amber alert on it. And in there, in questioning,  
10 they pointed out to you that it says that if you're in anything  
11 other than green, you're to contact the port captain. Is that  
12 correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And that would have been, I believe you're familiar with, a  
15 Captain Mabile?

16 A. Yes, Harvey.

17 Q. Harvey, Captain Harvey?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And do you recall that after the incident he was  
20 contacted, I believe by Captain Smith, and his reply, either his  
21 first response or something shortly thereafter was we always take  
22 the center span? Do you recall that?

23 A. No, I don't.

24 Q. Okay. Assuming that that conversation took place, do you  
25 think that if you would have called him before because of the

1 amber, if someone would have called him, you or Captain Smith  
2 would have called him beforehand, telling him what was going on  
3 and where you were going, do you think it's logical that he would  
4 have told you at that point we take that center span?

5 A. I mean, yes, I'm sure.

6 Q. I don't have any further questions for you. Thank you.

7 CDR MESKUN: Thank you.

8 Marquette? Mr. Reisman?

9 BY MR. REISMAN:

10 Q. Good morning, Captain Picquet. I'm David Reisman. I  
11 represent Marquette. Earlier this today, you testified regarding  
12 a number of Marquette policies, including bridge transit, watch  
13 change, voyage planning and stop work. Do you recall that?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. You read those policies before the accident, didn't you?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. And in your testimony earlier, you mentioned that Marquette  
18 had a lot of policies and you had only been back working with the  
19 company for about 3 weeks at the time of the accident?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Had you read every Marquette policy by the night of the  
22 accident?

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. But you had read the voyage -- excuse me, the vessel  
25 operating procedures and policies?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. That's correct?

3 A. Yes.

4 MR. REISMAN: I'd like, if we can, Lieutenant [REDACTED] if we  
5 can look at Exhibit 98, Section 5.4? We should be on page 15.  
6 Well, it should be on, I'm sorry, I think the second page. There  
7 you go.

8 BY MR. REISMAN:

9 Q. Captain Picquet, do you see Section 5.4 of this policy?

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. Can you read that out loud for us? If your eyes are better  
12 than mine.

13 A. "Under no circumstances will the wheelhouse person on watch  
14 be responsible for the transit beneath the bridge due to  
15 management pressure or pride."

16 Q. Who was the wheelhouse person on watch at the time the  
17 Kristin Alexis attempted to transit the Sunshine Bridge?

18 A. I was.

19 Q. So, earlier, you gave some testimony regarding who was  
20 responsible for enforcing policies or ensuring that they were  
21 complied with. Do you recall that?

22 A. Could you say that one more time?

23 Q. Certainly. Earlier in your testimony, you gave some  
24 indications that there were certain policies that the lead captain  
25 was required to enforce.

1 A. Right.

2 Q. Do you recall that? This particular policy, Marquette's  
3 bridge transit policy that you had read and were familiar with  
4 before the accident, it applies specifically to the person on  
5 watch responsible for the transit, doesn't it?

6 A. Right.

7 Q. Is that correct?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Who was that?

10 A. Me.

11 Q. Okay. And it tells you not to make a bridge transmit due to  
12 management pressure or pride, correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. All right. So I want to talk about stop work. You told us  
15 you were familiar with Marquette's stop work policy, right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And they have that laminated card you told us about earlier  
18 that everybody gets that tells you about stop work?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And stop work is something that gets discussed at every watch  
21 change, doesn't it?

22 A. No, we weren't discussing that at every watch change.

23 Q. Do you recall the -- (indiscernible) here.

24 MR. REISMAN: Lieutenant [REDACTED] if we could look at Exhibit  
25 48, page 33, please?

1 BY MR. REISMAN:

2 Q. I'd like you to take a look at this exhibit. I think you've  
3 seen it earlier today. Can you tell us what this is, Captain  
4 Picquet?

5 A. This is the watch change checklist.

6 Q. Okay. And on this one --

7 MR. REISMAN: Lieutenant, can you scroll down a little bit?

8 BY MR. REISMAN:

9 Q. It's been blacked out, but this was on October 12th. That's  
10 your signature there, you can tell that, can't you?

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Okay. And if you could look where the lieutenant is honing  
13 in now, I think he might be able to point at it, what does that  
14 line reference?

15 A. Stop work responsibility.

16 Q. And is there a check next to that?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Who made that checkmark?

19 A. I did.

20 Q. And that form is used at every watch change, correct?

21 A. Right.

22 Q. And so every time you came on watch, you'd go through that  
23 form, correct?

24 A. Yeah, I do myself, right.

25 Q. And you would check each of those boxes?

1 A. Right.

2 Q. So at every watch change, you were reminded of Marquette's  
3 stop work policy, correct?

4 A. Right. We just didn't discuss them like, you know, like you  
5 asked.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. But it was just something, that's something I have to do  
8 myself, you know.

9 Q. Okay. And I apologize if I misunderstood or misstated that  
10 earlier.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. But you personally had to take into account stop work  
13 responsibility at every watch change?

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Did you all participate in 15-minute job safety huddles?

16 A. Yes, every day we do them.

17 Q. Did you talk about stop work responsibility in those huddles?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Never?

20 A. Not within those 3 weeks I was on there.

21 Q. Okay. You had worked for Marquette before for about 2½ to 3  
22 years, correct?

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Was stop work responsibility discussed during those 2½ to 3  
25 years you worked there?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And in fact, you had participated in Marquette's steersman  
3 program, correct?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. How long did that last?

6 A. It wasn't -- I mean, it was more of me decking and steering  
7 at the same time. Once I officially, you know, was training on  
8 nothing else, it was about maybe a month.

9 Q. Okay. And during that month, you would participate in the  
10 watch changes?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And you were being exposed to Marquette's policies and  
13 procedures?

14 A. Right.

15 Q. And that included stop work responsibility, didn't it?

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Now, you told us earlier that when you took the watch from  
18 Captain Smith, you didn't felt like you had enough -- all the  
19 information you should have had; is that correct?

20 A. I didn't.

21 Q. But you also said you felt confident and comfortable taking  
22 the watch and proceeding with the bridge transit?

23 A. Right.

24 Q. And you knew when you took the watch you were going to be  
25 making a bridge transit that night?



1 A. Yes.

2 Q. You knew you were going to go through the Sunshine Bridge?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. There's been a lot of discussion about which channel you were  
5 going to take, but you knew you were going through the Sunshine  
6 Bridge?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. If you had felt, if you had thought in your mind at that  
9 point I don't have enough information to do this safely, I'm not  
10 confident, I'm not comfortable, what would you have done?

11 A. Well, for number one, you know, I would have made a phone  
12 call.

13 Q. To who?

14 A. To Harvey. To the port captain on duty. You know, if I felt  
15 as though, you know, I was unsuitable or unfit to do, you know, to  
16 foresee with that voyage, you know. Stop, you know, I could have  
17 stopped. You know, I thought about different things far as me  
18 stopping, you know, with, you know, me hitting the bank, you know.  
19 Like I said, that west bank, it's a bunch of rocks that's lined  
20 up, you know, and that probably would have been a whole other  
21 situation. I don't know, you know, but I took into consideration,  
22 you know, the different things that could possibly happen.

23 You know, I mean, far as the top of the bridge goes, I didn't  
24 figure, you know, that that was something that would have been a  
25 issue. My main concern was, you know, hitting on the side. And

1 that was basically it, you know, because he, you know, he felt  
2 comfortable enough to take off with the barge, with the crane.  
3 So, I mean, when I asked him was everything okay, you know, could  
4 I continue this with no problem, once he told me yes, you know, I  
5 figured that was it.

6 Q. So I'm not sure you answered my question. You said a lot  
7 there so I want to make sure that my question gets answered. My  
8 question is if when it was your time to take the sticks, if you  
9 thought I cannot safely get through that --

10 A. Did I think that?

11 Q. If you thought that, what would you have done?

12 A. I mean, stopped and made a phone call.

13 Q. You wouldn't have gone through the bridge if you didn't think  
14 you could do it safely, correct?

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. And so, when we talked about the stop work responsibility  
17 earlier, you were asked that question, did you feel pressure  
18 whether to use it or not use it, if you thought that you were in a  
19 dangerous situation, you would have used it, correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You wouldn't have been worried about what the discipline or  
22 repercussions would have been, you just would have stopped?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. But here, you said you were confident, so that's why you  
25 didn't use it; is that correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. You mentioned Captain Mabile earlier. That was your port  
3 captain?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Harvey, as you call him?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How long have you known Captain Harvey Mabile?

8 A. About a year prior to this.

9 Q. A year prior to the accident?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You had done some work with him before, when you were working  
12 for Marquette previously?

13 A. When I was decking, right.

14 Q. Did you have Captain Harvey's phone number in your phone?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Captain Harvey, did he play a role in bringing you back to  
17 the company?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Is he somebody that you had a good relationship with?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did Captain Harvey tell his people on his boats that you can  
22 call me whenever you need me?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And what about Desmond Smith, the relief captain on the boat,  
25 you said you knew him before the accident, as well, correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Was Desmond a nice guy?

3 A. Yeah, I would say so.

4 Q. And you knew him pretty well?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. So on the night of the accident, you could have called  
7 Desmond and said, hey, can you come back up here to the  
8 wheelhouse, right?

9 A. Yes, I could have.

10 Q. You could have asked him for guidance, correct?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you know whether he was even asleep at the time of the  
13 accident?

14 A. No, he wasn't.

15 Q. He had not even gone to sleep yet, had he?

16 A. No.

17 Q. How long do you think it would have taken if you had called  
18 Desmond and said, hey, come up to the wheelhouse, how long do you  
19 think it would have taken for him to get up there?

20 A. Well, he was in the shower when it happened, so, I mean, I  
21 don't know.

22 Q. Are you sure he was in the shower? Because he testified here  
23 yesterday that he was not in the shower at the time of the  
24 accident.

25 A. Well, that's what he told me he was going to do. He said he

1 was going to take a shower. When I hit -- when the collision --  
2 after the, you know, after the collision, he ran out of the room.

3 Q. How much time passed from the time you took the sticks until  
4 the Mr. Ervin hit the bridge?

5 A. Maybe somewhere around 2 hours.

6 Q. That would be a heck of a long shower if he was still in the  
7 shower all that time, right?

8 A. Well, he didn't go downstairs, you know, immediately, you  
9 know, after I took over. He stood up there for a little while,  
10 you know, then he went down to eat, you know.

11 Q. Right. But the point is, you could have contacted him and  
12 had him come back up?

13 A. Right.

14 Q. You chose not to; is that right?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. If you remember, Mr. Kucharski asked you some questions about  
17 the interview you gave to the Coast Guard and NTSB back in  
18 October. He showed you some of the words from that. Do you  
19 remember that?

20 A. Right.

21 Q. When you were asked back in October by the NTSB about the  
22 Marquette bridge transit policy, you explained it by saying, "If  
23 you're pushing a barge, like a crane barge or whatever, just make  
24 sure that the height of the crane has enough room to clear the  
25 bridge." Does that sound familiar to you?

1 A. I mean, that was a minute ago. I mean, I don't --

2 Q. Would you like to see that?

3 A. Yeah, I would.

4 Q. Look at page 37, starting at line 2. Can you read that for  
5 us? Well, go ahead and take a look at it first, and then if you  
6 can read it out loud.

7 I'll give you a little setup while you're looking at it.

8 Starting on page 36, one line 18, Mr. [REDACTED] asked you, "This is  
9 [REDACTED] Eugene, the policy that says to verify your  
10 vertical and horizontal clearances, does it tell you how to  
11 verify?"

12 You responded, "It's just saying make sure, you know, that  
13 all your numbers are correct. Like approaching a bridge, you  
14 know, if your air draft -- you know, have your air draft number,  
15 make sure that you have clearance, you know, things like that."

16 Mr. [REDACTED] continued, "So does it, does it tell you where to  
17 get those numbers?"

18 And you said, "No, it just states, you know, like, if you're  
19 pushing a barge, you know, like a crane barge or whatever, just  
20 make sure that the height of the crane has enough room to, you  
21 know, clear the bridge."

22 Is that accurate?

23 A. I don't recall.

24 Q. That's what it says there, though, right?

25 A. Right. Yeah, right.

1 Q. Does that sound familiar to you? I mean, do you agree with  
2 that?

3 A. I mean, judging by -- what are you asking me, though? Like  
4 this answer, what is this answer in reference to?

5 Q. Okay. The answer is in reference to what was Marquette's  
6 bridge transit policy.

7 A. I mean, as of right now, I don't remember what the bridge  
8 transit policy was. It's been a while.

9 Q. You've been gone for 7 months.

10 A. Yeah. I mean, maybe if I look at it, you know, certain  
11 things might come back to me, but a lot of that stuff I do not  
12 remember.

13 Q. Would you defer to what you said in October over what you  
14 remember now on the policies?

15 A. Would I defer? Would I what, change my answer?

16 Q. No, my question is, you gave this interview on October 16th,  
17 2018. Do you think you had a better understanding and familiarity  
18 with the policies then than you do today?

19 A. Yeah. Yes. Yes.

20 Q. So you would rely on what you said on October 16th over what  
21 you currently remember, is that correct?

22 A. Yeah, but this doesn't even sound like it -- it doesn't add  
23 up. You know, it doesn't go with the question you're asking.

24 Q. Okay. I'm not sure why you think that, but if you want to  
25 take a look, feel free to look starting on page 35. You were

1 asked specifically, "Is there a company policy for bridge transits  
2 that you've seen?" This is on page 35, line 22.

3 A. Yeah, that's correct.

4 Q. And you said, "Yes, sir." Then you were asked, "Do you know  
5 what the policy is? What does it talk about it the policy?" And  
6 your answer on page 36, beginning on line 2, do you want to read  
7 that for us, if you can find it?

8 A. Yeah, I just -- "It's just basically, you know, saying that  
9 make sure when you're transiting through the bridge, you know,  
10 that all the numbers check out, that your air draft, you have  
11 enough to clear. I mean, well, how could I see this vertical and  
12 horizontal."

13 Q. Right. So that was -- you were describing the Marquette  
14 bridge transit policy, weren't you?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. And then you went on to explain, as I said, on page 37, what  
17 it requires you to do?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And so you agree that's what you said, that was your  
20 understanding at that time, correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you. Captain Picquet, you talked earlier about  
23 pushing the barge into the bank if you felt like you needed to  
24 stop, and you had some concerns about possibly what you might hit  
25 on the bank. Do you recall that?



1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Another option for you would have been to simply hold  
3 position in the river?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Is that something that can be done?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Is that easier to do when you're headed up river the way you  
8 were that night?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No, but you can do it?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Have you done that before?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Do you know whether Captain Smith has ever done that?

15 A. No.

16 Q. You don't know whether he has or not?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Thank you, Captain Picquet. That's all I've got for you.

19 CDR MESKUN: Thank you.

20 Mr. Kucharski?

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you.

22 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

23 Q. Sorry, Captain, as counsel keeps asking questions, it makes  
24 me ask more questions. I apologize. And then one thing I did  
25 overlook. So, but, did you have -- when you took over the watch

1 that morning -- or late that evening, did you have an idea how  
2 long it would take you to get up to 175?

3 A. No.

4 Q. You had no idea how long it would take you?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Did you know how far -- well, you were at mile marker,  
7 roughly, 164 (indiscernible) fleet?

8 A. 165.

9 Q. 165. And Darrow is 175, or thereabouts, is that right?

10 A. 170 or 175.

11 Q. Okay. And you were doing about 5 knots, or 5 miles an hour,  
12 something like that?

13 A. Yeah. Yeah, about that.

14 Q. So about an hour to 2 hours, would that be fair to say that?

15 A. Around that area, yeah.

16 Q. Okay. I'm not trying to trick you here or anything. I'm  
17 just trying to determine, could you have kept your lookouts out  
18 there or kept a lookout out there if you had visibility problems,  
19 you know, till you got up to the Darrow fleet?

20 A. I could have kept them out there the whole time, yeah, right.

21 Q. Okay. I'm just trying to see these things through. And this  
22 question -- we were talking about holding up, okay. I asked you a  
23 question earlier about if you had a conversation with Captain  
24 Smith about holding up if the bucket wasn't moved, and you said  
25 you didn't have that conversation?

1 A. No, sir.

2 Q. So holding up, and we've talked about this and maybe there  
3 are different forms of holding up. You can stick it in the bank  
4 somewhere or you could just maybe hold up in the current, correct?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. So, could you have slowed down, or did you consider  
7 that, to allow the Nedra Kay, I think was the other vessel, to  
8 come down and go through the center channel, okay, the center  
9 stand, and then just gone through there?

10 A. I could have.

11 Q. Okay. Did you give instructions to your deckhands when they  
12 went forward to stand as lookouts?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you tell Mr. Blaise -- you know Mr. Blaise?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I'm sorry, Mr. Rudolph, Blaise Rudolph, did you tell him that  
17 you wanted to line up on the green lights, you wanted to take it  
18 through the green lights?

19 A. Well, he just -- he told me.

20 Q. He told you?

21 A. He told me that I was lined up on the green.

22 Q. But you didn't tell him that you wanted to do that?

23 A. Well, it's kind of like, you know, a ordinary thing, you  
24 know, something we do. Because the center of any span, that's  
25 your highest point. So it kind of, you know, it's something that,

1 you know, it's just automatic.

2 Q. Okay. So that was what you intended to do, to bring it down  
3 the green light, down the center of that span?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. Okay. That cleared that up. Thank you.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: And can we see Exhibit 76, please?

7 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

8 Q. And this is the statement of Chad Nelson, which I believe is  
9 dispatch at Cooper. Okay. I don't think you've seen this before,  
10 but in the first full paragraph at the bottom it says, "The  
11 captain also commented that the crane is kind of tall." And I  
12 think this talks about a conversation that he had, a phone  
13 conversation with someone on the Kristin Alexis. Was that you?  
14 Did you talk to dispatch?

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. You didn't?

17 A. No.

18 Q. That wasn't you, so it must have been Captain Smith then?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. You mentioned earlier when you were asked a question  
21 by Marquette's counsel that you knew Captain Harvey Mabile from  
22 another -- before Marquette?

23 A. No, I knew him prior to that situation.

24 Q. Okay. But before you came to work for Marquette --

25 A. I mean previous. I'm sorry.

1 Q. -- on this last time about 3 weeks before the accident, was  
2 he working at Marquette then? How did you know Captain Mabile?  
3 How did you know him?

4 A. I knew him from when I worked for Marquette before.

5 Q. Oh, okay. But it was just through Marquette?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And boy, I'm going to promise -- but this is going to  
8 be sort of a long one, so I apologize. It won't be brief.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: So Exhibit 38, could we look at that, please?

10 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

11 Q. And I think the title of this is Check Ride Worksheet, and it  
12 say 9/13/18, Bell Chase Fleet. Are you familiar with this form?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Yeah. Was this while you were working at Marquette?

15 A. That was -- no, I was still employed with someone else at  
16 that time.

17 Q. Okay. So Calvin Pizanni (ph.), III, who is he?

18 A. That was the captain onboard the St. Teresa. That's who --

19 Q. And who owns the St. Teresa?

20 A. Huh?

21 Q. Who owns the St. Teresa?

22 A. Marquette.

23 Q. Okay. So this is a Marquette boat that you were on?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. And it says, "Time 430 to 1630." What does that mean

1 up there?

2 A. That's the 12 hours. That's the shift.

3 Q. Okay. So there --

4 A. From 4:30 that morning to 4:30 that evening.

5 Q. Oh, okay. So this is a 1-day evaluation?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And Bell Chase Fleet, is that a fleeting operating,  
8 also?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. It says, "Evaluated good to go." Okay, meets expectations,  
11 exceeds in radio, lifeboat. Is there anything about navigation on  
12 this form?

13 A. I don't recall.

14 Q. Did you, during that 1 day you evaluated, did you actually  
15 have to show the evaluator that you knew how to go ahead and  
16 figure our bridge clearances or anything like that?

17 A. That check ride, basically, it, you know, it displays, you  
18 know, that I'm capable of operating a boat.

19 Q. To operating the boat. You mean actually, you know, running  
20 the sticks and everything else?

21 A. Yeah, I mean, shift barges, you know, face up, you know,  
22 different things, you know, just different things that we're asked  
23 to do, you know, to make sure that we're able to do the job.

24 Q. So the job would be in a fleeting operation, is that correct?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So you know how to run the computer. So you know how to run  
2 the things on the boat, but was there any practical -- to navigate  
3 the vessel besides just running a head line up or running lines  
4 up? Because it's a navigation issue that we have, I think, going  
5 under the bridge here. So, did you have any evaluation by  
6 Marquette for anything regarding navigating the boat instead of  
7 knowledge of vessel operations?

8 A. Could you -- like, I don't understand what you're asking.

9 Q. Yeah, so you didn't run the boat up and down the river at  
10 all, it was just in that Bell Chase (indiscernible)?

11 A. Right, it was just in that fleet.

12 Q. Okay. Thank you.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: That's it. Those are all the questions I  
14 have.

15 CDR MESKUN: Does either party have any follow-on questions  
16 to that?

17 (No audible response.)

18 CDR MESKUN: So in this testimony with Captain Picquet we  
19 discussed the transcripts from the interview that occurred on --  
20 following the initial casualty response on October 16th, 2018. I  
21 would like to enter this as an exhibit, IO Exhibit Number 118. Is  
22 there any objections from either party for that?

23 (No audible response.)

24 CDR MESKUN: Okay.

25 (IO Exhibit No. 118 received in

1 evidence.)

2 CDR MESKUN: Captain Picquet, you are now released as a  
3 witness from this formal casualty investigation. Thank you for  
4 your testimony and cooperation. If I later determine that this  
5 joint investigation team needs additional information from you, I  
6 will contact you. If you have any questions about this  
7 investigation, you may contact the recorder, Lieutenant [REDACTED]  
8 Thank you.

9 The time is now 11:28. We will recess for lunch for 1 hour  
10 and 15 minutes. Come back at 12:45.

11 (Whereupon, at 11:28 a.m., the testimony 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:            *KRISTIN ALEXIS/BARGE MR. ERVIN*  
   *ALLISION WITH THE SUNSHINE BRIDGE*  
   *DONALDSONVILLE, LOUISIANA*  
   *OCTOBER 12, 2018*  
   *Interview of Eugene Picquet*

ACCIDENT NO.:                 DCA19FM003

PLACE:                            Gonzales, Louisiana

DATE:                              May 7, 2019

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



Lisa Fuerstenberg  
Transcriber