

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

---

In the Matter of:	*	
	*	
	*	
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	*	

---

Tuesday,  
October 21, 2003

Staten Island, NY

INTERVIEW OF:

LIEUTENANT JOE LALLY

PRESENT:

ROB JONES, NTSB  
RICHARD GONZALEZ, USCG  
STEVE MATTEI, NYPD  
BRIAN CLIFFORD, NYPD  
JACK CALDERONE, FDNY

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. JONES: Okay. This is Rob Jones, NTSB.

This is an interview of --

LIEUTENANT LALLY: Joe Lally.

MR. JONES: And with the U.S. Coast Guard and about the incident of the Staten Island Ferry on October 15.

Okay. Joe.

LIEUTENANT LALLY: Okay. I initially got it reported to me by the MSDO, Lieutenant Nicky Thomas. She told me that the Staten Island Ferry had elided with the dolphins at the slip, which in my mind wasn't that big of a deal. It was reported that they hit the dolphins and they had 50 foot of damage and one person in the water, and that person it sounded like was reported that it retrieved. Next we got there around 1600, I think it happened around 3:30, maybe a little after 1600. I didn't look at my watch, but I know it was not long after. And our job was to, as a Marine inspector, I conducted damage survey on the vessel to make sure that they weren't taking on any water below the water line, any damage, any, because of the extent of the damage above we thought that we needed to take a look below.

So, we did that. We climbed in all the void

1 spaces. The first thing we did when we got there was,  
2 I had a camera, digital camera, so I took a lot of  
3 pictures of damage that I saw. Didn't get, and we did  
4 see the bodies and all of that. They were covered.  
5 The ones that I saw were covered in a sheet on the  
6 right hand side, as you walking from the pier onto the  
7 damaged end, being on the right hand side. Saw that  
8 the starboard, if that, that is what you are calling  
9 it, if you are looking that way, was all damaged,  
10 probably for about 210 foot of the vessel. We did go  
11 into all the void spaces. We went into the engine room  
12 and did not see any damage where water was coming into  
13 the vessel. Some, you know, some frames and that were  
14 bent up down there, but there was nothing and there was  
15 also some holes in the deck where timbers and other  
16 things had crashed through the top of the deck. Mostly  
17 in the area at the damaged end, where the allision  
18 actually happened.

19 And then we were there from, I guess around  
20 four o'clock until almost midnight, 11:30ish when the  
21 NTSB arrived and we kind of passed over to them. In  
22 that time there was also a response, as we are going  
23 up, after awhile they sent me up to the, I guess, they  
24 call it the Operations shack there, white trailer up  
25 there for the Staten Island Ferry, and I was working

1 with Joe Elbando(ph) and John Malden(ph) on a safety  
2 and security plan, and crowd control plan for the next  
3 day, so that they were looking at starting back up and  
4 resuming operations at 0:500. So, I was up there for  
5 probably two hours and then I came back down and I  
6 ended up taking the PAs from the Coast Guard back  
7 onboard and also my relief, Lieutenant JG Jessie  
8 Holstein, onboard to show them what the damage was and  
9 the PA hadn't been onboard, I guess, and hadn't gotten  
10 any pictures. So we wanted to get some more. So, I  
11 took them on to show them the damage.

12 MR. JONES: Coast Guard PA?

13 LIEUTENANT LALLY: Coast Guard PA. PA-2, I  
14 think, Mike Hosdar(ph).

15 MR. JONES: Okay.

16 LIEUTENANT LALLY: Yes.

17 MR. JONES: Anything else to add right now?

18 LIEUTENANT LALLY: No, not really.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. So, you are a marine  
20 inspector, you didn't respond, you responded on foot or  
21 by car?

22 LIEUTENANT LALLY: By car.

23 MR. JONES: Okay. The assessment that you were  
24 making of the vessel, did you look at structurally the  
25 deck and the deck that all the injuries were on?

1                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: We did look, I mean, we  
2                   knew right off the bat that like, I think it was nine  
3                   or ten of the 15 main vertical stantions on that side  
4                   had been snapped off. So, you know, we wanted to make  
5                   sure that there was not a lot of people up top, so, you  
6                   know, in the case that that deck become overloaded and  
7                   come crashing down on everybody that was down there.  
8                   So, they immediately started, the fire department and  
9                   the police and I am not sure who else, was all shoring  
10                  up, using timbers and that to shore up the deck above.

11                  MR. JONES: That was --

12                  LIEUTENANT LALLY: But, our main, our main  
13                  concern was at the time, it looked like the deck was  
14                  all, it didn't look like anything was moving or there  
15                  was any, I mean, there was definitely some structural  
16                  issues, that they lose a lot of strength underneath the  
17                  deck, but it didn't look like it was going anywhere.  
18                  At that time our big concern was to make sure that they  
19                  were sinking at the dock.

20                  MR. JONES: Okay. So, when you arrived at  
21                  1600, you saw fire and police already shoring up the  
22                  deck.

23                  LIEUTENANT LALLY: No.

24                  MR. JONES: Not at that time.

25                  LIEUTENANT LALLY: They started a little bit

1 after we got there.

2 MR. JONES: Okay.

3 LIEUTENANT LALLY: We were already going in  
4 void spaces by that time.

5 MR. JONES: Do you have an estimate of the  
6 time?

7 LIEUTENANT LALLY: I would say probably by  
8 1700, maybe.

9 MR. JONES: All right.

10 LIEUTENANT LALLY: Maybe an hour after.

11 MR. JONES: They were, that they were shoring  
12 up.

13 LIEUTENANT LALLY: That they started shoring  
14 up the deck.

15 MR. JONES: Okay.

16 LIEUTENANT LALLY: That is just a guess.

17 MR. JONES: When you walked aboard you did  
18 notice that the stantions were gone, the vertical  
19 support was gone, but at the time it didn't appear like  
20 the integrity --

21 LIEUTENANT LALLY: It didn't look like, there  
22 was other structural members that were holding up the  
23 deck as well.

24 MR. JONES: Okay. How long of a time did you  
25 take for the inspection of the below the water line in

1 the engine room?

2 LIEUTENANT LALLY: I would say probably an  
3 hour to two hours, hour and a half.

4 MR. JONES: Was there any, was there any  
5 inspection made above the deck where the impact  
6 occurred?

7 LIEUTENANT LALLY: We just documentary,  
8 pictures and I mean, it was just pretty much self  
9 explanatory as to what that impact was. I mean, we are  
10 going to go back over and determine what exactly needs  
11 to be done to fix it, but, you could see that right off  
12 the bat. Our big concern was with below decks, to make  
13 sure that there wasn't any major damage down there.

14 MR. JONES: Okay. And after you, after you  
15 inspected below, and came up, what did you do after  
16 that?

17 LIEUTENANT LALLY: That was when I went up to  
18 the, to the terminal there to work with them on the  
19 security plan.

20 MR. JONES: Okay.

21 LIEUTENANT LALLY: And then I came back down  
22 and then just gave my relief all the information and  
23 took them on a walk around tour and also then took the  
24 PAs around since I had kind of the layout of the ship  
25 and where most of the damage was and things like that.

1                   MR. JONES: Okay. That is all I have right  
2 now.

3                   MR. GONZALEZ: Richard Gonzalez.

4                   Joe, when you went to the engine room, what  
5 kind of assistance did you receive from the engineering  
6 department?

7                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: We had one person with us  
8 and I can't remember what his name was, I thought it  
9 was John or Jim, he was from the engineering. He just  
10 took us around and made sure that, he was mostly there  
11 for just pointing out, we are pretty familiar with the  
12 Staten Island Ferries to begin with, but, he was just  
13 there to make sure we were safe and showed us where all  
14 the voids were and how to gain access to them the most  
15 safe and efficient way. That was pretty much. But, I  
16 mean, it was really amazing the extent of the damage  
17 above and the minimal damage that was, that we found  
18 below. And in that case, above, you know, it just kind  
19 of sliced right through it at window level and just the  
20 tide must have been just perfect for that cement to cut  
21 right through at the window level. It didn't do much  
22 damage above or below.

23                   MR. GONZALEZ: That is all.

24                   DETECTIVE MATTEI: Joe, Detective Mattei from  
25 the 1-2-0.



1                   When you were down in the engine room, did  
2 you notice like any playing cards, actual playing cards  
3 or like games or dice or anything, you know?

4                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: No.

5                   DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

6                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: Nothing.

7                   DETECTIVE MATTEI: That is all I have, thank  
8 you.

9                   MR. JONES: Did you see at any time, after you  
10 finished your inspections, the crew of the vessel  
11 assisting anybody or could you identify them in any  
12 way?

13                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: No, I wouldn't, I would not  
14 have been able to tell crew from actual people from the  
15 dock, from the Staten Island Ferry, I didn't know who  
16 was who.

17                   MR. JONES: Okay.

18                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: And I am pretty sure that  
19 the IOs probably had all the crew tied up somewhere,  
20 you know, questioning them as far as I know.

21                   MR. JONES: IOs, investigating officers.

22                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: Yes.

23                   MR. JONES: Okay. Okay. Joe, that is all I  
24 have right now.

25                   LIEUTENANT LALLY: Okay.

1 MR. JONES: All right, thanks.

2 LIEUTENANT LALLY: Thanks.

3 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)