

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

LLOYD JOSEPH

PRESENT:

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

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MR. JONES: This is Rob Jones with the NTSB. In an interview of Mr. Lloyd Joseph, who was a passenger aboard the Staten Island Ferry on the incident of 10/15.

Mr. Joseph, if you could tell me in your own words, approximately where you were at the time, what you noticed first, what you heard.

MR. JOSEPH: I was at the lower deck on the ferry. Sitting close to the front.

MR. JONES: The front as you are approaching Staten Island?

MR. JOSEPH: Yes. And I -- what I am going to do when we reach. I saw the ferry passing where it is suppose dock. It was passing there straight and very fast. So, I say, maybe making a tour or something, somebody -- And then I look up again and the people who was close to the, were ready to go, you know, the boat, they turned around and started to run. Well, that was my call, too. I just got up and started running because I know something was wrong because I saw it pass the dock in place. And I started to run, look back and seen like a whirlwind coming at you. All -- the posts and everything just coming, spinning as you are coming. And it caught up with me.

1 MR. JONES: Okay.

2 MR. JOSEPH: The debris and -- And but, I knew
3 something was wrong with me, this side here. I knew
4 something was wrong, because it didn't feel right. I
5 didn't feel nothing there, it was just -- boiling, you
6 know.

7 MR. JONES: Yes.

8 MR. JOSEPH: People come get things off of me.
9 And the fireman came, and they started to remove stuff
10 off or me and everything. And one came and, he was --
11 and he said, keep talking to him. He said keep
12 talking, make him talk and everything.

13 MR. JONES: Was that other passengers, crew
14 members, the emergency service?

15 MR. JOSEPH: I don't think he was, I don't
16 know, he had some -- with him, I don't think, I thought
17 he was a passenger.

18 MR. JONES: Okay.

19 MR. JOSEPH: Maybe he came on after, when the
20 rescue crew.

21 MR. JONES: Okay.

22 MR. JOSEPH: Maybe he came on after the rescue
23 crew.

24 MR. JONES: All right.

25 MR. JOSEPH: And he hold my hand and he was

1 saying keep talking, just keep talking. He asked me my
2 name, I tell him. He said keep talking. Asked my
3 phone number and all this kind of thing. And then he
4 said, they are coming, they are coming for you. So, I
5 said, I want to get out of here, I want to get out of
6 here. I want to get out of here, I want to get out of
7 here. He said, they are coming, they are coming. They
8 are coming. Eventually, the firemen came with the
9 stretcher and took me over to the -- And they keep me
10 there for awhile, because they were telling me --

11 There were people with white sheets, and
12 eventually I get to go in ambulance and they brought me
13 here.

14 MR. JONES: Okay. Your first indication of the
15 accident was that you looked up and saw people running.

16 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

17 MR. JONES: Did --

18 MR. JOSEPH: At the time I don't think it had
19 hit yet.

20 MR. JONES: Okay.

21 MR. JOSEPH: But, those people that were at
22 the front, saw that it was going to crash.

23 MR. JONES: Okay.

24 MR. JOSEPH: And they took off running.

25 MR. JONES: And as you saw them coming to you,

1 your instincts just jumped in.

2 MR. JOSEPH: Yes. Because I know something
3 was happening, because I saw it pass where it is
4 suppose to dock.

5 MR. JONES: The ferry terminal?

6 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

7 MR. JONES: Okay. That is why, you are on the
8 starboard, the right hand side.

9 MR. JOSEPH: Yes. On the right hand side,
10 yes. I know something was happening, so I decided to
11 run, too.

12 MR. JONES: Okay. And as you were running,
13 that is when, did you feel the boat impact?

14 MR. JOSEPH: No, I didn't feel --

15 MR. JONES: Did you realize that?

16 MR. JOSEPH: I didn't feel the impact.

17 MR. JONES: Okay.

18 MR. JOSEPH: Realize, I didn't feel the
19 impact. The next thing I glance around again, I just
20 thought it was coming like a whirlwind. Things just
21 coming at you.

22 MR. JONES: Okay.

23 MR. JOSEPH: Things just coming at you.

24 MR. JONES: Okay. And you remained conscious
25 the whole time?

1 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, I was conscious.

2 MR. JONES: And at any time did you hear any
3 announcements or bells or whistles or alarms?

4 MR. JOSEPH: No.

5 MR. JONES: Okay.

6 MR. JOSEPH: Only, siren, boat coming into --

7 MR. JONES: After.

8 MR. JOSEPH: After, yeah.

9 MR. JONES: Any crew members in the area? Did
10 you see them running with you, can you remember that?

11 MR. JOSEPH: No, I can't remember that.

12 MR. JONES: And just so, for my clarification,
13 the first people that tended to you after the commotion
14 had stopped, was that a crew member or did you just see
15 a badge? You saw a badge or --

16 MR. JOSEPH: Oh, boy. It could be crew
17 member, but it wasn't, was talking to an older man who
18 just had a -- his name was Tod or something, you know.

19 MR. JONES: Okay.

20 MR. JOSEPH: But, it could be crew member that
21 get the debris off of me. It could be the crew member.

22 MR. JONES: Okay. And considering the extent
23 of the accident that happened, do you think you, you
24 were attended to in a timely manner, gotten off the
25 vessel as quickly as possible? I don't want to put

1 words in your mouth, but I want to, that is the kind of
2 question I want to try to --

3 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, yeah. I, I, I mean, at the
4 time, I thought it could go faster, coming up, but,
5 after thinking about it, you know, it is going to take
6 time to get there. So, I think it was done pretty
7 quickly.

8 MR. JONES: Yes. Okay. Is there anything at
9 this point that you could think of that might help, God
10 forbid another accident like that or -- Anything that
11 you could recommend after being through an experience
12 like that?

13 MR. JOSEPH: What I could recommend to me, I
14 know people -- the boat again.

15 MR. JONES: Yeah.

16 MR. JOSEPH: I would never ride it again. I
17 am done with the traveling in that boat. Travel to the
18 front of the boat.

19 MR. JONES: Okay.

20 MR. JOSEPH: Never.

21 MR. JONES: Let me open it out to the
22 Detective, Mr. Mattei?

23 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Detective Mattei, for the
24 record.

25 You said you looked up, and you seen that the

1 ferry was passing the slip.

2 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

3 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Do you take the ferry
4 almost every day?

5 MR. JOSEPH: Every single day.

6 DETECTIVE MATTEI: So, you basically know the
7 route it is going.

8 MR. JOSEPH: Oh, yes.

9 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. How long did it take,
10 or how long do you think, if you can estimate it, from
11 when you looked up, and you seen the normal spot, until
12 you seen or heard the whirlwind coming at you, about?

13 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, about. A couple of
14 minutes, if that.

15 DETECTIVE MATTEI: A couple of minutes.

16 MR. JOSEPH: I think so.

17 DETECTIVE MATTEI: A minute to two minutes?

18 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

19 DETECTIVE MATTEI: And you said the boat was
20 going fast.

21 MR. JOSEPH: Very fast.

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Did it seem like it got
23 faster or did it seem it just, the speed, it maintained
24 the normal speed?

25 MR. JOSEPH: I don't --

1 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Right, but, as you were
2 coming in, did it seem like the boat went faster or did
3 it just seemed like it was maintaining its normal
4 speed?

5 MR. JOSEPH: Like it was maintaining its
6 normal fast speed. I give it as out in the ocean.

7 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. And then you also
8 said that you passed it was on your side, so, if you
9 were say, you were towards the front of the boat, you
10 are saying, so if you looking towards Staten Island, at
11 the front of the boat, was now Staten Island like on
12 your right hand side almost, like you were just, you
13 know, or was it kind of, you are still looking towards
14 the island, but, maybe a little more of an angle?

15 MR. JOSEPH: Oh, this is the boat --

16 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. So, if me and you
17 were both looking at say Staten Island right now.

18 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

19 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Was the boat more like this
20 way?

21 MR. JOSEPH: No, it was going straight in,
22 well, it was going, it was going straight down there.
23 There was no angle to me. It was not at no angle.

24 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

25 MR. JOSEPH: It was going straight on the way,

1 it was going onto.

2 DETECTIVE MATTEI: When you take the boat, you
3 can feel the turns normally if it is maintaining --

4 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

5 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Did you feel any turn
6 before coming into the dock?

7 MR. JOSEPH: No, no.

8 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Or was it more like a
9 steady --

10 MR. JOSEPH: Well, it wasn't --

11 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

12 MR. JOSEPH: So, you know, but, to me, no.

13 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Okay. That is about
14 it for me.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: This is Lieutenant Gonzalez.

16 When the, prior to the people that you heard,
17 saw the people running, did you hear anybody say
18 anything?

19 MR. JOSEPH: No, no. No. No alarms,
20 whatsoever.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: No alarms. Was there any other
22 crew around that you could see?

23 MR. JOSEPH: No.

24 MR. JONES: Rob Jones, again. Mr. Joseph,
25 just, you said the front of the boat was where you were

1 seated approximately.

2 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

3 MR. JONES: Can you estimate how many rows
4 back maybe from the doors? Or in feet? Just
5 approximate.

6 MR. JOSEPH: One, two, three, four.

7 MR. JONES: So you were pretty far up there.

8 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, I was right up there.

9 MR. JONES: And at that time, did you notice
10 even you said about the passing the terminal, people
11 were standing getting ready to get off.

12 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, yeah.

13 MR. JONES: People were starting to line up
14 and get off.

15 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

16 MR. JONES: And up until you saw people
17 running, you had remained seated.

18 MR. JOSEPH: Right.

19 MR. JONES: Okay. That is all I have. I just
20 want to get your location, which was about four rows
21 back from the doors.

22 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Richard Gonzalez, again. You
24 were four rows from --

25 MR. JOSEPH: In the middle, yeah.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: On the, the, on the side of the
2 windows or to the middle of the vessel?

3 MR. JOSEPH: Towards the middle of the vessel.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: Towards the middle.

5 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

7 MR. JONES: And just to, if we could, if we
8 needed to follow up, could we get your phone number?

9 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah.

10 MR. JONES: Okay.

11 MR. JOSEPH: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

12 MR. JONES: And the Detective got your age,
13 right?

14 MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

15 MR. JONES: Twenty eight, was it?

16 MR. JOSEPH: Yeah, 25. Ha, ha.

17 MR. JONES: All right, well, I want to thank
18 you. You have been a lot of help. And I hope you get
19 better fast.

20 MR. JOSEPH: All right.

21 MR. JONES: But, thanks for your help.

22 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Detective Mattei, I have
23 one more question. While you were on the boat, or
24 leaving the boat, did you see any of the crew members,
25 even if you were on the second floor or when you --

1 MR. JOSEPH: You mean after injury?

2 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Yes.

3 MR. JOSEPH: They had a crew member in the
4 room.

5 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. If you --

6 MR. JOSEPH: Whether he was in that all the
7 time, or come from another, I wouldn't know.

8 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay.

9 MR. JOSEPH: But, they had a crew member
10 there.

11 DETECTIVE MATTEI: Okay. Thank you. That is
12 it for me.

13 MR. JONES: Okay. All right, thank you.

14 MR. JOSEPH: Okay.

15 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)