

Interview of Joseph Selch
Interview #1

Three (3) pages total including this cover

Interview Notes

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Accident DCA04MM001, Staten Island Ferry

13:00 October 16, 2003

Lead Interviewer, Morgan Turrell

Second NTSB, William Woody

Parties Present: NYPD, NYFD, NYCDOT, USCG, USCGIS, NYSTSB

JOSEPH SELCH

- Employee at SIF 1 year
- Was lookout on AJ Barberi at time of accident
- Nice day
- @KV Buoy, went down to open gate
- There was a broken door-it was tied off, Staten Island End Exterior Doors
- One older man hooked arm on banister before the ship hit
- The ship kept going, but Selch didn't fall down
- The staircase was gone
- His normal job was to sit on stool and look for traffic
- There was nothing out of the ordinary
- Smith was on bridge, believes Gansas was on bridge, a mate may have been on bridge.
- Doesn't remember the throttle being brought back
- Smith is the regular Asst Captain
- Gansas is a regular employee
- Capt Cavella is the regular captain
- Pilot house door is normally locked, open by permission
- First three dockings of the day were normal, there was some glare
- Remembered, as a lookout, reporting a tugboat sometime during his watch but doesn't remember which trip it was.
- Michael Gansas has a band
- Selch relates more to Capt. Smith
- Looked like the ship was set up for the channel correctly
- Selch had worked for A/C Smith since June
- Selch worked four days Tue-Fri 1:30-9:30
- Captain Smith would confide minor aches and pains, but no talk of medicine
- Events about A/C smith (attempted suicide) surprised Selch
- Selch was on Saloon Deck at the moment of impact
- Passengers were screaming and yelling
- No announcements were made, and he told passengers to go aft.
- Thinks that Gansas was sitting and may have been reading a paper.
- Selch never drilled for this type of accident
- There was a lot of panic otherwise would have yelled louder
- He was scared
- No general alarm was heard

- No bleeding on the bridge
- No announcements were made, sure of that
- Deckhand Ennis seemed “out of sorts”
- A/C Smith, when down below, saw woman hurt and left on Brooklyn side.
- 72Hour—goes to bed every night at 2300 and up at 0700 the next day
- Police officer Karen Santiago was of great assistance
- Maybe 1000 persons aboard, a light load
- Andy Covella was a more dominant personality than Mike Gansas
- Mate Hyde was on Staten Island Side¹
- Deckhand Ennis was on Brooklyn Side
- 7 round trips per shift are typical
- Didn’t hear engines throttle back

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED 14:10