

CUI

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CUI

(b) (6)

17 Sep 08

Interview with (b) (6)

Date of Interview: 17 Sep 08

Time of Interview: 1146

Interviewers: (b) (6)

Respondent: (b) (6)

interviewer: Good morning. This is (b) (6), senior investigating officer for the US Coast Guard Activities Far East. It is September 8, 2017. I have 11:46. If I could have the, everyone at the table here introduce themselves once again.

interviewer: Uh, (b) (6).

respondent: (b) (6).

interviewer: Okay. So, we are doing a re-interview here, just to cover a couple of other questions of things that popped in my mind. So, first off, again looking at my notes here I really didn't get your background history. I'm looking through again to make sure, yeah. So, when did you join the Navy?

respondent: Uh, I want to say, well, uh, my first day at bootcamp was February 14th, so, it was four months before that.

interviewer: Okay. So, bootcamp, Valentine's Day. I'm so, sorry for that.

respondent: (laughing)

interviewer: Was that your last day, or?

respondent: Uh, my first day was February 14.

interviewer: And so, you joined four months before bootcamp?

respondent: Yeah, I was in uh, DEP program.

interviewer: Okay. So, then the McCain would be your first vessel?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And when did you come aboard the ship?

respondent: Uh, May 27th.

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interviewer: Alright. Underway shortly thereafter?

respondent: Yes sir. It was, uh, three days, two or three days before we deployed.

interviewer: Alright, and again your day to day job is deck department and your current watch-station bill is the lookout, aft lookout, helm and lee helm duties?

respondent: Um, yes.

interviewer: Cause during the watch they try to rotate you guys around and make sure things don't get too boring up there. I'm sorry, I'm trying to confirm that with you. That is...

respondent: Uh, yeah, the main reason is mainly to keep everybody awake during watch so, that nobody is stuck at one, uh, location. A lot of times if we are training other guys on there they want to make sure that they also, have a turn on helm.

interviewer: uh-um. So, when you got underway in May you were standing watch at that time as well?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: As, as a UI, is that the term?

respondent: Yes, as a UI.

interviewer: And as part of that UI process as well, do they rotate you around on the same watch or like if you're starting UI at helm do they keep you at helm the whole time?

respondent: Uh, no, we still with whoever we are UI'ing every time they rotate you will rotate with them.

interviewer: So, you have like a mentor?

respondent: Yes. It will generally be anyone who's already been qualified.

interviewer: So, when did you complete your qualifications?

respondent: I want to say two weeks afterwards, after my first watch it was about two weeks.

interviewer: And so, when we say completed is that, uh, board finished, fully qualified, everything's good?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: So, that's towards the end of the first week in June?

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respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Okay.

interviewer: Alright. So, you've definitely had over two months of watch experience, daily, mult. Are you on a 1 and 4 or 1 and 3?

respondent: Uh, it's 1 and 3.

interviewer: So, again that's 5 hours of watch, 10 hours off?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: So, you are definitely standing twice, twice a day basically.

respondent: It's usually five hours in the morning, five hours at night.

interviewer: Alright. And regarding your training itself, is that again mostly UI or are there any, do they sit you down on a simulator or any power points, any book training? How does that work?

respondent: No, uh, what they do is, it's mainly UI. They go up there, and uh, what they'll do is they'll tell you about say for the helm for instance, they tell you about the different console, what's all on the console and what each, uh, essentially each button does. They will also, teach you like your Repeat-Backs, um, how to do course changes. And the actual lookouts, they are more, kinda more like book knowledge. We have power points of what to look for at night for different types of ships, and uh, be able to differentiate between like a type 1 or a type 3.

interviewer: Okay. So, you get like a lot of hands on experience at the helm, actually touching buttons.

respondent: yes

interviewer: And this is what this does, and this throttle. Uh, did anyone ever uh like point to a book or a manual and say if you want to know something more it's down there?

respondent: We actually, uh, have a shelf of binders that has the different manuals for the stations. We also, have a small kind of version of it hanging on the side of our helm station for reference if we ever need it, just kinda reach over and grab it.

interviewer: Do you know if those are used often, like uh as part of the training, or like do you have someone poking you, hey, check out that book?

respondent: We use them during like if we have loss of steering drills or um doing like rudder swing checks.

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interviewer: And, just to make sure that I'm, I'm not confusing the two, when you say manuals with like instructions and stuff, is this like a Navy, I don't know if it's EOSS or EOCC, like a step-by-step process, in case of...?

respondent: It's, um, I can't remember what the actual, it's like NAVPERS, something uh, but it has step-by-step, every step that you're required to take for um in case of a casualty.

interviewer: Okay, so, it's like a how-to manual.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Is there anything from uh I guess a manufacturer or NAVSEA or whoever puts the equipment on there that's like, you know "Welcome to steering gear 1. 0. Here's all the functions that are available in your system." And it's like, like an instruction manual of, you know, that comes with a VCR?

respondent: If we do, um, we don't have access. That mainly for like the techs, um, if they are doing like maintenance or something on it.

interviewer: Okay. So, not, not something that you've seen regularly available on the bridge?

respondent: No.

interviewer: Okay. Um, when did you wake up again on the 21st?

respondent: Um, I want to say it was around 4:50, 5 o'clock.

interviewer: Was that an alarm or something you had set or?

respondent: Yeah, it was an alarm I had on my phone.

interviewer: Do you guys get any cell phone service that close to the coast or...?

respondent: Um, well, it's like my um battery, like my alarm clock. It doesn't require any WIFI or anything.

interviewer: Sure. And, uh, so, again your position as helmsman was for sea and anchor detail?

respondent: Um, I was up there to um relieve them so, that they could eat breakfast, waiting for the master helmsman to take over the helm.

interviewer: Okay. Alright. I know you said that then. What was your duty on sea and anchor detail?

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respondent: I was, uh, I manned the RHIB. I was, uh, I was on standby in case uh we had a man overboard board and we needed to deploy the RHIB into the water.

interviewer: You were what for the RHIB, I'm sorry?

respondent: Um, I was uh forward steady line.

interviewer: Oh, forward steady line.

respondent: Yeah, forward or aft steady line usually is where I am at.

interviewer: Alright. So, was that arranged ahead of time that you would be standing?

respondent: Yes, we had a watch bill typed up a couple days beforehand.

interviewer: I'm sorry, for you standing I guess chow relief at helm. Who directed you to go up to the helm and stand that relief.

respondent: Uh, it was (b) (6)

interviewer: Okay. And I guess my question is when they told you to go up "hey go up to the helm, they need to get some chow, it will only be a few minutes or whatever." Did they tell you that morning? Did they tell you the night before? "Hey, wake up at 5 and go relieve."

respondent: Uh, it was that morning since I was uh one of the only ones up. Um, cause some of the other guys still need to get their quals so, I was one of the only ones that had my quals to just go up there for a couple of minutes so, they can eat chow.

interviewer: Do you know who the master helmsman was that was supposed to take the helm from you?

respondent: I believe it was (b) (6). He's one of our master helmsman.

interviewer: Okay. Do you see (b) (6) around?

respondent: Uh, no, not that morning. I did see, like I didn't see him until after the collision.

interviewer: Alright. So, you get up cause you set your alarm sometime before 5. Did you get any breakfast?

respondent: Um, yes, I had eaten breakfast and then I had went out to kinda look outside for a smoke break.

interviewer: And then somewhere along the way (b) (6) sees you and says "Hey, could you come up to the bridge, stand helm for a bit?"

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respondent: Yeah.

interviewer: So, the individual on the helm at that time was (b) (6) ?

respondent: Yes, (b) (6).

interviewer: Alright. So, how did that handover go between you two?

respondent: Um, I went up to, uh, I walked up to the helm station. We have a little white board that has basically the last orders relayed, course heading, which HPUs we are on, the speed we are going, and whether or not we are going trail shaft or split-plant configuration. And, uh, after looking at that I went to the con and did the formal relief.

interviewer: Okay. Do you recall again what those, uh, some of those, the information was, heading speed, trail, split...?

respondent: Uh, I believe, if I remember correctly it was um steady on course like 2-2-6, checking course 2-2-8, um, bravos online, alpha on standby. I believe at that point we were at split-plant configuration.

interviewer: And rough idea on speed?

respondent: I want to say at that point we were going 15 knots.

interviewer: Okay. Alright. So, you do your relief, go up to the con. Rough time again?

respondent: Um, I want to say 5:15.

interviewer: Alright. I'm not trying to catch what you said last week and be like "Oh, wait but, no". I'm just double checking my notes to see what I asked and didn't ask. Alright. So, 5:15, you're at the helm, going at the course ordered. And, then, uh, do you have the throttles as well?

respondent: Uh, yes, I have both throttle and rudder control.

interviewer: So, that's helm, lee helm, um, but you don't have lee helm for long, is that correct?

respondent: Um, we just, uh, as soon as I relieved (b) (6), it was either the Captain or one of the other officers had suggested that (b) (6) take over lee helm since we had heavy traffic to try to relieve the burden.

interviewer: Okay. So, I'm going to ask a question on that. Did you hear them make that suggestion?

respondent: Yes. Yes, I heard (incomprehensible) (b) (6) saying to take over at lee helm for thrust control.

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interviewer: Okay. Who told (b) (6) to take lee helm?

respondent: I can't remember.

interviewer: Okay. Alright. So, (b) (6) off the helm, you're on the helm, and (b) (6) why don't you take lee helm." How does, how do you switch from that helm station on left, the throttles, to the lee helm station on the right?

respondent: Uh, first you notify either the OOD asking permission to switch thrust control to lee helm. And after they give you the okay then um on the left, no the right, excuse me, the right, top right-hand quarter there is a little button that says, on there it says thrust location. And there's a little arrow, you click on it. It has a drop-down menu that shows um the different stations that you can switch the thrust to. We, uh, for port and starboard shaft we switched port shaft over and then starboard shaft and waited for the screen on the lee helm to kinda light up, suggesting to uh accept the thrust controls.

interviewer: Okay. And so, when you say we, who is actually touching the buttons to put it to lee helm?

respondent: I'm actually touching the buttons and then um (b) (6) is waiting for the pop-up so, he can hit it to uh hit accept, take the control.

interviewer: So, you were on helm and he's on lee helm?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Okay. So, when you, when you hit the, when you're on the console and you hit the port shaft you offer it to lee helm. Does he accept it immediately, or do you hit port shaft, starboard shaft and then he accepts them separately over here?

respondent: Um, I hit port shaft and starboard shaft and he accepts both immediately. Like it will pop up and then he'll hit accept for the controls.

interviewer: Okay. So, once you hit send port, send starboard he just hits one button to accept both?

respondent: Um, no, both lights will light up at the same time. He will have to drop down the both to hit accept for each one

interviewer: and accept individually. Okay.

interviewer: Prior to this, do you know if the throttles were ganged together?

respondent: Um, yes, we had them ganged since we will be doing multiple speed changes.

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interviewer: And when you transfer from one station to the other, do they remain ganged or do they have to be re-ganged?

respondent: If I remember correctly, they, uh, they stay ganged.

interviewer: Do you remember if, uh, because I've heard there's multiple steering methods. There's like a computer manual and a backup manual, different ones. Do you remember which mode steering was in at that time?

respondent: Uh, at that time we were already driving in backup manual.

interviewer: Did anyone explain why?

respondent: Uh, no. It was already there by the time I went up to relieve the helm. They were already in backup manual.

interviewer: Um, okay, so, you're at your station. You press to send. So, when you send throttles, you select what station specifically they get sent to?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Alright. So, you touched the drop-down menu from the throttle, the throttle menu. Selected lee helm.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And you, so, it's drop-down, lee helm, drop-down, lee helm. Did you go specifically in that order, port and then starboard?

respondent: Uh, yes, I went port and starboard. When did you see the lee helm station take those throttles?

respondent: Uh, immediately after I hit the send button his screen popped up to, uh, for accepting throttle control.

interviewer: And how do you know that the lee helm took those throttles?

respondent: Um, soon after we did a speed change, cause we were at, um, to increase to 20 knots.

interviewer: Okay. So, that increase was done from (b) (6) ?

respondent: Yeah.

interviewer: Alright. Um, so, again you got on watch at 5:15, or you took the helm at 5:15. When did you switch things over to the uh the lee helm?

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respondent: I'm gonna say 5:17? Two minutes after taking over helm.

interviewer: In, in the drop-down menu where you are selecting each individual shaft, where is the, where is the button to send helm control relative?

respondent: Oh, for steering control?

interviewer: Yeah.

respondent: It will be in the top left corner. It will say steering mode.

interviewer: Yeah.

respondent: It will drop down and say like CCS, autopilot, backup manual, computer manual and aft steering.

interviewer: Okay. So, is it a separate drop-down menu altogether?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Okay.

interviewer: Um, so, the indicator for which station has control, is that in a top menu? Is that in a bottom menu? Where, where is that indicator that says "Oh, it's at helm"?

respondent: Um, normally, on top like it will show the, little flashing thing saying that they have control, and then down at the bottom where it has a synopsis of uh, uh different functions, (incomprehensible) it will say signal transferred to lee helm.

interviewer: So, when you say flashing, what, what is flashing on that screen?

respondent: Um, the actual the, um, drop-down menu for uh the different, for the different stations, it will flash basically notifying that uh the lee helm or the helm, whichever station is taking control, that it's ready to be taken control of.

interviewer: Okay. So, that's how a station knows they can take control, it will be flashing at them?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: How about alarms?

respondent: Um, we, there usually isn't an alarm for thrust control, but there is if uh we were to change the steering control.

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interviewer: Okay. And how do you clear those alarms?

respondent: It automatically, as soon as the other station accepts the controls it stops automatically. Um, there is a way to do it, stop it manually, but I'm not sure how to stop the alarms.

interviewer: So, again when you're taking steering control it's that same drop-down menu, it's flashing at you, you accept, and you've got it. Is there anything on the main screen that is flashing that you can touch and it does the same thing, or is it only through the drop-down menu?

respondent: It's only through the drop-down menu. The only other way to switch steering control is down aft and if you hit the emergency override button.

interviewer: Okay.

interviewer: And the alarm you said stops automatically for steering control the moment they accept it?

respondent: Yes, the moment the other station has positive control of steering then the alarm will stop sounding.

interviewer: And do you recall hearing that alarm?

respondent: Yes, after I hit the emergency override to aft steering the alarm went off.

interviewer: Alright. About what time was the speed increase given, that 20 knot speed increase?

respondent: I believe, about 30-35 seconds after lee helm had gained control of thrust.

interviewer: Alright. So, everything is at lee helm, you get an order for speed increase. We go to 30 knots, or 20, 20 knots.

respondent: 20 knots, 30 seconds.

interviewer: 20 knots, 30 seconds after the helm, the throttles are switched. I'm going to get this worked out eventually. Alright. At what time then do you, did you experience a loss of steering?

respondent: I want to say a minute after steadying up on course 2-3-0, um, I started drifting a little to the right of my course. I moved uh left 4-degree rudder to steady back up on it. As soon as I was getting ready to steady up I tried to move it back right and it would not respond.

interviewer: Alright. So, you had a course change as well to 2-3-0?

respondent: Yes.

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interviewer: Alright. So, you're on the helm, (b) (6) is on throttle, switch to throttle, everything switched to lee helm, 30 seconds later "hey increase speed to 20 knots" and about 30 seconds after that "let's get a course change to 2-3-0."

respondent: Uh, it was the um, as soon as I took over as helm is when we did the course change to 2-3-0, so, before we did the throttle change.

interviewer: Okay. So, roughly at 5:15, hey go 2-3-0.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Roughly 5:17 let's go to 20 knots.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: So, so, we're working, oh take that back. So, you're up there at 5:15, you get an order for 2-3-0, 5:17 is the switch to the throttles to lee helm, and about 30 seconds after that is the increase speed to 20.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Shortly after that you're finally on course 2-3-0, and we're steadying the course, you come back try to get a left 4-degree rudder. Did it go left 4 degrees?

respondent: Yes, it, um, it went left 4 degrees. I, uh, I started getting back on course. Then as soon as I tried to bring it back right to steady it off, it, uh, that's whenever I noticed that it was locked at 4 degrees.

interviewer: Alright. In that moment, explain to me what you're screen is showing. Like what's, what's in each corner of your screen?

respondent: Um, everything is, uh, for the most part, everything is doing what it's supposed to be doing, and then the actual rudder. Um, like everything was running except for like the rudder is, it's like stuck. It looks like it would be working but it's just staying there like a frozen screen.

interviewer: Okay. So, you've got like a heading, a compass, and what's your heading?

respondent: Uh, my heading is 2-3-0. Then on my rudder I had it showed ordered amidships but it was the port and starboard rudder were 4.

interviewer: And on your screen, you also, see throttles as well?

respondent: Yes, um, except for on my screen they are grayed out because the helm has control.

interviewer: Are they still repeating though what's on the lee helm screen?

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respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Okay. Where are they? Cause it's basically like a graph, it goes up and it goes down. Where are the two throttles?

respondent: They are at, um, both of them showing 20 knots, and I believe that's like 1-9-8. I can't remember. We have a chart that shows the actual number. But I know they were both saying that they're still at 20 knots.

interviewer: So, both numbers are showing the same?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Alright. So, the rudder is locked at 4 degrees. What additional actions did you take?

respondent: Um, in order to verify that I had loss of steering I did a rudder screen check, try to do 5, left 5-degree rudder and then right 5-degree rudder. As soon as I verified that uh it was non-responsive I called out to the OOD, telling her that I have loss of steering.

interviewer: And what time do you think that was?

respondent: I want to say around 5:19, 5:20.

interviewer: And what was the response from OOD?

respondent: The OOD had told the Boatswain Mate of the Watch, (b) (6), to call on the IMC, "Combats system casualty, loss of steering". After that I tried to switch my backup HPUs from bravos to alphas, and they were non-responsive.

interviewer: So, backup HPUs from bravos to alphas?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: What do you mean they were non-responsive?

respondent: Um, it was like lit up like I'm able to click on them and change them but it wouldn't allow me to switch them to alphas.

interviewer: Okay. At this time is there anything changing on your screen?

respondent: I do notice my rudder, um, when it was stuck at 4, it was slowly increasing left. I want to say it reaches about left 15-degrees. It was just very slowly moving over to the left.

interviewer: Any changes to throttles?

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respondent: They were still um both indicating 20 knots. Then as soon as um, since we were already in backup manual, um, I, the OOD had said to call down for to man aft steering. As soon as we got COMMS in steering, they said they were ready to take control. That's when I hit the manual override, the emergency override button to send the signal to them.

interviewer: Okay. How many times did you hit the manual override button before aft manning was stood up?

respondent: Uh, just the one time. As soon as they verified, uh, notified to us that they were ready to take control.

interviewer: Alright. So, and when you say hit the manual override button is that, that big red button that's on like the center part of the console?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Alright. So, you hit the button. What then happens to the steering?

respondent: Um, the aft steering does their rudder swing check, and uh, it actually shows on my screen that it had, as soon as I switched it over, it moved back to amidships. Then they did their rudder swing check. Then we relayed the order to them to do hard right rudder, and they moved it all the way to right 30-degree rudder. They were getting ready to slowly ease it up to 35. As soon as they get to about 31, that's whenever they called back up to us saying that they no longer had control. Shortly after, I'm looking at my screen and the rudder had whipped back over to the left, and uh, I just happened just to um be moving my rudder down to amidships at the time. And after it went back to left 15 it started moving back down as I was moving my rudder to the right

interviewer: just to make sure you had control again?

respondent: Yeah. And by that time (b) (6) was up there because he was supposed to relieve the boatswain of the watch. Me and him both started swinging the rudder to the right to get it to move back over. As soon as we got to right 15-degree rudder we ended up losing control again.

interviewer: After when aft steering had control, that first time after you hit the button, was there, did you touch anything on the screen or anything at the helm?

respondent: No, cause uh the only thing we do as soon, whenever we switch it to aft steering is to move our um rudder to amidships and not to touch anything else. Everything else on my screen is grayed out so, that way I'm not able to touch anything. But if someone were to hit the emergency override button again it would send the signal back to the helm station.

interviewer: It would send it back from the station, to the station to, back up to...

interviewer: So, the first time you hit the red button it goes to aft steering, and the second time you hit it, it comes back to you?

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respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Where, where on your screen does it say where the steering, like which station has steering?

respondent: So, my top left corner, it shows that uh steering location and it said aft.

interviewer: And that's after you hit the red button?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Do you know what's, what are you seeing on the throttle screen?

respondent: They are at 20 at the time, and the Con had ordered to, uh, down to 5 knots since we switched steering over to aft steering. And it shows that it's slowly decreasing, like down to um 5, and I want to say it reaches around 10 knots before, uh, the initial collision happened.

interviewer: And so, when you say you're seeing it come down, is that on your screen or is that the lee helm screen?

respondent: Um, you can see it on both screens. On my screen, on my console it's grayed out so, that way I'm not able to mess with it, but you can still, it will still, on all the stations you can still show that it's moving.

interviewer: Um, how quickly, so, again, the speed order, the only speed order given was to go from 20 knots down to 5 knots.

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And you said it got to about 10. Roughly how long did it take to go from 20 to 5?

respondent: When it reached about 10, um...

interviewer: Or 20 to 10, I'm sorry.

respondent: Uh, I want to say 45 seconds. Yeah, cause we felt the initial jolt of the rudders going reverse to, uh, start slowing down. It only took about 45 seconds to start really decreasing.

interviewer: When you say rudders, is that the prop?

respondent: The, um, the propellers.

interviewer: Okay.

respondent: Or the engine.

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interviewer: And again, they are going down together?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: So, you shifted control to aft steering by pushing the red button. What did you do with the helm?

respondent: Um, I was bringing my wheel back down to amidships cause if not then wherever I would have my helm at, if I had hit the control back to me or switch back to me it would go right wherever my helm is at.

interviewer: What's the time interval between you pushing the button and getting to amidships?

respondent: I want to say not even a minute. Like I hit the red button, uh, verified that they had taken control. As soon as I saw them do their swing checks I started moving my rudder to amidships.

interviewer: Because your rudder was at what degree?

respondent: Uh, it was at 4 left degree rudder.

interviewer: How much do you have to turn your helm to get from 4 to 0?

respondent: Um, I want to say about 1/2 turn.

interviewer: Okay. So, it's not like multiple rotations to get back. It's just like, like kind of a U shape.

interviewer: And on that helm control, what are the markings again? Are they 1s, 5s, 20s?

respondent: Um, on the actual um, on the non-digital one, the actual one that shows me where my wheel's at, it has like the tacks or lines and then it goes by 5s, like 5, 10, 15, 20. And then I can't remember if it goes to 25 or not, but I do know it shows 30.

interviewer: Okay. So, you're at, when you say you're at 4, that's on that physical control or is there a digital control that you're looking at?

respondent: uh, physical.

interviewer: Physical. So, it's right next to that 5. And so, when you are coming back to amidships are you actually turning that wheel or are you touching the screen?

respondent: I'm turning the wheel.

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interviewer: Alright. So, you send it to aft steering, you see a positive rudder check. Is that correct?

respondent: Yes. And then immediately after the rudder check they had did a hard-right rudder.

interviewer: So, positive rudder check. From where to where, do you go?

respondent: Uh, you do 5 left degree rudder, then 5 right degree rudder, and then back to amidships.

interviewer: You said 5 degrees?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And what's the turn from 5 to 5?

respondent: Um...

interviewer: About how much time?

respondent: I want to say, like depending on how fast you're moving it, about 5 seconds. Just like about three or four full turns.

interviewer: Okay. I guess what I'm saying is like, you have your indicator that says move to 5. So, if you're 5 left and then you're going to 5 right, how long does it take the actual rudder to get from 5 left to 5 right?

respondent: Um, after the ordered rudder angle it follows up just like seconds behind, just maybe like 1 or 2 seconds behind it.

interviewer: Okay. And you see the rudder go, right?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: 30?

respondent: Yes, after the, um, we relayed the order to do hard right rudder.

interviewer: And again, you're, you're not touching anything on your screen, you're not touching anything on the rudder? Is there anyone else on the screen next to you touching anything?

respondent: No, we were both standing by waiting for further instruction.

interviewer: Did you see anybody, I guess there's a screen forward in the bridge that has similar functions? Was there anyone at that station?

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respondent: No, that station was turned off, or the screen was blacked out.

interviewer: Okay. And when you say aft steering has taken control, was that, was there a verbal or was that simply seeing them move the rudder?

respondent: Uh, they tell us that they are doing rudder swing check and then as soon as they do it, they say they have positive control, we relay that to the con.

interviewer: And so, you heard that on your radio?

respondent: Uh, yes, whoever was on COMS at the time with aft steering.

interviewer: Who was on COMS with aft steering?

respondent: Um, for a little bit it was the JOOD, and then I'm not sure who took it afterwards.

interviewer: So, you see the rudder going to 35 and then it just starts swinging back left.

respondent: Yes. Yeah, cause it gets to about 30 for a couple seconds. We can feel like our ship starts turning to the right. And then right after that it had whipped back over to right, or to the left.

interviewer: And when this is happening, what, where are the, what is the throttle speed?

respondent: Um, as soon as like whenever I uh, it had whipped back to the left the throttle had just reached 10 knots.

interviewer: Okay. So, everything is moving left. Your rudder is...?

respondent: Um, I had just started moving it to the right then amidships. And that's whenever it started crawling, uh, my rudder.

interviewer: Okay. So, when you hit the big red button you put her back to amidships.

respondent: Um, I was waiting for them to do their swing checks. I waited till they did their swing checks before.

interviewer: Okay, but is the policy that when you push the red button and they have control you go to the amidships?

respondent: As soon as I was notified that they had control then we brought it down. Like I say, there was a delay in like the orders between the COMS. I had waited until I had saw the swing checks to switch over.

interviewer: Okay. So, you saw the swing check? But you kept it at 4?

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respondent: Yes, um, as soon as their swing check was over they moved it hard right. At the same time, I moved it, I started moving it over. As soon as they hit 30, um, degrees it had moved back to the left.

interviewer: Okay, so, when they hit 35 and it started moving back you were at...?

respondent: As soon as, I'm at amidships right now.

interviewer: You're at amidships?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And the rudder goes from 35 and then moves to...

respondent: Um, I believe at the time it reaches about 9, 10 left degree rudder and then it starts moving back over to the right.

interviewer: And then, I'm sorry, it comes from right full rudder to, to left 10 degrees, 9, 10 degrees?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And then back to amidships?

respondent: Yeah, then it went back to amidships to match, it started to match my rudder.

interviewer: And what indications did you have that it was back at the pilot station?

respondent: Uh, I had did, I started, um, whenever I saw it move. Cause usually like it's grayed out where it shows the rudder, but it had lit up. As soon as I saw that I moved it, I did a rudder swing check and it moved the way it was supposed to. And then me and [REDACTED] immediately tried pulling it to the right.

interviewer: Did you see, what indicators do you have aside from it not being grayed out on your helm, on your station?

respondent: Um, that was, cause my steering location still said that aft was, uh, still had control and I want to think the actual, the rudder had lit up and then aft had said they no longer had control.

interviewer: Okay. So, it's at amidships, it's following your rudder, your screen is lit up but it says aft has control?

respondent: Yes.

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interviewer: And then immediately yourself and (b) (6) ...?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: ...are trying to shift the rudder to, right?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: Who, who gave the order for right?

respondent: Um, originally the uh first initial hard right rudder was given by CON and then uh, as soon as uh my station (incomprehensible) me and (b) (6) took the initiative because we saw the ship right on us, so, we tried to whip it back down to the right to get out of the way.

interviewer: Okay, so, you saw the ship off your port side?

respondent: Yes. I want to say, cause the way it looked it was about 500 yards out at that time.

interviewer: And why were you looking out the window?

respondent: Um, cause I had looked cause my CON was at the port, had just walked over to the port and then I had looked over to get his attention and I saw the ship right there.

interviewer: Did anyone else notice the ship?

respondent: Um, yeah, all the officers that were standing port lookout, and we had one officer on the bridge trying to get bridge-to-bridge COMS with it.

interviewer: Do you know who that was?

respondent: I believe it was (b) (6), but I'm not 100% sure.

interviewer: Can you spell that name please?

respondent: I believe it's spelled (b) (6).

interviewer: Okay. And what position was (b) (6) standing?

respondent: Um, at that time he was supposed to relieve OOD, during sea and anchor.

interviewer: And, uh, when did you hear a collision alarm?

respondent: Um, immediately after, um (incomprehensible) we heard, um, a loud crash, uh, we shook, kinda flew, me and (b) (6) back a couple of feet. And then as soon as like everybody kinda realized what the hell happened, the Captain yelled out, "Sound the collision alarm and um station general quarters."

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interviewer: So, the CO called the collision alarm?

respondent: Yes.

interviewer: And then GQ. How many times had you switched the different stations before for throttle or steering or?

respondent: I want to say, myself, four to five times since I've been at the command.

interviewer: And had there been any issues before when transferring?

respondent: No, everything worked the way it was supposed to?

interviewer: Did you, when you were doing those transfers, was, was the helm at any time in backup manual?

respondent: Uh, normally it's at computer manual. But every now and then, I'm not sure why they do it, but they'll have it at backup manual.

interviewer: Okay. But have you transferred a helm station or a throttle before in backup, when steering was in backup?

respondent: Yes, yes.

interviewer: About how many times have you done that?

respondent: Uh, I've done that twice while we were in backup manual during a loss of steering drill.

interviewer: When do you think the last loss of steering drill was done aboard the ship?

respondent: I want to say two months? I believe, I believe it was the beginning of July was the last one I had. I'm not sure how many times we did it after that.

interviewer: So, (b) (6) is standing next to you, using the throttles. Did you see him touch the screen any other times?

respondent: No, the only time I seen him was to change the throttle.

interviewer: Okay. Touch the screen to take control?

respondent: Yeah, to take control, and we did a speed change.

(b) (6)

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interviewer: Again, I definitely appreciate you coming back to talk to us here, answer some of our questions. (b) (6), anything further? Alright. Hopefully we can get you some lunch here. Definitely, again, thank you so, much for your time. Just want one last time to give you, any questions or comments for us?

respondent: No, I think that's pretty much it.

interviewer: Well, again, we appreciate your time. If we do come up with any additional questions we will reach out to you again. Thank you so, much.