

Summary of Interview

Interviewers:

Barry Strauch, Human Performance Investigator, National Transportation Safety Board
Anthony Hoti, Detective, NYPD

Interviewee:

JOHN MAULDIN-Port Captain, NYC Dept Of Transportation. Div Of Pax Transport, SI Ferry.

He has been employed with them 26 years.

He started out in 1977 as a deckhand, in 81 got his 1st class pilots license, 82 became asst Capt, 85 to Capt. And in 1995 port captain. He left that position when a new dir. Of ferries came onboard and returned to the ferries, he thinks this was 97, and came back as a port captain, maybe 99 and has been there since.

Basic responsibilities include daily operating functions of the ferry, such as scheduling, fueling, informing the crews of any and all changes in USCG regulations, making sure all required drills are carried out, and now includes terminal operations as well.

His office has a staff of another port captain, a port mate and 3 port engineers. Director of ferry operations, Capt. Patrick Ryan is his immediate supervisor. He supervises the staff at the port office, the staff of the ferry personnel at both terminals and all operational boats.

Capt. Gansas and smith both report to him. He knows Capt. Gansas. Has been his supervisor at least 4 years, and for a period of time Michael was a deckhand when he was captain.

Capt. Gansas is competent, needs little if any supervision in carrying out his duties. From the very first day that he met him he has been like this. Never had to reprimand or discipline him. He doesn't recall if he commended him. He encouraged him to take the courses needed to get his pilots' licenses. When he was a deckhand he became interested in the pilothouse and wanted to become a pilot.

The Barberi class boat has different kind of propulsion system (like a helo), and has a different kind of steering wheel, not the big one. He, john, has been here since the Barberi class was delivered and was here when the captains learned to use it. He has never seen anyone steer this as well as Michael Gansas did, that is why he encouraged Gansas to go for his pilots' license, to john, Michael was a natural.

They captains are to be in the operating end of the vessel. This is a policy, but he is not sure that it is written.

He doesn't know why someone would think it unusual.

Between Capt. Maulden and the other captain they make various trips from the ferry from time to time. The trips are unscheduled and there is no number of how many should be done. He we guess that at least once a day they will go out to the boats, at least once or twice a day they will go out, there are many reasons why they would go out.

It's hard to say on the average how many are done. Unless there was a reason to talk to the master alone, in the pilothouse, he has never seen only one pilot in the pilothouse.

The written policies would be with the director, Capt. Ryan. Licenses that are required are established by the USCG, ferry.

A deckhand would need three years as a deckhand, get a 1st class pilots license, work on that license for at least one year, then obtain a masters license, so it will take 4 years or better. As a deckhand they would stand wheel watches, during the years that they are working on the boat preparing they would gain experience, then once they got their license they would post it in the office, then when the job would be available (vacancy) they would interview them, ask them questions, and based on their answers either appoint them or not.

He has rejected maybe two out of eight (approximately) applicants for captain/assistant captain since 1999. They didn't give the right answers on the questions. When they become permanent in that title (rather than an appointment), they would get a specific test that they would have to answer, this is a city wide administrative test. No specific test of knowledge.

They are required to maintain their USCG license, they do this themselves.

Capt. Smith, knew him about 15 years, as long as Richey has been here. Capt. Smith is a good man, good employee, competent. He doesn't know anything else to say. Always been a great guy. Never interacted with Mike Gansas (other than a SI ferry picnic-in 95, they might have been there). He does not socialize with either one.

He has not written a reprimand to Capt. Smith. Never recalls any experience like what the press reported about Capt. Smith (being fired for insubordination, then getting his job back after union appeal) this is simply not true.

He looked at their personnel records after the accident. This is a normal thing after some event, e.g., hurt or gets ill, to get the start date of the employees, that is the only reason that he looked through the records.

He is not the type of supervisor who would put something in writing, he would just go up to the individual and say nice things to them, in his belief this would be done in person to have an effect. He has done this with Capt. Gansas. He, John, was very proud when Capt. Gansas got his license, he was his protégé.

He does not recall ever getting a report that only one pilot was in the deckhouse, while the vessel is underway with passengers. Some of the vessel requires Kennedy class, requires one in each pilothouse while pax are not on board. This is during operations when passengers are not on board. He has never heard of this while in normal operations with pax on board.

Safety is the first thing they look at in evaluations, then being on time. The ferries carry a lot of people, 20 million a year, safety is the no. 1 priority, this is the basic standard criteria they use. If he sees other issues that raise a red flag he will bring them to the attention of the director, they will sit the individual down and talk to them, this has never happened with these guys. Has never had to discipline either one on timeliness, he thinks that their on-time rating is 98.4%, and they have over 100 trips a day, sometimes there is vessel traffic, but never with these guys.

Their licenses are on file in the personnel office, but it is their responsibility to make sure that their licenses are current. On occasion they have had guys being on the wire, some have forgotten and they had to wait until their license got renewed. Usually the individual himself will stay on top of it.

There is an evaluation done on each employee once a year. Some of them he would do, some the director does. The captains would do their crews. The chief engineers would do their crews, the port engineers would do the chief engineers, the ferry terminal supervisors would do the deck hands who work in the terminal.

Either he or Capt. Joe Ecock would have completed the evaluations.

The medical requirements are established by the USCG to obtain their license, if they have a medical condition they are required to note that on their application, and a medical review board would oversee this and would ok and give their direction as to what has to be done. One requirement is for eyeglasses, e.g., to keep a spare with them at all times while on duty.

They would know what medical information was noted on license. Never encountered a situation where someone licensed did not inform the USCG of a medical conditions. No medical limitations of Capt. Gansas or smith. There is a requirement that is part of the CFR that prohibits certain medications while on duty, it is tied to the drug testing policy.

He has been with the ferries 26 years going on 27, this is a devastating thing. The people the next day, the passengers, they all came back the next day.

He spoke to the vessel on the bay station. Someone had said that the Barberi is docking at 69th St. The old ferry to brooklyn, he came out and saw the ferry in that general direction, he went on the radio and asked what's going on and Michael said that "i'm having trouble, trouble getting power," he could tell in his voice that something was wrong.

He has had experience with jumpers, suicide attempts and he could tell from the voice when something is wrong. There was a tugboat at the facility that kept calling the ferry and he Michael was answering them. He called Michael back, he, Gansas had said that they hit the ferry, there were lots of injured people. He told him that the tug was there trying to help. He told him that they needed to get the tug to help him (19a frequency) get it back into a slip to help the injured. This tug is under contract to them. This tug was here because the fuel barges were at the facility, the tug had brought one of the barges and it was laying near where the boat hit.