

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

SINKING OF THE FISHING VESSEL *

JEANETTE OFF THE COAST OF PAGO PAGO * Accident No.: DCA19FM010

DECEMBER 5, 2018 *

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Interview of: RONALDO CANDELARIO
Electrician/Oiler

Monday,
December 10, 2018

APPEARANCES:

LT [REDACTED], Supervisor, Marine Safety Detachment
American Samoa United States Coast Guard

FRANK THOMSEN, Assistant Supervisor, Marine Safety
Detachment
American Samoa United States Coast Guard

DAVID FLAHERTY, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ROY HALL, JR.
P&I

WARD GRASSEL
Hull & Machinery Underwriters

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:06 a.m.)

1
2
3 LT [REDACTED]: So, and here we have Mr. Ronaldo -- can you
4 say your last name?

5 MR. CANDELARIO: Candelario.

6 LT [REDACTED]: Candelario. You're the electrician/oiler?

7 MR. CANDELARIO: Yes.

8 LT [REDACTED]: The time is 11:06 a.m., December 10, 2018.

INTERVIEW OF RONALDO CANDELARIO

9
10 BY LT [REDACTED]:

11 Q. Mr. Ronaldo, could you please just go over the events from
12 the very beginning when you first -- going back as far as you can
13 remember with that day.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And just go step by step, include every detail, take your
16 time. We'll let you, you know --

17 A. Start from the time I start work?

18 Q. Yeah, when you got to the boat.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, from breakfast.

20 BY LT [REDACTED]:

21 Q. From breakfast.

22 A. Breakfast. Okay.

23 Q. And then go through all the events. We'll let you talk, and
24 then at the end we'll ask some questions.

25 A. Yes. Okay.

1 Q. So, yeah, please go ahead and get started.

2 A. Okay. Just that day, the routine in the boat, we start to
3 eat breakfast around 6:45 or something, before 7 o'clock, because
4 the start the work in our boat is 7 o'clock.

5 And 7 o'clock we usually go down and talk to the assistant
6 what was the job for today. So he told me to repair the leak on
7 the air line going to the sewage pump, which is the -- we need to
8 cut the one-half-inch pipe and replace a new one, and connect it
9 with new fittings. Then we try to do that until -- we start at
10 7 o'clock and then we -- usually we have the break at 9 o'clock
11 for 30 minutes.

12 Then after that, after 30 minutes we go down again, start at
13 9:30. And we still doing that with Alvin, Alvin Ramores. Me and
14 him is the one who do that close to those guys, the welders,
15 Anthony and Michael. We are on the same area, the wet deck, and
16 then -- I don't remember the time that we stopped but that's why
17 we stopped, because we are -- we know that we are close to the
18 break time already. So we close, we stopped, then we go up -- I
19 wash my -- wash our heads, then go up. I think, as far as I
20 remember, that was like 11:15, 11:15 or something like --

21 And every day I usually hang around in the bow. There is
22 like a small passage -- like a small room there, like a anteroom
23 in the bow. Like this one --

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. There is a room there, but it's open. Then next door there

1 is the one room going to the part of the hallway that we -- I
2 usually stand by there.

3 Q. During your break?

4 A. Before the cook call us for lunch.

5 LT [REDACTED]: Oh. So David, just so that you know, on the
6 main deck, on the forward starboard side --

7 MR. CANDELARIO: No, no. This is the deck.

8 LT [REDACTED]: Oh, port side.

9 MR. CANDELARIO: This is the deck.

10 LT [REDACTED]: Yeah.

11 MR. CANDELARIO: I think this is the room that I'm telling
12 about. It's --

13 MR. HALL: It's kind of, like, when you come back East,
14 everybody (indiscernible) a back room where you take off your
15 galoshes.

16 LT [REDACTED]: Yeah, it's like a little --

17 MR. HALL: It's a little cubby just like that.

18 LT [REDACTED]: All right. So forward part of vessel, main
19 deck, forward of the hallways, there's a little area where -- I
20 guess -- it looks like it's set on centerline of the vessel, in
21 between the toilet and shower rooms.

22 BY LT [REDACTED]:

23 Q. Okay. Go -- I'm sorry. I just wanted to make sure we had
24 that.

25 A. That's the place that I always hung out.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And then me and Anthony sit there inside, and then suddenly
3 we heard about -- those guys coming, they said there's a fire.
4 They come out from the door. From the door, they're coming from
5 the hallway, they said there's a fire; fire.

6 And then we called Bruno, our deck boss. Bruno is -- I see
7 Bruno there is painting. He paint something over here, in the bow
8 over here. Then we call him, Bruno, there's a fire. Where? Then
9 we tried to go inside, inside again, but we can't because the
10 smoke is coming out very fast. That's why tried to come up, going
11 up to the pilothouse on the pilothouse deck, going to the stern.

12 That's the time we see some guys already set up the hose and
13 then try to open up the valve. Then when they open up, I try to
14 get the hose and then I try to spray the water inside.

15 Q. Inside where? Where were you at?

16 A. Over here, in the stern already.

17 Then Anthony found like a BA suit, a BA suitcase, which is
18 inside is a little oxygen tank and a mask. And we try to put it
19 in my body, try to put in my face, the mask, try to suit it on my
20 face, and I go inside to hold the hose. The mask is good, I can
21 breathe good. The oxygen is come out very good. But the problem,
22 when I go close to the chapel already, the smoke is still come out
23 -- come in. I can't do that anymore, so I go out again.

24 And that's the time, we still try to spray till the time the
25 -- I see one fireman come with -- is holding with their own hose,

1 also. Then I try to help him and grab his hose also because
2 that's a good hose. I try to spray as far as I can but the smoke
3 is still coming out very good, very dark smoke, so I can't stand
4 it anymore.

5 As far as I remember, after that, after maybe like -- I'm not
6 sure how long I try to put out the fire with the hose with that
7 fireman, then the port police come and they told us to evacuate
8 the place, the boat. So they tried to tell us to go out from the
9 boat, all of you guys. So we stay -- we go out and then until
10 they said -- they tried to stay on the main gate area. So we stay
11 over there, but we realize that we're not complete, some -- I
12 think, some guys still in the boat. So we try to come back, but
13 the port police no allowed us. We told them to -- no, we going to
14 help the guys to put out the fire. No, don't worry, the firemen
15 is already over there. We're not allowed to come.

16 Then we make -- we maybe, we attempt twice and then our last
17 attempt, maybe the third time, that's the time we go in because
18 the guard is not there. That's the time we saw those guys setting
19 up the portable pump, because I think the wet deck is full of
20 water already and the boat is now in leaning position. So we help
21 them until the pump is working, then till the water in the wet
22 deck is gone. Then the last time I remember when I was in the
23 boat is when the fireman told us to leave the place because it's
24 not safe anymore. I see those firemen already pack up their
25 things and this is the time we leave the boat. That's it. And I

1 see the boat tugged by the tug boat.

2 BY MR. THOMSEN:

3 Q. So you guys that were fighting the fire --

4 A. Well, we tried.

5 Q. -- the port police told you to leave as you were trying to
6 fight the fire?

7 A. Yeah, yeah. Because they said there's firemen already to
8 handle the situation.

9 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

10 Q. Do you remember anybody from all the crew and you guys
11 getting together and counting everybody to make sure you had
12 everyone?

13 A. I remember.

14 Q. When did that happen?

15 A. What's that, sir?

16 Q. You --

17 A. The one we -- those guys with me? Or --

18 Q. Or like did Itchy or the assistant or anybody go around and
19 start counting guys to make sure everybody was off the boat or you
20 were missing somebody?

21 A. No, we just counting when we are in main gate, already. And
22 that's -- at that time we realize that we're just only the one who
23 get up on the boat. I think we're seven of us, and some guys
24 still on the boat.

25 Q. You knew they were still more?

1 A. Yeah. That's why we try to come back, but the port police
2 don't allow us to come back. And then we try again, until third
3 time, that's the time they pumping the water already. They're not
4 helping to put out the fire anymore. I see those guys pumping the
5 water on the wet deck because there's a lot.

6 Q. Yeah, yeah. The boat's --

7 A. The boat is leaning.

8 BY LT [REDACTED]:

9 Q. So at 11:15, you're done washing your hands. You're in the
10 dirty break room with Anthony.

11 A. Yeah, with Anthony.

12 Q. Okay. You -- the next thing you hear is "fire, fire, fire."

13 A. I see Vincent and the other guy.

14 Q. Who says "fire, fire, fire"?

15 A. Vincent. They holding -- I remember he's holding a fire
16 extinguisher that time.

17 Q. Did you hear any alarms?

18 A. I heard alarms.

19 Q. You did?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Before he said "fire, fire, fire," you heard the alarm?

22 A. Simultaneously, that one.

23 Q. Oh, okay.

24 A. Yeah.

25 MR. FLAHERTY: So just to clarify, you heard multiple

1 different alarms, correct?

2 MR. CANDELARIO: No, I think this is a smoke alarm that I
3 heard.

4 LT [REDACTED]: You just heard one smoke alarm?

5 MR. CANDELARIO: I think there's multiple.

6 LT [REDACTED]: You heard multiple?

7 MR. FLAHERTY: Multiple at -- okay.

8 MR. CANDELARIO: That's why when I heard that one, I supposed
9 to come inside to check it out, but those guys come out already.
10 And then they said "fire, fire, fire."

11 BY LT [REDACTED]:

12 Q. So when you heard that, you went to the bow and told Bruno.

13 A. Yeah, Bruno is on like -- maybe a few meters away from us.
14 And then I shout --

15 Q. What is -- so you try and go back but there's too much smoke?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Does Bruno go up to the top with you? Everybody does?

18 A. All of us.

19 Q. Everybody does?

20 A. We go up, because we cannot go inside the hallway anymore.

21 Q. So by -- you say all, you mean you, Bruno, and Anthony,
22 right?

23 A. Anthony, Vincent.

24 Q. Oh, and Vincent.

25 A. And the other guy is Portuguese guy. What's the name of the

1 guy? Claudio.

2 Q. Yeah, I know that name.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Claudio.

4 MR. CANDELARIO: Claudio and one Filipino guy, Armando.
5 Armando.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And you guys all ran off --

7 MR. CANDELARIO: Yeah, around the pilothouse and then we go
8 down again to the (indiscernible) --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's like a (indiscernible).

10 MR. CANDELARIO: Yeah, I know.

11 BY LT [REDACTED]:

12 Q. So when you go topside, and you go around to the back, to the
13 aft end of the boat with the fire hose to fight the fire, is there
14 any electricity on in there? The lights were off?

15 A. No. Nelson, I think he already -- that time he already tell
16 us, okay, you can simply spray the water inside because I already
17 shut down the panel.

18 Q. Where did you get the SCBA at?

19 A. There's an anteroom also over here in the stern, like this.
20 The top of the ladder going down to the wet deck, there's a SCBA
21 there hanging.

22 Q. You grabbed it from there?

23 A. That's the one we grabbed, me and Anthony. And then he tried
24 to put it in my body.

25 MR. THOMSEN: Does he know all the SCBA locations?

1 LT [REDACTED]: I didn't ask him that. I just asked him where
2 did he get his at?

3 BY MR. THOMSEN:

4 Q. Do you know where the SCBA locations --

5 A. Yeah, I know. That's why I try to -- when I found out the
6 SCBA here, I tried to put it on so I can grab the SCBA near to the
7 chapel, but I can't because the smoke still come inside my face.

8 Q. Do you know of a SCBA at the pilothouse?

9 A. I'm not sure if they have. But if they have a SCBA inside
10 the pilothouse, you cannot go inside too because there's a lot of
11 smoke inside.

12 Q. Oh, I see.

13 A. I'm sure there is but we cannot go inside.

14 Q. When you were down in the -- you said you were working down
15 in the wet deck and then you saw the welders and Tinifu. What was
16 Tinifu doing down on the wet deck?

17 A. Tinifu is doing like a grinding, grinding the beam that is
18 need to -- going to replace for the old one. I see him grinding
19 there.

20 Q. And how long was Tinifu down there? From the morning all the
21 way to the fire?

22 A. We start there. All of us is start at the same time.

23 Q. Did Tinifu go up top to the main deck?

24 A. Yep. I see him go up, go down, but I'm not sure how fast or
25 how long, but I see him moving around.

1 Q. Okay. Like, how long did he spend down on wet deck before he
2 went up, and how long was he up?

3 A. I can't tell, sir, because I am also busy on my own project
4 there. But I see him walking around, but I'm not sure how long.

5 LT [REDACTED] I don't have anything else.

6 Do you guys got any further questions?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

8 LT [REDACTED]: David, do you have any further questions
9 regarding this one?

10 MR. FLAHERTY: No, I don't think so. But it was very
11 insightful.

12 LT [REDACTED]: Ronaldo, thank you for your time. I'm going
13 to hit stop.

14 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: SINKING OF THE FISHING VESSEL
 JEANETTE OFF THE COAST OF PAGO PAGO
 December 5, 2018
 Interview of Ronaldo Candelario

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA19FM010

PLACE:

DATE: December 10, 2018

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

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Transcriber ✓