

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

In the Matter of:	*	
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ALLISION WITH STATEN ISLAND	*	
FERRY TERMINAL MAINTENANCE	*	DCA-04-MM-001
PIER AT ST. GEORGE'S,	*	
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK BY THE	*	
FERRY ANDREW J. BARBERI on	*	
OCTOBER 15, 2003	*	

Friday
October 17, 2003

Staten Island, NY

INTERVIEW

DANIEL ENNIS

PRESENT:

ROB JONES, NTSB
RICHARD GONZALEZ, USCG
STEVE MATTEI, NYPD

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. JONES: This is an interview with Daniel
3 Ennis. And he is a crew member aboard the Staten
4 Island Ferry.

5 My name is Rob Jones and we are going to
6 conduct the interview now.

7 Daniel, where were you at the time of the
8 accident?

9 MR. ENNIS: I was on main deck, Staten Island
10 end.

11 MR. JONES: Okay.

12 MR. ENNIS: Center of the boat.

13 MR. JONES: And if you could take us through
14 just from when you knew something was wrong or what you
15 first witnessed and then through the entire incident.

16 MR. ENNIS: Okay. Middle, the boat was in the
17 middle of the harbor, the wind is blowing fierce. The
18 doors kept flying open. They are not, you know, they
19 are not bolted shut or anything like that in case of an
20 emergency. They fly open and the air comes down the
21 walkway and people, you know, they get pissed off
22 because they are trying to read the paper and I go and
23 close them. I did that two times. The third time I
24 couldn't close the left door. The wind was that
25 powerful that I could not close that door. So, I

1 walked back, and sat down. I noticed it was almost
2 time to approach the slip. I heard a huge, I don't
3 know, bomb, I thought it was a ship that first that hit
4 us. I looked and everything was coming this way. I
5 was facing towards the -- Island Bridge. Looking at
6 the -- Island Bridge, when I heard this noise.

7 MR. JONES: Port side, starboard side?

8 MR. ENNIS: I am, as we, I am on the Brooklyn
9 side. This would happen on the Jersey side. I would
10 be at starboard, mine would be my port.

11 MR. JONES: Okay.

12 MR. ENNIS: Just before I heard the noise, the
13 boat seemed to, the bough, let's see, the Staten Island
14 end seemed to go down a little bit, lisp to the
15 starboard. And right after that, that is when
16 everything come my way. Everything.

17 MR. JONES: Okay.

18 MR. ENNIS: I, I got up, there were other
19 people, they were knocked over. I walked to the front,
20 why I did, I don't know. I looked up and there was no
21 stairs. I seen the body, maybe, it was maybe two to
22 three feet left of the stairs on my side of the boat.
23 I seen a body there, but he, he looked like he was
24 decapitated. I immediately run back, I seen a man
25 laying on the floor, a woman was there, tended to the

1 man, he was moving. He had no blood or anything. He
2 said he was all right. He said, he slipped or
3 something, but he was all right. He said, I will be
4 okay.

5 At the time I jumped over to the seats and I
6 ran past this woman, she had short black hair, small
7 woman. I went to go, she was bleeding from the mouth.

8 I went to get a life preservers, sticking under the
9 head, so I had this lady on the deck. I left, I put it
10 and then I noticed she had no legs, I think one leg was
11 gone. As I walked further to the mid ship of the
12 boat, there was other people and I -- One guy is
13 looking for his friend, Pete, help me look for Pete.
14 Moving and step away, chairs, benches, everything. We
15 found his backpack, but we didn't find this other guy.

16 At that time, I seen a body there whose face was
17 ripped off. He could have been alive, I --

18 I seen Bob Rush. He is the other mate. He
19 asked me where is the mask? We kept, we carry a
20 defibulator on that side, it is like a gear room, that
21 was completely gone. So, I was looking for, I, as we
22 were walking towards the rack, I found the defibulator
23 and handed it to Bob and Bob took off down the other
24 side of the boat. I did the best as I could to help
25 people. There was another man who was laying there,

1 his name I think was Lewis. He had glasses, Puerto
2 Rican. I asked if he was hurt. He said he couldn't
3 breathe. I got him up, I sat him in the seat. At
4 that time I noticed, we were drifting, we were
5 drifting. I didn't see no other boats. I didn't know
6 if there was a boat to bring us in or, I don't think we
7 were under our power. I didn't, I didn't hear anything
8 running at that time.

9 MR. JONES: The previous amount of time you
10 were talking about, the ship was solid against that
11 pier, and you noticed it was drifting.

12 MR. ENNIS: Actually, actually I thought it
13 was a ship that hit us first. I didn't even know we
14 hit the pier.

15 MR. JONES: Yes.

16 MR. ENNIS: If I ever looked over my shoulder
17 and seen everything coming, I didn't know it was the
18 pier at all. I looked for a ship. I was hoping to see
19 a bough of a ship because the gash so, I don't know. I
20 don't know.

21 MR. JONES: Okay.

22 (Pause.)

23 MR. ENNIS: You know, I am not a wuzzie, what
24 I seen, I --

25 MR. JONES: Take your time.

1 MR. ENNIS: Yeah, go ahead.

2 MR. JONES: Well, let's, we can just turn
3 around. How long have you worked for the ferries?

4 MR. ENNIS: Approximately seven years, I
5 think, seven or eight years.

6 MR. JONES: And -- Now it is me. I will call
7 you back.

8 And employed in what capacity?

9 MR. ENNIS: As deck hand.

10 MR. JONES: As deck hand. And, is that a
11 union affiliation?

12 MR. ENNIS: That is Local 333, yeah.

13 MR. JONES: Three, thirty, three.

14 And what are the hours you usually work on
15 the vessel?

16 MR. ENNIS: On this particular ship it is from
17 1:30 to 9:30.

18 MR. JONES: And is that standard every day?

19 MR. ENNIS: Tuesday is maybe an hour and a
20 half we do a steering drills. Wednesday is another
21 hour and a half, we do a fire and life boat drill.
22 Thursday, every second week we do a cleaning drill.

23 MR. JONES: Okay.

24 MR. ENNIS: Friday is almost sometimes a
25 regular day, unless the ferries break down, we will

1 still be on the run.

2 MR. JONES: You work five days a week, seven
3 days a week?

4 MR. ENNIS: Four days a week.

5 MR. JONES: Four days. And you mentioned you
6 did these drills. Did you receive any other kind of
7 training?

8 MR. ENNIS: CPR.

9 MR. JONES: CPR training. DOT send you to
10 that, or --

11 MR. ENNIS: Do I have a certificate? Yes, I
12 do.

13 MR. JONES: Is it DOT that sends you there or
14 is the local?

15 MR. ENNIS: Yes, yes, no, DOT sends us there.

16 MR. JONES: Okay.

17 MR. ENNIS: We did other, what do you call
18 that, bio, medical, bio hazard, did that training.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. Hazmat.

20 MR. ENNIS: Hazmat.

21 MR. JONES: Hazmat. Okay.

22 Did you receive any type of crowd control
23 training?

24 MR. ENNIS: Yes. I was awarded, we did rescue
25 by buoy 22, that is in the lower bay, and a sailboat

1 had capsized, we rescued four people.

2 MR. JONES: Which vessel?

3 MR. ENNIS: I am pretty sure it was an
4 Allegiance, the captain's name was Joey Cox. Was it
5 the Allegiance.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I am not sure which
7 boat.

8 MR. JONES: Did you receive an individual or
9 the --

10 MR. ENNIS: No, we got a certificate. We all
11 over on Staten Island and --

12 MR. JONES: Great.

13 The crowd control training that you received,
14 yearly, once every five years, do you remember what it
15 is?

16 MR. ENNIS: Yearly.

17 MR. JONES: And this again is through the --

18 MR. ENNIS: That came in handy that day.

19 MR. JONES: And that is through the DOT?

20 MR. ENNIS: Yeah.

21 MR. JONES: Okay. And you said the
22 defibulator, that was located in the gear box?

23 MR. ENNIS: Yeah, on the door there, they have
24 it mounted inside the door.

25 MR. JONES: Is that mid ship?

1 MR. ENNIS: That would be on the Staten Island
2 end, on the, actually it would be starboard side, we
3 call that Jersey side.

4 MR. JONES: Jersey side, Staten Island.

5 MR. ENNIS: We have one on each floor. There
6 is the main deck and we have saloon deck, bridge deck,
7 and we have also locate each pilot house.

8 MR. JONES: And where you were, you said lower
9 deck.

10 MR. ENNIS: That main deck.

11 MR. JONES: Main deck. So, main deck, lower,
12 next deck up.

13 MR. ENNIS: Saloon deck.

14 MR. JONES: Saloon deck.

15 MR. ENNIS: Bridge deck. Hurricane deck is,
16 we have no passengers up there, that is where the pilot
17 house is located.

18 MR. JONES: Okay. So, main, saloon and bridge
19 and they are all accommodation areas as far as seats.

20 MR. ENNIS: Yes.

21 MR. JONES: Okay. And the other one is
22 hurricane.

23 MR. ENNIS: Six thousand.

24 MR. JONES: And just the two pilot houses.

25 MR. ENNIS: Two pilot houses.

1 MR. JONES: Up there.

2 You have got to forgive me, all the ships I
3 have worked on --

4 MR. ENNIS: Yeah.

5 MR. JONES: One pointy end, the other one is a
6 nice big round, so. Sorry about this.

7 (Pause.)

8 MR. JONES: So during the time of the
9 accident, you just mainly were, stayed the lower level
10 and assisted whoever you could.

11 MR. ENNIS: The whole trip I was on that lower
12 level.

13 MR. JONES: Okay. The vessel pulled back in,
14 basically, now, New York end, into Staten Island,
15 Manhattan end to the Staten Island.

16 MR. ENNIS: That I don't know. They must have
17 had to turn the boat around and put the New York end
18 into the slip, because there was no way, the stairs on
19 my end were completely gone.

20 MR. JONES: Okay.

21 MR. ENNIS: If I remember right, I would
22 think, I am just taking a guess, two feet the most
23 left, so she was ripped like this, and there was a body
24 there.

25 MR. JONES: Right.

1 MR. ENNIS: So, I imagine they turned it
2 around so they could discharge the people.

3 MR. JONES: Right. So, the time that you were
4 down there, the next thing you noticed then was rescue
5 units or fire department or police personnel coming
6 aboard.

7 MR. ENNIS: Yes, yes.

8 MR. JONES: So then you were back against the
9 dock.

10 MR. ENNIS: Yes. I had hooked up the boat at
11 that time. That is part of my job is to put the hook
12 into the pad to the deck, open the gates and stuff like
13 that.

14 MR. JONES: So then you did, you did that
15 again.

16 MR. ENNIS: Yes.

17 MR. JONES: Okay. All right. And do you have
18 any recollection of time, did you ever look at your
19 watch during this incident?

20 MR. ENNIS: When I tried to close that door, I
21 couldn't close it, because the wind was that powerful,
22 I walked back, I would say 3:15, 3:20.

23 MR. JONES: Okay.

24 MR. ENNIS: I can't be exact, but.

25 MR. JONES: Okay. And how long after that did

1 the incident occur, best estimate?

2 MR. ENNIS: Best estimate, four, maybe six
3 minutes.

4 MR. JONES: Okay.

5 MR. ENNIS: Maybe less.

6 MR. JONES: Okay.

7 MR. ENNIS: It wasn't too much after I tried
8 to close that door that I walked back and I was going
9 to walk to the end of the boat because sometimes the
10 people get very annoyed at you, and they will let you
11 know, and I, I just sat down because I knew we were
12 close to the end.

13 MR. JONES: Okay.

14 MR. ENNIS: There was no sense in walking all
15 the down the other end and walking all the way back, up
16 again. And that what happened.

17 MR. JONES: Yes. Did you see either of the
18 Captains prior to the incident when you were --

19 MR. ENNIS: When I first got onboard, yes, I
20 did go up there.

21 MR. JONES: Okay.

22 MR. ENNIS: Up to the wheel house, I saw both
23 of them, Assistant Captain, the Captain and I think I
24 saw the Mate Bob Rush, in the New York pilot house.
25 That was maybe around, oh, 14:45 I would say.

1 MR. JONES: Okay.

2 MR. ENNIS: We were heading towards Manhattan.

3 MR. JONES: Okay. And the mate, the second
4 mate, is that what he is listed at or just mate?

5 MR. ENNIS: Yeah, that is --

6 MR. JONES: Bob Rush.

7 MR. ENNIS: Yeah, Rush was up there also.

8 MR. JONES: Okay. And he is the second mate?

9 MR. ENNIS: I --

10 MR. JONES: Or mate?

11 MR. ENNIS: They go seniority, I don't know if
12 Hyde has been there longer, or if he has, or --

13 MR. JONES: Okay. All right.

14 I am going to turn it over to the other
15 gentleman, now, Daniel.

16 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Steve Mattei.

17 How fast do you think the boat was going? Can
18 you take an estimate or --

19 MR. ENNIS: I would say the regular speed.

20 DETECTIVE MATTEI: What would be normal speed?
21 I don't know.

22 MR. ENNIS: That I have no idea.

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

24 MR. ENNIS: I imagine, I don't know, they have
25 governors on them, as far as I know.

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

2 MR. JONES: Just to jump in, Rob Jones here
3 again. The regular transit speed coming through the
4 harbor.

5 MR. ENNIS: Yes.

6 MR. JONES: Okay.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Now, we had heard
8 like some people saying just before the boat, they
9 thought maybe the boat sped up. Did you feel that at
10 all, the boat speeding up just before?

11 MR. ENNIS: No.

12 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Or was it just the normal
13 speed or --

14 MR. ENNIS: No.

15 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Or did you think --

16 MR. ENNIS: No, the only thing, at that time I
17 didn't know where we were, but I did feel like the
18 bough was lipping to the starboard.

19 DETECTIVE MATTEI: You are going to have to
20 help me on that one. The bough to the starboard, I am
21 not too --

22 MR. ENNIS: Okay.

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Front and back I know.

24 MR. ENNIS: All right. We will say the front.

25 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. The front end heading

1 towards Staten Island.

2 MR. ENNIS: Right.

3 DETECTIVE MATTEI: You felt that go?

4 MR. ENNIS: Towards the starboard.

5 MR. JONES: Front right side.

6 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

7 MR. ENNIS: That is your right.

8 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right side, the Jersey
9 side.

10 MR. ENNIS: Right, exactly.

11 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. And you were on the
12 lower level or the middle level?

13 MR. ENNIS: That is the main deck, that is
14 lower, we have a deck below that, that is the engine
15 room.

16 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

17 MR. ENNIS: I am on the main deck.

18 DETECTIVE MATTEI: The main deck.

19 MR. ENNIS: Right.

20 DETECTIVE MATTEI: That is the lowest where
21 the people can go on.

22 MR. ENNIS: Right.

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: All right. You said after
24 the accident you hooked up the boat, is that what --

25 MR. ENNIS: After the accident?

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yes, it was your job to
2 hook up the boat or something.

3 MR. ENNIS: Well, after, the boat, after it
4 hit, like I said, I ran to see what was in the front
5 and I ran back, and I helped this man here, and then,
6 you know, you are going --

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yeah, you are helping.

8 MR. ENNIS: I am not looking at my watch.

9 DETECTIVE MATTEI: No, I know.

10 MR. ENNIS: Trying to help what I could do
11 there. To me, when I helped that other guy, Louie,
12 Lewis, it seemed like we were adrift.

13 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

14 MR. ENNIS: But, I am not looking around.

15 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Did you happen to see, like
16 before the accident, you missed the slot or like the
17 boat was missing --

18 MR. ENNIS: No.

19 DETECTIVE MATTEI: So you --

20 MR. ENNIS: I just thought we were just a
21 regular --

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right.

23 MR. ENNIS: -- going in.

24 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. And you said you
25 seen, was it Bob Rush, and the Assistant Captain and

1 the Captain in what did you say, in --

2 MR. ENNIS: In the pilot house.

3 DETECTIVE MATTEI: In the pilot house.

4 MR. ENNIS: New York pilot house.

5 DETECTIVE MATTEI: New York pilot house.

6 That was going to Manhattan.

7 MR. ENNIS: Towards Manhattan.

8 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Now what about coming
9 back to Staten Island?

10 MR. ENNIS: I was down on the main deck.

11 DETECTIVE MATTEI: You never went up at all?

12 MR. ENNIS: Just that time, and walked down to
13 the main deck.

14 DETECTIVE MATTEI: No, when you left
15 Manhattan.

16 MR. ENNIS: Yeah.

17 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Did you ever go up to the
18 higher floors?

19 MR. ENNIS: No. I went down to the main deck.

20 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Boat leaves at three
22 o'clock.

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: What is that?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The boat leaves
25 Manhattan at three o'clock.

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yeah, no, I got --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He saw them before.

3 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yeah, no, so you seen them
4 going to Manhattan, you see those three people up in
5 the pilot house.

6 MR. ENNIS: Right.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right, that is when you are
8 going to Manhattan.

9 MR. ENNIS: Right.

10 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Then did you get off the
11 boat at all or no?

12 MR. ENNIS: No.

13 DETECTIVE MATTEI: So you just stayed --

14 MR. ENNIS: On the boat.

15 DETECTIVE MATTEI: After you seen them you
16 went down to the lower level and you stayed down there.

17 MR. ENNIS: Right. We are still going to
18 Manhattan at that time.

19 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right. And then you never
20 got off when you got to Manhattan.

21 MR. ENNIS: No.

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: You stayed in that lower
23 level.

24 MR. ENNIS: That is my job, to stay in my
25 station.

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yeah, okay. And then when
2 you came back to Staten Island, the boat is coming back
3 to Staten Island, you still stayed down there.

4 MR. ENNIS: Right, I stay down there, the
5 reason why is because those doors kept on swinging
6 open.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

8 MR. ENNIS: Somebody has got to close them,
9 you know.

10 DETECTIVE MATTEI: All right. How about going
11 there, was the doors opening up?

12 MR. ENNIS: What do you mean going there?

13 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Going to Manhattan, was the
14 doors opening up?

15 MR. ENNIS: I don't, no, no, I don't know
16 about that end.

17 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Well, you were down there,
18 right, I mean, that is --

19 MR. ENNIS: Yes. But, I am not down on Staten
20 Island end. I am on the New York end.

21 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Oh, okay. Okay.

22 MR. ENNIS: Let me explain something.

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yes.

24 MR. ENNIS: The pilot house is up on the New
25 York end.

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

2 MR. ENNIS: When I come out of that pilot
3 house, I go down the bridge deck, downstairs to the
4 main deck.

5 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

6 MR. ENNIS: I don't go all the way down to the
7 main deck, and walk the main deck, down to the Staten
8 Island end here. You understand what I am saying?

9 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yes. So, your position is
10 in, going to Manhattan you are in the back of the boat,
11 coming to Staten Island you are in the front of the
12 boat.

13 MR. ENNIS: Well, I am all over the boat.

14 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

15 MR. ENNIS: My job is when we hook up to
16 Staten Island.

17 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

18 MR. ENNIS: Anything else besides that, I am
19 checking passengers.

20 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right.

21 MR. ENNIS: Looking --

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: But, the doors open three
23 times coming to Staten Island.

24 MR. ENNIS: Oh, yeah, the wind was blowing.

25 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Blowing heavy, right.

1 MR. ENNIS: Oh, yes.

2 DETECTIVE MATTEI: But, going to Manhattan you
3 don't know if they were opening up or not.

4 MR. ENNIS: On my end?

5 DETECTIVE MATTEI: No, on the other end.

6 MR. ENNIS: That I don't know.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Who was on the other
8 side?

9 MR. ENNIS: Who is on the other side?

10 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Who would be on, if you
11 were going towards Manhattan, who would be on that --

12 MR. ENNIS: That deck hand is Sylvester.

13 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. All right, I guess
14 that is it.

15 MR. JONES: Coast Guard, Richard Gonzalez.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: When the, when it started, did
17 you see any other deck hands on the Staten Island,
18 operators or personnel there with you on the main deck?

19 MR. ENNIS: Oh, yeah, there was a mate, Billy
20 Dole, I saw. I saw Hyde. I saw Bob Rush. Like I said,
21 he was looking for the mask for the defibulator, helped
22 them looked for that. I found that, gave that to Bob.
23 He went to assist other passengers. I got a lot of
24 help from the, from the construction workers on the
25 boat. Me and this other guy, when things got a little

1 settled, we embraced, shook hands. I think his name was
2 Mike.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

4 MR. ENNIS: I could have did a lot more, but,
5 you know, it is --

6 MR. JONES: I am sure you did more than what
7 you did. It is quite a scene down there from what I
8 could tell. I am sure you did a lot.

9 MR. ENNIS: I told the man this morning and
10 the FBI, I think it was some from your office there.

11 MR. JONES: From the NTSB?

12 MR. ENNIS: Yes. They are two good captains.
13 All crews, you know --

14 MR. JONES: Yes. All right. Daniel, if, at
15 this time, you know, I would like to ask you if there
16 anything you think could help, God forbid another
17 situation like that.

18 MR. ENNIS: I hope it never happens again.

19 MR. JONES: Right. But, just from seeing what
20 you have seen, you know, we know there were the life
21 jackets, they seemed really accessible. Any other
22 medical supplies that could be down there that you
23 think you maybe more of, less of, better location, is
24 it adequate? Whatever you think might help.

25 MR. ENNIS: I got a little annoyed with one

1 passenger, grabbed me, where is the Band-Aids. Look,
2 what is a going band-aid going to do for this man here.

3

4 MR. JONES: Yes. Well, I just want to give
5 you that opportunity.

6 MR. ENNIS: No.

7 MR. JONES: No.

8 MR. ENNIS: It is a million things --

9 MR. JONES: I think that is fine. I
10 appreciate your time.

11 MR. ENNIS: Yes.

12 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)