

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	*	

Tuesday,
October 21, 2003

Staten Island, NY

INTERVIEW

JOHN SCOTT THOMPSON

PRESENT:

ROB JONES, NTSB
STEVE MATTEI, NYPD

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. JONES: I am starting the interview now with Mr. Scott Thompson, who was a passenger onboard the 15:00 ferry on October 15, 2003, the Andrew J. Barberi.

Mr. Thompson, in your own words, give me a little brief before the incident and then when you first realized something was wrong.

MR. THOMPSON: Oh, I was a non eventful day. Typically, I got the three o'clock boat. It was a windy day, albeit. I don't know if it was high or low tide, but it seemed, we didn't have to walk down the ramps as much like it was a low tide, but it seemed kind of like a mean tide, and got on the ferry. Actually I had to hit the head and then I, because my wife is picking me up, I went down to the lower level of the boat, which is the bottom deck, port side.

I am not a sitter, I like to stand and watch, so I went right to the front doors, so I could get off the boat before the crowd. To me there weren't many people on that three o'clock boat, in hindsight, that was a great thing, but, there were about, I don't know, 200 people on the lower deck, total. It was uneventful up until, I am going to say the last 45 or 50 seconds of the trip. And because of the wind and maybe the

1 salt spray, I just was looking to my port side, towards
2 the Verrazano Bridge, not looking towards Brooklyn, or
3 I am sorry, Bayhome and the other sites that you could
4 see, and I noticed that we were really, I guess, east
5 of Bayhome, going maybe at that time 200 yards, or
6 maybe 100 yards where the boat should park. But, that
7 is not uncommon, because of harbor traffic and stuff
8 like that, but usually and when, when you get closer,
9 and, again depending on, I guess the tides and all of
10 that, I am not a pro at that, the captain usually shuts
11 the boat down, so we tend to coast. And sometimes on
12 occasion, they will actually hit a reverse where you
13 feel like a ratching type motion from the engines, just
14 like a braking effect, because no boat has a brake, you
15 know, like we have in cars. So, none of that happened.

16 And I was, again, standing by two double
17 doors on the port side. There was an actual bum who is
18 sitting on the steps, again, on the port side step,
19 cursing out one of the young Italian guy, who is
20 outside, who had left the door open and quote he said,
21 "What do we live in a barn", to that effect. And there
22 was a young girl with sunglasses wrap around inside,
23 because it is right there, and the kid said, listen, we
24 were going too fast. I said, yeah, you are right,
25 because he was shouting, because, he said, you had

1 better get in. He couldn't open the door because of
2 the wind and the pressure against it and the speed we
3 were going, because we were still going, again, knots
4 per hour I don't know, but we never stopped, we never
5 slowed down.

6 And again, being so far off our normal slip,
7 slip four or five, we saw a pier coming at us, or a
8 maintenance jetty, I guess, two sides. He tried to get
9 in, I helped him in, I said, we are going to hit it.
10 He goes absolutely. Again, waiting for that last,
11 okay, we are going to shut the boat down or put that
12 reverse on, I didn't make a move. I stayed by the
13 doors. And we started telling everybody and shouting,
14 especially this young kid, we are going to hit hard, we
15 are going to hit hard. And we have done it before, you
16 know, you bounce off the pier, you know, the, I guess
17 the eight by eight pylon that they have in, but, there
18 are no pylons at this pier. It is, I guess, the
19 cement another super structure on the side, where they
20 bring the boats in to change crews or whatever. And I
21 am guessing 100 yards, again, east of the pier that we
22 should have docked in, slip five.

23 At that point, I am, I am going to say a
24 football field away from the pier and I said, I am in
25 trouble. And I said, what do I do? I said, I am not

1 going to be able to outrun it, because if we hit, we
2 are going to hit right at the water line, I thought. I
3 said, let me just sit down and brace myself. And that
4 is what I did. I turned around, put my back against
5 the super structure that held up the doors from the
6 port in the center, where the passengers come down from
7 the second deck to egress the boat, and I just turned
8 around and put my hands over my head in a fetal
9 position, and 10 seconds later, I just saw like a can
10 opener, the pier just came right through the whole
11 right side of the boat.

12 And the dust, and, you know, I was covered
13 with glass, obviously, and, and the dust, it was like,
14 it was white and reddish, I don't know why it was red,
15 but it looked like red dust to me, and the boat still
16 hadn't stopped. It tore through, geez, as far as I
17 could see, because then I lost visibility, but the
18 whole right side that I could see from that angle was
19 gone. And the whole second, I guess and third deck, it
20 looked like it was about to collapse, because all the
21 columns that hold up the boat, they were just cut like,
22 geez, you take a pair of scissors and cut through
23 paper.

24 Is everybody all right? That is the first
25 thing I said. And help, help, help, is all you heard.

1 And again, it, at that point I don't know if I was in
2 shock, but I can't tell you how much time elapsed from
3 the hit. And it was like, God, it felt like hours.
4 And all of a sudden, the engine stopped. And then I am
5 getting toward the bicycle area, which is on the port
6 side where the people who rides bikes back and forth on
7 the ferry, are able to store their bikes during their
8 voyage back and forth. There were a couple of ladies
9 hysterical, we can't swim, we can't -- I said, take it
10 easy, don't worry, we will be all right. And all of a
11 sudden I felt the boat revert. I am saying 40
12 seconds, maybe, from the time we hit, the engine shut
13 off and then somebody tried to back out, but obviously
14 the engine or the motor or, I guess, I don't know what
15 type of stern drive they have or propellers, got posed
16 because it was so violent. It was like really locking
17 the front of the boat. And then it stopped. And then
18 there was dead silence and all you could see was the
19 smoke, dust, cement, screams for help.

20 And the thing that bothered me the most was
21 there no horns blowing or anything, because I expected
22 like six or seven blasts real quick and pending crash
23 coming. There was nothing at all.

24 So, I got up, I was covered with blood, but
25 it was only from a nick, shoulder hurt because the door

1 blew back and hit my left shoulder, but it was okay, I
2 mean, and then I started looking around and I saw some
3 body parts pass the stairway. And a Puerto Rican lady,
4 older black lady, peed herself. She was so hysterical.

5 I reached up underneath the deck and got life jackets,
6 started to hand them out, just to calm them down. At
7 that point I saw some guy jump out the window, way on
8 the right, our side. Now, I am backwards, so it is my
9 right side. But, it was still the port side of the
10 boat hitting. And people yelling for help. And that
11 is when I seen the officers from the 120, they came
12 forward. I couldn't see pass mid ship, and the boat is
13 what, 300 feet, 250, they were like right in the guts
14 where all the angle line beams, it was almost a can
15 opener effect. I don't know what the ship is made of,
16 maybe an alloy of some sort, but it was, it looked like
17 all the plastic seats were just like cut, boom, boom,
18 boom, and all over the place.

19 And at that point I lit a cigarette because I
20 smoke, I said, what are they going to do give me a
21 ticket? At that point in time. Oh, I had napkins on
22 me and one guy had a cut on his neck, who was riding on
23 the other side, I reached over and I applied some
24 pressure to him. I don't know what happened to the
25 gentleman because the ladies were screaming, honestly I

1 muddied out, I didn't want to go over that wall. I was
2 scared. So, I backed up and I helped the ladies out,
3 you know.

4 And the next thing we heard, we didn't move,
5 we just stayed there and again the policemen did their
6 thing. And we heard a tug come around side. How long
7 it took, I don't know. At that point I was just like
8 shaking, you know. I turned around, they moved the
9 boat, and I said, I know Joanie saw this, she was
10 waiting in the car. She saw this thing happen. I have
11 got to get off the boat. I guess instinct came over,
12 and I saw a guy from work, are you okay. He is a
13 mailroom guy, and I am a consultant type thing, so, we
14 say hello once in awhile. He was okay. He was on the
15 upper deck. He said, what happened? We hit hard. I
16 said, we hit more than hard. Didn't even, he was on
17 the upper back, and the impact, I guess, because it
18 wasn't a direct hit, it was more of a sheering hit, it
19 was like a rough hit, if you were in the upper deck and
20 didn't know how the boat docks. It was just a rough,
21 rough time.

22 And once the boat got into the dock, I said I
23 am out of here. And I just walked right off. Now,
24 there was a guy with a white shirt next to me, I don't
25 know who it was. But, the thing is I even brought a

1 life jacket home. I had, I didn't realize I had a
2 child's life preserver under my arm. I walked right
3 off and she said, what is wrong? And that is when the
4 firemen and everybody, EMS is there, all the cops, and
5 then they stabilized the boat. But, I didn't wait for
6 anything. I just wanted to get out of there.

7 That is about it, you know.

8 MR. JONES: Well, that is quite a story.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Well, it is true.

10 MR. JONES: Let's start right where, right
11 where you got off the boat.

12 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

13 MR. JONES: You said you were one of the first
14 ones off.

15 MR. THOMPSON: I was the first one off.

16 MR. JONES: Okay.

17 MR. THOMPSON: The boat wasn't even locked in,
18 I just walked over.

19 MR. JONES: And no one tried to stop you.

20 MR. THOMPSON: No. No. There was so much --

21 MR. JONES: I know.

22 MR. THOMPSON: -- chaos, I mean, how could
23 they.

24 MR. JONES: And deck hands didn't say
25 anything?

1 MR. THOMPSON: I didn't see a deck hand. And
2 I hope somebody can find out, you know, I have taken
3 the boat 30 odd years and the one thing I have always
4 at least the policemen have their precinct number and a
5 badge number, deck hands are invisible. If they at
6 least had badges, a name tag, anything, at least I know
7 somebody I could say, oh, I saw, you know, and helped
8 me or didn't help me, at least I could complain to
9 somebody at the Maritime. But, there, they were non,
10 not even there.

11 MR. JONES: And you couldn't tell even if they
12 were doing something good, whether they were there or
13 not.

14 MR. THOMPSON: Well, let me tell you
15 something, there were people down on that deck, who
16 might have had heart attacks and they are trained for
17 CPR, not one of those MFs came down to help. The only
18 two people I saw were the two officers.

19 MR. JONES: Yes.

20 MR. THOMPSON: And they are trained for CPR, I
21 mean, I am looking for first aid kits, or something
22 that can help, I got napkins in my hand. You know, I
23 am saying these, these people went over the wall and
24 through it. These deck hands, for whatever reason,
25 never came down, you know, whether they were told to

1 stay in the concession stand or the second deck for
2 crowd control, I wasn't there. But, I have no respect
3 for them at all. At all. I mean, if there is such a
4 thing as -- now days, trust me everyone of them could
5 go under. Well, they had a good racket for all these
6 years. And I would love to see these guys posted like
7 the cops are, if they are on the lower deck, they
8 should be on the lower deck.

9 MR. JONES: Yes.

10 MR. THOMPSON: Bough and stern. I mean, like
11 the Coast Guard does, you know, you have been there.

12 MR. JONES: Yes. When you exited the boat,
13 was the fire department --

14 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, everybody.

15 MR. JONES: -- cops already there.

16 MR. THOMPSON: EMS was there. Fire department
17 was there. Oh, God, there was so many services there,
18 some many ambulances. They were there, I mean.

19 MR. JONES: So the response was already there.

20 MR. THOMPSON: Absolutely, incredible. I
21 mean, my only thing was the deck hands. I mean, just
22 to show your face, at least and say, take easy,
23 something, you know, nothing.

24 MR. JONES: Yes. Do you have an estimate of
25 how many other people were maybe behind you or with you

1 on the lower deck?

2 MR. THOMPSON: On my side, well, on the left
3 side, I told Joanie, I said, I said, what 20 people got
4 killed, at least, because most people at that time were
5 like me, we get up and we are work at six, we are out
6 at two, get the three o'clock boat. And most of the
7 people were sleeping.

8 MR. JONES: Yes.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Even though they have these
10 like contour chairs, they were laying them down and
11 when the kid started yelling and I started yelling, I
12 don't think they heard us.

13 MR. JONES: Yes.

14 MR. THOMPSON: You know,, and again, if there
15 was a whistle or a horn, that would, that was really an
16 emergency blast, they might have awoken maybe. But,
17 again, you know, it is like hindsight, you don't know.

18 MR. JONES: No. So, approximately 20
19 disembarked with you around that time.

20 MR. THOMPSON: I only saw a white shirt next
21 to me, and I was just concentrating to see Joan,
22 because I know she saw this and --

23 MR. JONES: Okay.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Even though there is a like
25 triple indemnity from a common carrier, I wanted to see

1 her, you know.

2 MR. JONES: Oh, yeah.

3 MR. THOMPSON: That type of thing, yeah.

4 Again, I was on the left side and I just made
5 the left and she was there, and oh, I said to the fire
6 department, they had come in, I forgot the company, I
7 said, it is bad. I said, you, guys, be careful,
8 because I thought everything was going to collapse at
9 that point in time.

10 MR. JONES: Okay. Let's, while you are talking
11 about that, the stantions and all the support were
12 knocked out.

13 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, yeah. On the, nothing on
14 my side.

15 MR. JONES: Right.

16 MR. THOMPSON: But, on the starboard side,
17 definitely. And it had to go into the middle of the
18 ship, where the stairway, you have got the starboard
19 side, you have got two stairways going down.

20 MR. JONES: Actually three. It is three with
21 two rails.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, okay. Yeah, okay, but
23 everything on that side down the middle was gone.

24 MR. JONES: Yeah.

25 MR. THOMPSON: Now, I couldn't tell you how

1 big the pier was that actually run through all the
2 glass and the super structure, and if it was like a
3 cascading effect, but, it was definitely like a domino
4 effect, it just kept going, because the boat didn't
5 stop, it didn't --

6 MR. JONES: Now what made you possibly worried
7 about the overhead coming down?

8 MR. THOMPSON: The windows on the, are
9 rectangular, I guess, and they are like 10 by 8s, well,
10 they weren't, they were like 7 by 8. They were
11 literally blown. And everything was hanging down, I
12 guess the plastic ceiling or whatever they use, the
13 tiles, as far as I could see. It was just, you know,
14 like, you know, a pick up sticks type of thing, only
15 they are metal.

16 MR. JONES: Yeah.

17 MR. THOMPSON: You know, and there was nothing
18 there. I mean, just nothing.

19 MR. JONES: Just to let you know, that
20 overhead lasted about an hour and a half before, in the
21 same condition, before the police and the fire
22 department started to shore it up.

23 MR. THOMPSON: That is what I thought, because
24 I, they had all lumber with them. I mean, these guys
25 were prepared.

1 MR. JONES: Yeah.

2 MR. THOMPSON: But, I guess it was in risk of
3 collapsing.

4 MR. JONES: It is possible.

5 MR. THOMPSON: You know,, again, yeah.

6 MR. JONES: But, it is --

7 MR. THOMPSON: But, at that moment in time, I
8 could have sworn it was going to fall down and
9 everybody on top was going to hit, you know, crush, you
10 know.

11 MR. JONES: That was a good perception.

12 Let's go to the man that jumped in the water.

13 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, he was an older, well, he
14 looked like the typical, he had a little long hair and
15 a beard, I guess, and he was at the end of the boat,
16 but, you know, I don't see that every day, a guy going
17 off the side, you know.

18 MR. JONES: Now he jumped off the side that
19 was hit?

20 MR. THOMPSON: No, he went, no, he was on our
21 side, he went through the window. He went out a
22 window. It looked like a window.

23 MR. JONES: On the good side.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah. And swam toward the
25 pylons. And from what I understand, he was picked up.

1 MR. JONES: Okay. Just so I get this straight,
2 because I have gotten two stories now. Here is the
3 pier as it was struck, and here is the ferry.

4 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, that is the right side.

5 MR. JONES: Okay.

6 MR. THOMPSON: I am in the front back and I
7 saw somebody go out there, right here.

8 MR. JONES: So, he jumps out here.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, somewhere, I mean, I
10 couldn't tell you exactly which row or aisle, but it
11 was a body going out.

12 MR. JONES: But, now he is --

13 MR. THOMPSON: He is saying he went out the
14 starboard side?

15 MR. JONES: Yeah. I am getting one story and
16 coming up on here.

17 MR. THOMPSON: You know, again, I saw a body,
18 I am not going to swear to that.

19 MR. JONES: Okay.

20 MR. THOMPSON: I can't. Because I mean, at
21 that point, it was after the impact. But, I saw a body
22 going out.

23 MR. JONES: Could it may be as you came up
24 here --

25 MR. THOMPSON: It could be, yeah, yeah, again,

1 but I saw somebody going out the window.

2 MR. JONES: Okay. That is fine.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Again, I am like --

4 MR. JONES: Two people --

5 MR. THOMPSON: And I am like this, too.

6 MR. JONES: Oh, yeah.

7 MR. THOMPSON: And I had free access, I mean,
8 there was nothing there to see, so.

9 MR. JONES: Because up until yesterday, we had
10 a report of one of the mates over here on this boat,
11 that saw someone go into the water, but he said he went
12 in the water before it struck, so we had two reports.

13 MR. THOMPSON: See, I saw somebody after we
14 hit.

15 MR. JONES: Right.

16 MR. THOMPSON: And it was a guy.

17 MR. JONES: And I have already talked to the
18 man that jumped in after.

19 MR. THOMPSON: And did he go to the pylons?

20 MR. JONES: He said he went on the same side
21 that was struck.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. So, then, it might be my
23 mistake.

24 MR. JONES: And it is just --

25 MR. THOMPSON: Maybe there was another person

1 we haven't found yet?

2 MR. JONES: Well, that is, that is --

3 MR. THOMPSON: Could that be? Because there
4 is no real count on the ferry boat.

5 MR. JONES: Right.

6 MR. THOMPSON: Maybe that is something that
7 they can address in the future.

8 MR. JONES: We hope that is not the case, but,
9 that is why we want to try to nail it down.

10 MR. THOMPSON: No, no, okay. Again, I was
11 confused at that point in time.

12 MR. JONES: Yeah.

13 MR. THOMPSON: But, I know I saw something
14 going overboard.

15 MR. JONES: Yep. And the, now you mentioned
16 no crew members visible.

17 MR. THOMPSON: No, not at all.

18 MR. JONES: When you regularly ride the ferry,
19 when do you see them into the voyage? When you are
20 arriving in Staten Island.

21 MR. THOMPSON: Once you, once you embark off
22 the pier, they are there to open onto the ramps and
23 close the gates, and then you will see them after,
24 typically after the captain either puts the boat in
25 reverse or shuts it down. And they will come out in

1 front and open the gates so the passengers can get off
2 the boat.

3 MR. JONES: Not during the passage between
4 Whitehall --

5 MR. THOMPSON: Never.

6 MR. JONES: -- and --

7 MR. THOMPSON: Never. You will see them in
8 the concession stand having coffee and picking up
9 garbage, you know, with those little things.

10 MR. JONES: Yeah.

11 MR. THOMPSON: And brushes, yeah. That is it.

12 MR. JONES: Do you usually ride the, you don't
13 usually ride the lower level, is what you said?

14 MR. THOMPSON: No. Typically never.

15 MR. JONES: So you --

16 MR. THOMPSON: Especially a new boat, because
17 the old boats, when they used to have cars before 9/11,
18 you could get off quicker and you might want to do
19 that, because it is, it is more congested to get off
20 the ship.

21 MR. JONES: Right.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Newer boats, because of all the
23 access you can get off a lot easier from the upper deck
24 and the buses are on the passenger deck, or I guess
25 that would be the third level. Yeah, third level.

1 MR. JONES: Right. And then, I lost my train
2 of thought there.

3 MR. THOMPSON: That is all right.

4 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Do you see any mates
5 normally during the course of the trip?

6 MR. JONES: Oh, yeah, the crew members, you
7 don't see them usually during the transit.

8 MR. THOMPSON: No, only if they are picking up
9 garbage, if they haven't swept up. They typically
10 clean the ship, as I usually get on first, so you can
11 see them, you know, cleaning up the debris that
12 passengers leave on their way, and that is about it.

13 MR. JONES: And when you usually ride the
14 upper level, you said, the next deck up?

15 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, any level.

16 MR. JONES: Okay.

17 MR. THOMPSON: It goes, I have ridden all
18 three levels, numerous times, you might see an
19 occasional deck hand in the men's room, or something
20 like that, but --

21 MR. JONES: Do you know what the announcement
22 is when you are getting close to Staten Island?

23 MR. THOMPSON: Stay off the hands, I mean, the
24 rails, and steps until the boat is fast to dock.

25 MR. JONES: Is it clear?

1 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, yeah.

2 MR. JONES: Can you hear it?

3 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sure.

4 MR. JONES: Do you know if you can hear it on
5 the lower level?

6 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, but, it didn't happen on
7 Wednesday.

8 MR. JONES: Okay.

9 MR. THOMPSON: There was no announcement at
10 all.

11 MR. JONES: Right.

12 MR. THOMPSON: No.

13 MR. JONES: Okay. That is all I have right
14 now.

15 DETECTIVE MATTEI: This is Detective Mattei.

16 Did you feel the boat, usually, like make the
17 turn, the normal turn to go into the, like a slip, you
18 know what I mean?

19 MR. THOMPSON: No. Looking out, again, because
20 of the salt spray, I couldn't see, I thought maybe it
21 was harbor traffic.

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yes.

23 MR. THOMPSON: But, the, the boat never veered
24 off course. It just took dead aim and I am looking,
25 the lighthouse is on our right, I don't know how many

1 yards away that is, and he never moved. It was just a
2 straight line. Thank God there wasn't an oil tanker or
3 some type of barge with jet fuel, because we could hit
4 that and it could have been a real tragedy. But, this
5 guy never moved, never turned, never signaled, never
6 shut down the motor, nothing. It was a straight line.

7 I mean, if the tides were real tough, we could have
8 veered off further, I would think, but there was no
9 rudder involved at all, or any type of turning of the
10 vessel at all. At all.

11 DETECTIVE MATTEI: That is all I have.

12 MR. JONES: Okay. You ride the ferry every
13 day.

14 MR. THOMPSON: On the way home, yes. Now I
15 take the, because of the scheduling, the six o'clock
16 ferry, because I have to be in at six, I take the 53
17 bus over the Verrazano Bridge, and take the R train, at
18 86th Street into Metro Tech in Brooklyn, where I am a
19 consultant.

20 MR. JONES: Okay. Medical supplies, did you
21 hear any problems, anybody asking for them during
22 that?

23 MR. THOMPSON: Well, I was looking for first
24 aid kits and there were none there. And I did see fire
25 extinguisher, but there was no first aid kits available

1 at all, on the lower level. I have been on the upper
2 deck, and today coming home on the 2:30, because I came
3 early, I looked around there is nothing. I mean,
4 nothing unless they are hidden someplace for the deck
5 hands to get, but if they are not there, what good are
6 they, you know.

7 MR. JONES: Well, just to, you know, I did
8 hear about that and went and took a look, and there are
9 stenciled signs and it says medical kit is up in the
10 Staten Island pilot house.

11 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, great, that is good to
12 hear, when there is dust and you can't see five feet in
13 front of you, how am I going to get where there is no
14 stairway up to the pilot house?

15 MR. JONES: Well, that is a good suggestion.

16 MR. THOMPSON: Maybe they should have a strobe
17 light over this thing so you can see them in a
18 disaster.

19 MR. JONES: Well, all these suggestions will
20 be, we can put forth.

21 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, I mean, really, you know.

22 MR. JONES: And actually this is good open
23 forum, too, that if you could think of anything other
24 than, I mean, what I hear from you is lack of medical
25 supplies.

1 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

2 MR. JONES: Lack of presence.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

4 MR. JONES: Of the deck crew.

5 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

6 MR. JONES: Uniformed deck hands so that you
7 can readily identifiable, especially in an emergency.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Sure, sure.

9 MR. JONES: So, all these things are taken --

10 MR. THOMPSON: The other thing I would really
11 like to see is with the modern technology, with easy
12 pass and metro card, is not to charge people to get on
13 and off the boat, but, they could have some type of
14 scanner as you get on the boat to get an accurate head
15 count and how many people are on that boat. I mean,
16 there is electronics available. I mean, it could be a
17 sensor on each railing and just activate it, as you get
18 bodies going by, how many are on it. Because you could
19 say, I could put a turnstile in the waiting room, but
20 there is 1500 people that might not make that boat. So
21 you don't know how many people are on the boat.
22 Because they are saying 1500 people, maybe, maybe 800,
23 I mean, maybe 100 on the bottom deck, you know, it is a
24 big boat.

25 MR. JONES: Yeah, there is no accurate way.

1 MR. THOMPSON: No, but if you have a counter
2 of some sort, and they do it on easy pass, when you
3 have that little thing, it is infra red, boom, you are
4 out. And you get charged, trust me. I am not saying
5 you get charged for this, but at least you have a head
6 count with the technology we have got today.

7 MR. JONES: So, just to, so I am clear, Scott,
8 you were port side.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

10 MR. JONES: As it struck.

11 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

12 MR. JONES: Assisted, calmed a couple of
13 ladies that were there.

14 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

15 MR. JONES: Assisted man with a napkin on a
16 cut neck.

17 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

18 MR. JONES: Saw the uniformed police officers,
19 helping out everybody.

20 MR. THOMPSON: Absolutely.

21 MR. JONES: On the starboard side now.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Absolutely.

23 MR. JONES: Which is the Jersey side.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Yep.

25 MR. JONES: Possibly saw someone go out a

1 window.

2 MR. THOMPSON: Yep.

3 MR. JONES: Or did see that, but possibly
4 which side.

5 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

6 MR. JONES: As you went back the other way
7 now, towards the good end, you stayed down that same
8 side?

9 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

10 MR. JONES: Looking over to the damage and
11 everything the whole time.

12 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, yes.

13 MR. JONES: But, never saw any crew members.

14 MR. THOMPSON: No.

15 MR. JONES: Down there.

16 MR. THOMPSON: No.

17 MR. JONES: Never saw anybody with a white
18 shirt and a black pants that looked like an officer
19 with epaulets and a white, black, black tie?

20 MR. THOMPSON: No, sir.

21 MR. JONES: With a black sweater on, maybe?

22 MR. THOMPSON: No.

23 MR. JONES: Over the top of that.

24 MR. THOMPSON: No.

25 MR. JONES: You ride the ferry daily.

1 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

2 MR. JONES: You know what the deck hands look
3 like.

4 MR. THOMPSON: Sure.

5 MR. JONES: They do have a little bit of a
6 scruff to them.

7 MR. THOMPSON: I know they don't wear
8 uniforms. I know what they look like.

9 MR. JONES: Do you think you could identify
10 those, even if they were in there helping out, even
11 with the confusion?

12 MR. THOMPSON: Probably not. Probably not.
13 Because the only thing I focus on was the body parts I
14 saw.

15 MR. JONES: Yeah, I am sure.

16 MR. THOMPSON: And the two policemen, who were
17 there. And then the people called me so I turned
18 around, so I didn't notice from maybe the last third of
19 the boat, I concentrated from the mid ship towards the
20 front, that is what I saw, then I, that is where the
21 policemen were in the middle. And that is when I
22 turned to help the ladies and a couple of people out.

23 MR. JONES: That is a fair assessment.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

25 MR. JONES: I mean, if you didn't see, you

1 didn't see.

2 MR. THOMPSON: No, I wouldn't say, you know, I
3 mean, if they were there, I didn't see Kerry help the
4 kid with the legs, and I understand she was at the back
5 of the boat.

6 MR. JONES: Almost towards where the bathrooms
7 were, from their account.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. So, that to me is the
9 back of the boat.

10 MR. JONES: Yeah, yeah.

11 MR. THOMPSON: I didn't see that either.

12 MR. JONES: Right.

13 MR. THOMPSON: You know, so, anything could be
14 happening, all I can tell you is what I saw.

15 MR. JONES: Yeah.

16 MR. THOMPSON: You know.

17 MR. JONES: After it struck and then the
18 tugboat came along, did you witness, see any of that,
19 the tugboat tying up? Did you notice who tied the
20 tugboat up or was it on the side that you were on?

21 MR. THOMPSON: It was, actually, it was. And
22 no, I was there, I saw the tug come up and, you know,
23 had all the rope and everything on it, and, no, I
24 couldn't tell you who was tying it up.

25 MR. JONES: Okay.

1 MR. THOMPSON: If somebody jumped off the,
2 came down the ladder, who was available or not, I
3 couldn't tell you.

4 MR. JONES: Okay.

5 MR. THOMPSON: I couldn't tell you.

6 MR. JONES: As the tug now started towing you
7 back, and put you in the reverse way, any announcements
8 made during that time?

9 MR. THOMPSON: Not to my knowledge.

10 MR. JONES: And you were still --

11 MR. THOMPSON: I was still on the bottom, yes.

12 MR. JONES: -- on the lower level.

13 MR. THOMPSON: Yes. I didn't hear anything.
14 But, I did hear a lot of commotion going on toward,
15 now, is going to be the front of the boat.

16 MR. JONES: Right. So no one said at that
17 point, there was no mustering of passengers up on the
18 next deck, which actually facilitated a good response
19 from the, the rescue units, so that, you know, there
20 wasn't a stream of thousand passengers?

21 MR. THOMPSON: Nobody was coming downstairs.

22 MR. JONES: Yes, so everybody pretty much went
23 up.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

25 MR. JONES: Or those like yourself, had stayed

1 on the lower --

2 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, because I said, I mean, I
3 just want to get out here at this point in time.

4 MR. JONES: Right.

5 MR. THOMPSON: So.

6 MR. JONES: Okay. That is about all I have.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Nothing for me.

8 MR. JONES: Okay. I appreciate it.

9 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)