



U.S. COAST GUARD INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Matter Under Investigation: Vessel CHAD PREGACKE Railroad Bridge Allision in Vicksburg, MS., on 27 FEB 2019

CWO [REDACTED]'s statement from interviewing the Trip Pilot, Charles Stapleton, and the Towing Vessel Captain, Fransisco Rivera. Began interview at approximately 1100 on the 27th of February 2019. The location was on the bridge of the M/V CHAD PREGACKE. In Attendance was myself, CWO [REDACTED], as investigator for the CG, MST1 [REDACTED], Charles Stapleton and Fransisco Rivera. This is in regards to the bridge allision that happened on 27 February at approx. 0705 in the morning while they were pushing 30 loaded barges of dry cargo down river to various locations south, to include but not limited to Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

The Trip Pilot, Charles Stapleton, stated he came onboard vessel on the 25th of February at Cottonwood Point, which is in Pemiscot Township, MO, to assist CAPT Rivera southbound on the Mississippi River for the duration of the trip. He specifically stated he was hired to do this based on the lack of experience the CAPT had on this route. Pilot was on his 2nd issue of his MMC and stated he had been on this river since 2001. We began talking about what happened at the time of the allision. There are typically two ways these mariners approach this particular bridge during high water, they say either steering or flanking. And, these decisions are based on what the mariner is comfortable with. This pilot stated he normally flanks but chose to steer based on what he experienced coming around Brown's Point. He stated however the current is behaving at Brown's Point helps him plan for what he does at the Vicksburg Bridge. While coming up to the Vicksburg Bridge he stated as he had his jackstaff to the right, he ended up "setting way ahead than expected". He had an option to back out but decided to try to push through which caused him to hit the number 3 Pier referenced in the Railroad Vicksburg Bridge pdf. He stated he hit the pier with the number 2 barge out (from the towing vessel) in the first string port side. The video shows it looking more like the 2nd coupling. However, if you notice the tow diagram the CC-95507B is the barge that stayed and sank at the bridge. He also stated he went through this bridge, going Northbound the week before and had transited this bridge southbound 2 weeks before the allision. He also mentioned he is hired by several different companies for this route.

After this questioning, I proceeded to ask him specifics about any SMS exposure he received from the CAPT or Marquette Transportation Co. LLC. He stated he completed an orientation with CAPT Rivera and documented this information on the Boarding and Departure Statement (please see attached) when he arrived, they get this guidance out the SMS by referencing the New Crewmember Orientation Job Aid (attached). Additionally, he completed a safety training video for Marquette on January 10th. When preparing for this bridge he uses a River Cast Map on his phone which helps him determine river levels and forecast of levels. Additionally, the SMS has a job aid for the Pilot/Master to go over (verbally – not logged) just before they transit a bridge. Please see attached evidence. He checked in with the VIC (Vicksburg Information Center) an industry ran watch during high water. The VIC is very similar to a VTS and is due to how many allisions this particular location has during high water. Once we completed questioning regarding the SMS, we spoke about how he was tested for alcohol and he also completed drug testing when the Marine Surveyor, Fred Budwine, arrived onscene and completed a 96 hour work/rest history worksheet. Both Pilot and CAPT River completed these.

Please see attached. Cross referencing the log the VIC prepares when vessels check in at certain points...it shows the M/V CHAD PREGACKE had checked in at 0230 and pushed in due to the restriction of only daylight transit through the bridge, southbound. He specifically stated he stayed on the bridge and just took it easy until daylight and his turn to transit.

//s// CWO [REDACTED]
MSD Vicksburg, MS

Date: 01 MAR 2019