

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

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FIRE ONBOARD *SPIRIT OF NORFOLK* \*

NEAR NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, \*

Accident No.: DCA22FM022

VIRGINIA ON JUNE 7, 2022 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: ROBERT ENLOE, Chief Mate  
City Cruises

Virginia Beach, Virginia

Friday,  
January 27, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CDR RANDY WADDINGTON, Lead Investigating Officer  
Chief of Analysis and Compliance Division  
United States Coast Guard

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City Cruises

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:32 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 CDR WADDINGTON: The time is 2:32. The hearing is now in  
4 session. At this time I call Mr. Robert Enloe, Chief Mate, Spirit  
5 of Norfolk. Lieutenant [REDACTED] will administer your oath and ask  
6 you some preliminary questions.

7 LCDR [REDACTED] Mr. Enloe, please stand and raise your right  
8 hand. A false statement given to an agency of the United States  
9 is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment under 18 U.S. Code §  
10 1001. Knowing this do you solemnly swear that the testimony you  
11 are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing  
12 but the truth, so help you God?

13 THE WITNESS: Yes.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] Please be seated.

## INTERVIEW OF ROBERT ENLOE

15  
16 BY LCDR [REDACTED]

17 Q. Sir, please state your, state your full name and spell your  
18 last name.

19 A. Robert Gerald Enloe, last name E-n-l-o-e.

20 Q. Please identify counsel or representative, if present, and  
21 have them state and spell their last name as well as your firm or  
22 company relationship.

23 MR. DENLEY: Good afternoon. I'm Eric Denley, D-e-n-l-e-y,  
24 deputy general counsel for City Cruises Hornblower Group,  
25 designated party in interest to this investigation.

1 BY LCDR [REDACTED]

2 Q. Please tell us what is your current employment and position?

3 A. My current employment is Hornblower City Cruises and I'm  
4 considered the first mate, although it's kind of an honorary title  
5 of Chief Mate.

6 Q. What are your general responsibilities in that job?

7 A. I'm mainly in training sessions with all of our new people.  
8 That's one of our main responsibilities. Also I do set up  
9 schedules for routine maintenance on the boat. I am on -- during  
10 cruise days if I am a senior mate I will be the mate on duty as  
11 far as being there, being there for the cruise.

12 Q. Can you briefly tell us your relevant work history?

13 A. Thirteen years U.S. Navy. I've spent a year with MSC (ph.)  
14 out of Singapore. I've been with the Jamestown Surry Ferry. I've  
15 been with the Virginia Responder out of Little Creek, oil spill  
16 cleanup ship. I've been with numbers of smaller companies like  
17 Tracker Boat in Hampton. And now I've been with Hornblower City  
18 Cruises going into 16 years.

19 Q. And what is your education related to your position?

20 A. High school, some college, electronics in the Navy for my  
21 whole 13 years, and I do -- up until 2021 I carried a 100-ton  
22 Master's license and I have a Navy certificate.

23 Q. Do you currently hold any professional licenses or  
24 certificates related to your position?

25 A. Not for this. I, I let, let my 100-ton elapse in 2021,

1 especially after 2020 thinking I probably wouldn't be coming back  
2 to work.

3 Q. Thank you, sir. All of my questions are related to the  
4 period up to June 7th, 2022, unless I specifically ask you about a  
5 later, a later or earlier day. Thank you for being here, and we  
6 ask you if you have any questions. We will take breaks. If you  
7 need a break just let me know.

8 There is an exhibit binder available in front of you, and I  
9 will put up any exhibits or the chief will put up any exhibits in  
10 -- on the monitors for your viewing. I please ask that you try  
11 and refrain from using any acronyms.

12 We're going to break your testimony up into a couple main  
13 parts, the first being the events that took place on June 7th,  
14 2022, the second your role as the Chief Mate aboard the Spirit of  
15 Norfolk, and lastly, the events specifically between the 15th of  
16 May until the beginning of June 7.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. To understand your role in the City Cruises organization, who  
19 do you directly report to?

20 A. I'm sorry?

21 Q. Who do you, who do you directly report to?

22 A. My direct --

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. -- person is Captain Ryan Nadeau.

25 Q. Is that in all cases?

1 A. Anytime we're on the boat that's -- he's the one I report to  
2 unless we have a cruise with another captain.

3 Q. Okay. And briefly, who reports directly to you?

4 A. We have approximately during a cruise three, maybe four  
5 deckhands.

6 Q. Do you work on any other vessels other --

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. -- than the Spirit of Norfolk, or not Spirit of Norfolk, with  
9 City Cruises?

10 A. No. We have a freedom, freedom to leave, but I, I'm more or  
11 less involved with the Spirit of Mount Vernon now.

12 Q. Okay. Please take a moment to collect your memories from the  
13 events of the 7th, Tuesday, June 7th, 2022, and I'd like for you  
14 to talk about that day starting from when you prepared the Spirit  
15 of Norfolk for the day trip. Please provide me as much detail as  
16 you can and recounting the day until you departed to Pier 4 later  
17 that day -- until the vessel departed Pier 4.

18 A. Okay. That was a 11:00 to 1:00 two-hour cruise so at 7  
19 o'clock I arrived. My job is to come in and open up the boat,  
20 make sure we get the AC going, especially in the summer, check  
21 lights. Within 15 minutes I'm down in the machinery room or the  
22 bow thruster getting those -- that equipment online. Usually my  
23 first job is to get in, start the generators and engines, make  
24 sure that everything is working there. I'll look for anything  
25 abnormal, leaks, anything that is not under the normal auspices of

1 my job. Once I do the machinery space for the engine and  
2 generators I go to the bow thruster and repeat the same thing  
3 there. I check it.

4 By that time usually my crew who was going to be there for  
5 the day has come in, and then I have to sit with those guys, make  
6 sure that they know what we're coming up to for the day, what  
7 we're going to be doing, what our responsibilities are, who is  
8 going to be cruising with us. Just getting them -- putting them  
9 into the, into the know of what to expect.

10 And after we do that we did put fuel on that day. That  
11 morning probably the truck arrived 8:30 to 9 o'clock. Made sure  
12 we had fuel onboard. My responsibility also was to put -- make  
13 sure we have adequate water onboard. Normal days unless we've had  
14 rain it's also my job to wash the boat down outside, third deck  
15 both port and starboard side.

16 Once I get through doing that I go down and get the guys  
17 ready. I check the, check the, the heads to make sure that all  
18 the normal things have been done in the heads for the day, getting  
19 them ready. Once we finish that we're expected to get up to the  
20 wheelhouse. Usually an hour and a half prior to leaving the pier  
21 we will have everybody ready there, what we call a suit out, get  
22 your cruise clothes on. Sometimes we'll have what we call a  
23 tabletop session where we talk about something that may or may not  
24 have happened in the last week or what we're looking forward to.

25 Once we get everything done and set up there hour and a half



1 before we're out on the pier getting it set up, make sure that  
2 we're all ready for the customers when they arrive. Usually, if  
3 it's a 11:00 to 2:00 or 11:00 to 1:00, by usually 11:00 or 10:30,  
4 10:45 most of the people are there. We get then onboard. This  
5 particular day, right around 11 o'clock, the captain was ready to  
6 go. We had our people onboard. We had a, we had a group of young  
7 people, young kids with either one or two of their parents with  
8 them which makes it easy, makes our job easier to have their  
9 parents there that can kind of help look out for them. After  
10 everybody was onboard we got underway.

11 We did our first engine check. When I say we, Jeremiah Perry  
12 is one of our older deckhands. When I say older, older in terms  
13 of time on the boat. So he was in charge of taking one of our  
14 brand new people, a guy, a person that had only had one -- I think  
15 that was his first real cruise on the boat, taking him down and  
16 just spending time showing him what we do to do engine checks.  
17 Not to have the guy do it but to let him oversee what he's doing.  
18 That's how we do a lot of our training over the months and years  
19 that people are with us. And so approximately 11:30 we did our  
20 first engine check. Everything was fine.

21 Approximately 20 minutes later I had just asked two of our  
22 deckhands to go down to have lunch. Within three or four minutes  
23 I hear a message from the captain saying, "I'm getting some kind  
24 of alarms." I don't know if it's a smoke alarm or just what kind  
25 of alarm it was, but he said, "I'm getting some, some alarms up in

1 the wheelhouse. Someone go down and check the engine room." So  
2 immediately I ran down to the engine room, went through the galley  
3 to the door. We have one of our experienced deckhands and another  
4 new deckhand standing there at the door, and they had just opened  
5 up the door and then closed it again. When I got there I said  
6 what's going on? He said, "Well, we've got a lot of smoke. I  
7 said, "There's, there's fire coming in." That's why I need to see  
8 more than that. So we open up the door again and you get nothing  
9 but hot gassy air, smoke coming out. So I knew it wasn't  
10 something that we were going to have to just use the fire  
11 extinguisher on. My feeling is if I couldn't breathe to get into  
12 it, I couldn't fight it.

13 So at that point in time I notified the captain that, hey,  
14 there's no way that we can get in with what we have to fight a  
15 fire of this type, this size. And from that point I sent my  
16 deckhands back upstairs. I made sure that everyone was out of the  
17 galley, cleared it, went upstairs. Checked the heads to make sure  
18 there was nobody there.

19 Jeremiah Perry was on the, on the first deck. He asked me at  
20 the time, said, "What should we do about our emergency fuel  
21 shutoffs?" I said let me call captain to find out. I mean I knew  
22 at that time everything was stopped on the boat. I mean, nothing  
23 was going on. I did call Captain Ryan and I said, "Look, what,  
24 what, what do you -- else do you want us to do beside right now  
25 shut this off?" He said, "You all go ahead and shut, shut the

1 fuel shutoffs off."

2       One of my deck hands that already went to the bow, Captain  
3 Ryan had already called for a tug to come over to attempt to tow  
4 us away from the Navy base because we were drifting in that  
5 direction. The towline that they, they handed over to the tug was  
6 not a real towline. It was just one of our dock lines. And as  
7 soon as the tug started to take a strain on it the, the line  
8 parted at the where -- at the tug itself, so I go out. Of course,  
9 we're being drowned. The tug at the bow was just dumping water on  
10 us like crazy. I told the deckhand to go on back inside. No  
11 sense both of us here we're getting drowned. I don't want anybody  
12 to get hurt if something should happen with one of the lines out  
13 here.

14       So I did get the line in that broke. Called the tug back.  
15 he handed me a big, huge towline. I put it over our cleat, gave  
16 him the thumbs up and they started to tow us out. At that time I  
17 ran back in and assisted in getting PFDs to help, help the, the  
18 wait staff get the people ready to get over. They had most of  
19 them already upstairs, but they were bringing them down when the  
20 Rover came over so we could start to get them over, over the side.

21       From that point on once we started doing that I started  
22 trying to make sure we cleared the boat, make sure no one was  
23 around or available or that was in our way trying to do our job.  
24 We have had people hide out in bathrooms and in other closets and  
25 so we ran through and made sure everything was, was cleared.

1 I called the captain, told him what we were doing and what,  
2 what, what was going on with everything. And I said, "Do you need  
3 me to do anything else?" He said no, so I ran upstairs real  
4 quick, told him that we'd verbally gave him the, the direction  
5 that we, we had gotten everyone cleared down below. We were  
6 getting them off on the Rover boat. Did he want me to do anything  
7 else at that time, and he said no. You're going to be the last  
8 person off. Tell them when you get on the boat and you're, you're  
9 it and myself and, and C.J., the other captain, we will remain on  
10 the boat. So that was my, that was my time up until I cleared the  
11 boat and got on the Rover.

12 Q. Thank you. Can you please walk me through the light off  
13 (ph.) process that you did in the morning of the 7th for the  
14 engines?

15 A. Our process in the morning as we go through, I've, I've tried  
16 to focus or get people to focus on the fact look around. Don't  
17 just walk in with blinders on and do one little simple thing.  
18 Check everything, the bilges mainly. We do a lot of that. We  
19 always check our AC pumps, make sure the AC pump lines are good,  
20 that they're working. My pet peeve is oil on the deck or in the  
21 bilges. It bugs the heck out of me to, to have to see that so my  
22 job is to make sure everyone's aware that goes in there to clean  
23 up after yourself if you're using something. But we watch  
24 everything to make sure there's no oil leaks, water leaks, fuel  
25 leaks, anything.

1 I -- my -- the way I usually turn everything on is I went --  
2 I go through the port generator, turn the battery switches on, get  
3 it all set up to make sure it's ready. Start, start it. Then I  
4 go to my port main do the same thing. When I first get in to look  
5 at all this and get ready, one of the main things I do is check  
6 our dipsticks, make sure we've got plenty of oil in the system.  
7 Go through do my port generator, port main, starboard main,  
8 starboard generator, get them up and running. We'll check our  
9 gauges and make sure everything is working right, not just on the,  
10 on the engines and generator but also on our control board, the  
11 control panel that shows you what everything is doing there so  
12 that when we do switch power from shore power to generator power  
13 everything should be the same, should be normal.

14 Once I get all that done, I spend usually about 10 to 15  
15 minutes in the engine room in the mornings checking everything  
16 that you can think of on engines and generators to, to make sure  
17 that when you leave that they're working good. We made a mistake  
18 many years ago in thinking that we could wait until right before  
19 the cruise to start up our engines and generators. We got burned,  
20 so that's why we start in the morning, crank everything up as soon  
21 as we come in to make sure everything is working.

22 Once I've finished all my checks in the engine room I leave  
23 and go immediately to the bow thruster, do the same thing with the  
24 bow thruster. Make sure it's up and running, that you check the  
25 oil, all your fluids, make sure there's no leaks. Once I get

1 through that in the morning then I'm back ready to do the rest of  
2 the other checks.

3 Q. On the 7th did you conduct the pre-underway check yourself or  
4 did you have anybody with you?

5 A. Yes, I did -- well, the, the underway check itself as far as  
6 during the cruise no. We always try to have our people that are  
7 experienced try to, try to maintain those. I've, I've done it a  
8 lot. People that have been there four or five years I sometimes  
9 say, hey, I want you to do the checks and I want you to take our  
10 new people so they can see what you're doing. That particular day  
11 it happened to be Jeremiah Perry along with a person that was --  
12 it may have been the first, first cruise he was on.

13 Q. So Mr. Perry he did not conduct the pre-underway check with  
14 you.

15 A. He did the, did the first underway check.

16 Q. Underway check.

17 A. Right --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- which was approximately 11:00, about 11:30.

20 Q. Okay. And did you give him any kind of pass down prior to  
21 his underway check?

22 A. In the mornings when we -- when they're -- my, my group comes  
23 in I tell them, hey, everything's been cranked up, everything's  
24 running, no problems. Just keep your eyes open when you're making  
25 your rounds today. And that's generally what we do every day we,

1 we do a cruise if to make sure people are aware to keep their eyes  
2 open.

3 Q. And did you train Mr. Perry?

4 A. Part. I helped to train him. The captains do some training.  
5 I do training. We have some new people. When I say new people,  
6 when new people come in some of our people that have been there  
7 three, four, five years they help train them. So we're all in the  
8 training phase all the time.

9 Q. Can you walk with me -- walk, walk me through how you  
10 actually train people in conducting underway rounds?

11 A. When we first start training people we let them come in and  
12 ride along just to see what we're doing. That's, that's the big,  
13 that's the big thing. We hire people with the understanding that  
14 we'd like you to see our work and then you can decide if you think  
15 you want to be part of this team, part of this group. Once  
16 they've decided that and they've done their job for, maybe for a  
17 week or two, we will elect to take people down as we're doing our  
18 checks in the machinery spaces. We don't want those people  
19 thinking that they're going to be doing those checks right away so  
20 we make sure that they know you're just down here to see how we do  
21 it because if you stay with us very long you'd best be -- you're  
22 going to be given more responsibility. And part of that  
23 responsibility will be monitoring the engine room, monitoring the  
24 bow thruster. That's on top of their of their other duties, but I  
25 try to make sure that when I put one of our new people with

1 someone that's been there for a while that I'm watching all of  
2 them, not just one person, but monitoring what they all do. And  
3 that's part of how I train is to oversee and don't just forget  
4 about them and say, okay, they've done it for a couple times so  
5 they're good. It's an ongoing program. I can pull somebody out  
6 anytime and say, well, I'm going to do an engine check but you're  
7 doing it. I'm going to watch. That's, that's how we -- that's  
8 how we do our training.

9 Q. And after a member of the crew would conduct an engineering  
10 round onboard the Spirit of Norfolk, is, is there a standard or  
11 protocol that you guys have implemented to which you do a pass  
12 down to the captain prior to completing your round or after  
13 completing your round?

14 A. We do our -- used to do our pass downs at the end of the  
15 cruise if there's something that we need to pass down. Obviously,  
16 if it's a -- an emergency sister situation then the captain  
17 wouldn't know about it right, right away, but during our cruises  
18 if it's normal usually at the end of the cruise we get together  
19 and say everything went like it's supposed to. We had no  
20 problems, no issues. The check sheets that we do come back up to  
21 the wheelhouse. We also have a pass down log. We have a daily  
22 log. So there's a number of places that we can put things in that  
23 shows either training, maintenance, any kind of a situation that  
24 might come up where that -- that needs to be noted.

25 Q. What types of items are on the check sheet that you just



1 spoke of?

2 A. The one for the engine room asked you to look at all the, the  
3 gauges for engines and generators, such as oil pressure, fuel  
4 pressure, RPMs. We also have a big compressor down there, air  
5 compressor we have to check. We also have our steering system  
6 which most of the time at least when I try to train people and  
7 make sure they don't overlook it. We do have a side gauge on it  
8 as well as a gauge to tell you what your pressure is. That's,  
9 that's some of the main things.

10 We also make sure they understand they need to look around  
11 and check our, our AC pumps, make sure the strainer baskets are  
12 okay. They're not leaking. This is all on our check sheet. And  
13 even though I do an engine check one way and someone else who does  
14 it maybe a little different, the end result is what we're looking  
15 for is that they check everything. I'm -- I start, I start  
16 portside and work to the right. Somebody else might do starboard  
17 to port, but it's the idea is to get everything on the check sheet  
18 checked off.

19 Q. And on the 7th of June did Mr. Perry complete a check sheet?

20 A. Yes. We have a check sheet that we fill out. If it's two  
21 cruises a day then you have two checks sheets. First check sheet  
22 is the, the half hour checks for the first cruise, so Jeremiah  
23 would fill out that. We have it clipped up right next as you come  
24 in the door so all you got to do is walk in the door, pick it up  
25 and start your check.

1 Q. And from previous testimony I believe that Mr. Perry was not  
2 scheduled to conduct the second round of the engine room?

3 A. On the first cruise he was scheduled to do three checks.

4 Q. The same person was going to do three checks.

5 A. Right. And what I usually do if it's something like that  
6 I'll try to have him team up with another one of our new people to  
7 see how he does it.

8 Q. Okay. Do you have any, any engineering training in your  
9 background?

10 A. Not formal training for engineering, no.

11 Q. And how long have you been conducting these rounds on the  
12 Spirit of Norfolk, work on the Spirit of Norfolk you said?

13 A. I started in May of 2007. I became, even though I had a  
14 captain's license, I started like everyone else. I started doing  
15 senior deck -- deckhand duty at about four months in, and six  
16 months after I was promoted up to junior mate, first step into the  
17 mate's position.

18 Q. Now, this training that you provide to the, the prospective  
19 engineer -- not engineer, prospective crew members to be  
20 designated as engineers, is this a formal training or is there a  
21 company that --

22 A. It's, it's the policies that's developed over the years I've  
23 worked on the Spirit boats. I'm not sure if the company has put  
24 anything in, in a format saying this is, this is what we do. But  
25 this was ever since I've been there we've had the sheets with all

1 the same types of information on it. And, of course, we're not  
2 considered engineers. We're, we're all deckhands starting out.  
3 With my background military, different ships and the time, and  
4 time and grade that I've been there that's why I've wound up being  
5 -- becoming what they say is first mate.

6 Q. Is there a requirement on how many rounds somebody should do  
7 with another qualified person before they're seen as being  
8 designated?

9 A. It could be to designate -- so designate someone as a senior  
10 deckhand or mate it, it could be two months, it could be six  
11 months. It's according to their ability, their aptitude, their  
12 attitude about it. There's just a lot of, a lot of different  
13 factors that we look at in making sure that someone can do the  
14 job.

15 Q. As the lead trainer for engineering tasks, rounds and  
16 maintenance do you make the determination on who's capable of  
17 completing the task required to conduct maintenance and/or rounds?

18 A. I'm part of that. Captain Ryan also is involved with that.  
19 In fact, Captain Ryan is the one that says with my back, my  
20 background, my information to him about the people plus our other  
21 part-time captains, other mates he takes that into consideration  
22 when he moves these folks into a higher position of  
23 responsibility.

24 Q. Does your training that you provide does it also include  
25 people to, to be able to identify hazards in an engine room?

1 A. Most of the time we try to make sure people understand that  
2 this is a boat is not like a car and there's a lot more things to  
3 a boat you have to worry about it and look at and take, take a  
4 good look at. We took -- we do talk a lot of maintenance on  
5 general stuff. We talk security. We talk flooding, I mean, we're  
6 always talking about it. That's part of what we do. There's no  
7 formal guideline that says that these are the topics that we have  
8 to hit with these people when they're brand new. We try to, we  
9 try to cover our bases with the new people as much as we can with  
10 the number of people that we have there. I'm not the only person  
11 that's involved with training. I try to cover what I feel is  
12 important and the other senior mates or our part-time captains and  
13 Captain Ryan they do the same thing.

14 Q. Do you provide training on engine nomenclature and systems?

15 A. Yes. I, I, I do that plus our part-time captains and Captain  
16 Ryan. My part of it is when we do the, what we call routine  
17 maintenance, is I take them through the engines and generators  
18 showing them the basics, explain what you have to do to maintain  
19 them as far as keep them running. I'm also the one mainly in  
20 charge of setting our schedule for oil changes. I do most of the  
21 training for the oil changes. I do most of training on showing  
22 how to check batteries, how to replace batteries, how to replace  
23 strainer baskets, AC pumps. Generally that's, that's my job on,  
24 on maintenance.

25 Q. So just quickly with -- when you're conducting a light off of

1 the engine and you turn on the battery, you turn on the generator  
2 and you, you, and you go to start up the engine, do you start it  
3 up from the engine itself?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Is there a way to start the engine from the pilot  
6 house?

7 A. Yes. The engines can be started -- we have local and remote  
8 on the engines so we have to leave them in the remote position so  
9 captain can crank them up anytime he wants to. The generators are  
10 a different story. You crank these up in the machinery space and  
11 you shut them down there.

12 Q. Now, prior to you starting, so prior to you bringing or  
13 starting the, the port main or the starboard main diesel engine,  
14 is there -- when you bring them online is there an alarm that goes  
15 off in the pilot house prior to them starting up?

16 A. I don't know about starting them, but there will be an alarm  
17 that goes off in the engine -- in the wheelhouse once you, once  
18 you crank them up; lets the, the captain know or somebody know  
19 that's up there that your engines are running. When I see an  
20 alarm it's, it's on the display panel up there showing that it's  
21 flashing lights. Then you know, hey, my engines are online or  
22 they're running.

23 Q. You had mentioned that you had heard alarms in the -- I don't  
24 know if you, if you stated you heard them in the pilot house or  
25 you heard them coming over maybe over the walkie-talkie as Captain

1 Nadeau was, was giving orders. Were those alarms similar that  
2 you've heard before?

3 A. I -- there was a lot of noise. I remember hearing some  
4 beeping in the background, but there again I have a earpiece  
5 hooked up to my phone. A lot of things happened at the same time.  
6 I just knew something was going on in the wheelhouse. As far as  
7 what alarm was going off, I don't know.

8 Q. And Captain Nadeau had stated that he had experienced a loss  
9 of port control. Do you know what that means? Alarm -- loss of  
10 port control alarm?

11 A. No, I'm not familiar with what, what he means there. I mean,  
12 if he said he, he, he lost propulsion I would know what he meant  
13 by propulsion or if he told me, hey, I just lost my port pain or  
14 my starboard main or, or whatever I would know it. If I'm down  
15 there and the power goes off I figure he's probably lost the  
16 generator. But that's -- I'm usually not up in the wheelhouse  
17 when -- I mean my -- the big job I have is trying to take care of  
18 all the people down below and make sure our people do their job.

19 Q. So when you went down to the engine room after Mr. Bracey,  
20 were the engines running at that point?

21 A. They appeared to be running to me, but I did not go in  
22 because like I say, we opened the door we had a lot of pressure  
23 from the engine room out. Bryan had informed me, yes, the fire is  
24 back in the, the port quarter, the stern. I know in my mind  
25 anytime you open up a door to a enclosed area like that with a

1 fire you're, you're feeding it, and my job was to, A, the safest  
2 thing right now we know we have a fire. We don't have OBAs. I  
3 don't have a face mask. I don't have any protection to get in  
4 there to check it, let alone fight it. And we've, we've had  
5 numbers of Norfolk fire department people work with us and over  
6 the years they've told us if you, if you have an enclosed space, a  
7 confined space fire that you have no way to get in, what you want  
8 to do is try to maintain that in one spot and block it off. And  
9 the second time we opened up the door I told Bryan, I says,  
10 "Bryan, just dog the door down. That's all we can do right now is  
11 close it."

12 Q. Prior to you getting to the door and opening the door, in a  
13 normal situation can you hear the engines running outside of the  
14 engine space?

15 A. Normally not, but not -- and especially not if you have  
16 ventilation fans running.

17 Q. And prior to your entering in did you don hearing protection?

18 A. No. We have, we have no protection outside of the engine  
19 room.

20 Q. Prior to entering into the engine room do you normally put on  
21 hearing protection before you go in?

22 A. Oh, hearing protection.

23 Q. Yes, yes.

24 A. Yes sir.

25 Q. And on the 7th prior to you going in to, to look into the

1 engine room did you put on hearing protection?

2 A. I didn't because I was second person down there and they were  
3 already at the door. And as soon as I got down there I asked him,  
4 I said what, what the situation was. And he had already opened  
5 the door and told me, told me we have a fire back into the port  
6 quarter. There was no, no reason for me to put ear protection on  
7 at that time.

8 Q. Were they wearing hearing protection?

9 A. Was what?

10 Q. Do you remember if Mr. Bracey and the other individual with  
11 him were wearing hearing protection?

12 A. I don't remember if they had it or not.

13 Q. During the evacuation what orders did you receive from the  
14 captain?

15 A. What words did I --

16 Q. Orders, orders did you receive from the captain?

17 A. Oh, receive. The captain put the word out that we needed to  
18 make sure we started getting our, our guests off the main decks.  
19 I was out on the bow for a while getting the lines hooked up, so I  
20 wasn't -- and the tug was spraying water on us. I lost radio real  
21 quick, so I don't know what may have transpired at that point. I  
22 just remember when I came back in that the word had already gotten  
23 out that the wait staff to get the people up to the third deck and  
24 Candi (ph.) had already, had already started that process.

25 Q. You also mentioned earlier in your, in your previous



1 testimony, Exhibit 72 which was your previous testimony back in  
2 June, that you were also responsible for ordering parts for  
3 maintenance.

4 A. Normal what we call routine maintenance like oil. I don't do  
5 anything as far as ordering parts for breakdowns on mains and  
6 generators. I order things like filters for the AC units, our  
7 filters for the, for the generators for instance. I order those  
8 things. That's the extent of my ordering on, on machinery blame.

9 Q. (Indiscernible) on that exhibit. It was 71 so it's the  
10 transcripts. So you, just to paraphrase what you just said, you,  
11 you only order -- you're responsible for ordering parts for  
12 general maintenance, correct?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. And how do you know when to order those parts?

15 A. How do I know when to order them?

16 Q. Yep.

17 A. We have a set schedule at 250 hours on oil changes, on  
18 generators and, and mains. And we keep a tab of that up in the,  
19 up in the wheelhouse and also in the engine room so that when we  
20 get to a particular point in our cruising schedule we get within,  
21 say, 10 or 15 hours that's when we start making sure we have all  
22 of our parts to do our 250-hour check.

23 Q. So you guys are pretty standard on when you want to do your  
24 maintenance to your engines.

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Is there ever a time that you do it just as a precaution, do  
2 it earlier?

3 A. Yes. Couple of years ago we had training with the US Navy,  
4 and we were going to be out, like, three or four days and it was  
5 getting close to a certain point in time while we're out there we  
6 may need to, so I did the oil changes early.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. This was with the captain's knowledge, asking him, you know,  
9 "You think it's going to be okay to do?" He said, "Yeah, I would  
10 rather us do it then than be out there during our training session  
11 and not being able to do it.

12 Q. Okay. Have you ever ordered parts that is not for  
13 maintenance? Have you ordered parts that is for a replacement  
14 part?

15 A. No. Usually those things are done by the captain.

16 Q. And as the lead, I'd use the term engineer, as the lead  
17 person in charge of maintenance and taking care of the engines  
18 does he make you aware of when he's ordering parts?

19 A. Oh, sure. We, we, we -- Ryan and I have worked close  
20 together for quite a few years so he, he keeps me involved with  
21 things that, that he may have to order just to let me know that  
22 it's been -- that he's doing his part. And when I need to order  
23 my stuff I'll let him know that I've ordered things.

24 Q. Okay. With regards to the recent overhaul of the engine  
25 where the -- a recommendation was made to replace the inboard

1 turbocharger, were you ever made aware of when he ordered the  
2 turbocharger?

3 A. No. I was there when they were doing the breakdowns and I  
4 did hear them say something about turbos, but that's way out of  
5 my, my jurisdiction. Once they get to the part of breaking down  
6 engines and generators my, my job is pretty well over.

7 Q. Is the ordering -- in your experience has the ordering of  
8 parts ever been significant -- say, six days after a  
9 recommendation was made to order the part?

10 A. I'll have to admit that with two operation captains, or maybe  
11 three we've had, normally when things are told us that we, that we  
12 need to get it it's done as expeditious as we can. And I don't  
13 know that anyone says, well, I'm not going to worry about it.  
14 We'll do it later. Our reputation amongst a lot of the ships in  
15 the Hornblower Group is that we have always really taken care of  
16 making sure we maintain our gear, that we don't slack off on it.

17 Q. Were you aware of the work that was conducted on the port  
18 main engine from the 15th through the 26th by Bay Diesel?

19 A. Only time I heard about it was when I came back on Monday and  
20 they had, they had already started working on it. So I know they  
21 were working on the port main, but that's just -- that's as much  
22 as I knew.

23 Q. On the 26th, Bay Diesel had made a recommendation on their  
24 technical report to have the crew keep the eye on the right bank  
25 turbo until the replacement has come in.

1 A. Word had come down that they wanted us to just maintain our  
2 watchfulness on all of, on all of them, but anytime we've had  
3 problems with mains or generators it's, at least for the senior  
4 people, we know we're going to watch it anyway. They don't have  
5 to tell us. We're going to, we're going to be watching it because  
6 you can say today it's fixed but it doesn't mean it's going to be  
7 working tomorrow. So we're always in the mode of, of checking  
8 every day.

9 Q. And that, that would come from who?

10 A. (Indiscernible).

11 Q. Understood. Did you receive an order to specifically keep an  
12 eye on the right bank turbo after the 26th of --

13 A. No, we didn't receive anything saying keep your eye on the  
14 right turbo, no. The thing that came to me was I reported on, on  
15 Monday this episode with the coolant happened somewhere over the  
16 weekend. I wasn't there. And the word was they would just --  
17 we'd just watch and make sure everything's all right on the  
18 engines since we've had work on it.

19 Q. Thank you. I have no further questions.

20 CDR WADDINGTON: Okay. Mr. [REDACTED] do you have any questions  
21 for this witness?

22 MR. [REDACTED] I do, Commander.

23 BY MR. [REDACTED]

24 Q. Mr. Enloe, so you were there when they, they had already  
25 started the rebuild?

1 A. Yes, sir. I was there when they got it up and running, and  
2 I'm pretty sure I was there when the -- when we took it out for  
3 sea trial.

4 Q. Were you there when they refitted the engines previously from  
5 the 3400 CATs to the Skandias?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. Was there anything particular that you guys kept an eye on  
8 after they did that change out?

9 A. No. We had been told that these were a lot more horsepower  
10 engines, not that they might have been more reliable but just said  
11 that we were going to have stronger engines and that there was no  
12 word given to us on, hey, keep an eye on anything. We were just  
13 glad we got new engines.

14 Q. So after they did the rebuild did you guys do anything in  
15 addition to what you normally do for your engine room rounds after  
16 that?

17 A. No, sir. It made things a little bit easier because of these  
18 engines being different, completely different than our CAT --  
19 Caterpillar engines we had. Made it a little bit easier on the  
20 guys doing some of our checks, but we still did the same. In  
21 fact, we probably wound up getting a few more additional checks  
22 because of those new engines we got.

23 Q. So you'd consider doing a rebuild let's say a major, major  
24 maintenance or a major repair for the engine?

25 A. The, the rebuild --

1 MR. DENLEY: I'm going to object. I think --

2 THE WITNESS: I wasn't --

3 MR. DENLEY: I think I want to object to the question. I  
4 think the testimony has been pretty clear that Captain Nadeau was  
5 responsible for the, for the overhaul. And Mr. Enloe testified  
6 that he wasn't, wasn't part of it, so I guess I would object based  
7 on relevance and the testimony is already in the record.

8 CDR WADDINGTON: Objection noted. Mr. [REDACTED] can you either  
9 rephrase or continue on it?

10 MR. DENLEY: And it also calls for him to speculate on  
11 something that he wasn't -- that he's already testified that he  
12 wasn't involved in, so I guess we can throw that in there as well.

13 BY MR. [REDACTED]

14 Q. Okay. Again, so after Bay Diesel came in and did the rebuild  
15 on the engines did you do anything differently in your rounds than  
16 you had done previously before they did the rebuild?

17 A. No, sir.

18 MR. [REDACTED] That's all the questions I have. Thanks, Mr.  
19 Enloe.

20 THE WITNESS: Okay.

21 CDR WADDINGTON: NTSB, do you have any questions for this  
22 witness?

23 MR. KARR: Yes. Thank you, Commander.

24 BY MR. KARR:

25 Q. Mike Karr with the NTSB. Mr. Enloe, back on June 7th when

1 you peered into the engine room can you describe -- and if you saw  
2 any flames at either time you opened up the doors or someone  
3 opened the doors?

4 A. I, I did not you see it because when we opened up the door  
5 all I got was a blast of hot, smoky air in my face. Heat was just  
6 coming right out. I had asked Bryan, who was there at the door  
7 first, and he said, "Oh, I saw it." He said -- well, I guess he  
8 opened up the door wider. He said it's back in the port, the port  
9 quarter.

10 Q. All right. And how far behind him were you standing when you  
11 got hit with that heat?

12 A. I was right behind him when I first came down to the engine  
13 room, so within a foot or so of where he was at.

14 Q. All right, thank you.

15 A. He was, he was at the, the door, had already had the door  
16 undogged and everything when I got down there.

17 Q. All right, thank you. On the engine -- on the round that you  
18 did in the morning of June 7th, did you by chance check the oil  
19 level in the port engine?

20 A. Yes, sir. We check, we check oil and transmission level.

21 Q. All right. And where is the oil level dipstick or -- and the  
22 transmission oil located?

23 A. Well, the dipstick for the oil is on the inboard side about  
24 halfway down. The transmission dipstick is on the back behind the  
25 engine on top of the transmission.

1 Q. All right. So when you said on the inboard side so it would  
2 -- the dipstick was on the center, more towards the center line of  
3 the vessel rather than on the outside of the, outside of the port  
4 engine?

5 A. It, it would be about half and half on top of the  
6 transmission casing is where your dipstick is for your  
7 transmission.

8 Q. And what about the lubrication oil?

9 A. Lube oil is, is about halfway back from the front of the  
10 engine down about maybe a foot and a -- a foot or so off the deck.

11 Q. Off the deck but if I'm facing the bow --

12 A. Yeah, it's on the inboard side.

13 Q. And, and when you say inboard so towards the keel?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. All right, thank you. And I would ask that we put up Number  
16 84, Exhibit 8 -- Coast Guard Exhibit 84? And the, the bottom  
17 picture if you could expand that? So Mr. Enloe, these are -- this  
18 photograph I'm showing you is from a surveyor's photograph of the  
19 day before and there are cardboard boxes and totes in that  
20 picture. Can you remember if they were there on the morning of  
21 the 7th when you did you round in the engine room?

22 A. Yes, sir. The box right in the front is a water pump. The  
23 box over on the right that you see is also a water pump. We have  
24 couple of different sizes of water pumps and we don't have  
25 anywhere on the boat other than stacking them outside somewhere



1 that we can maintain these. We don't have a big warehouse or  
2 anything so a lot of our spares are put down into the engine room  
3 in an area where at least we can get by the engines and generators  
4 to, to look at them.

5 Q. Yeah. And those shelves all -- have those shelves for  
6 containers always been there?

7 A. About five years ago we replaced the shelving itself, but  
8 we've always had shelves there and we've always kept our spares  
9 there.

10 Q. All right, thank you. That's all I have.

11 CDR WADDINGTON: Bay Diesel, do you have any questions for  
12 this?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No (indiscernible).

14 CDR WADDINGTON: City Cruises?

15 MR. DENLEY: I do.

16 BY MR. DENLEY:

17 Q. I've -- I have a couple of questions for you, Mr. Enloe. You  
18 commented that you have some firefighters that are part of the  
19 ship's crew?

20 A. Right now we only have one part-time firefighter as a, as a  
21 part-time captain, and we have a part -- our other full-time  
22 captain is a retired firefighter.

23 Q. And in years past you've had firefighters that have been part  
24 of your crew?

25 A. We have always tried to have firefighters as part of our

1 crew, but to, to my knowledge that's very, very, very rare that  
2 you can get a firefighter to become part of it. We have another  
3 young guy that's a firefighter, and I understand he may be coming  
4 back to work for us again.

5 Q. And is this part of --

6 A. And it's --

7 Q. Mr. Enloe, excuse me, I'm sorry to interrupt. Can you just  
8 move closer, the speaker closer?

9 A. I'm sorry.

10 Q. Thank you very much.

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. And so if it -- I guess it doesn't really matter who they  
13 are, if they're firefighters or not. They're, they're part of  
14 training.

15 A. We train on how to get into open spaces. It's hard to do  
16 real world training on an enclosed space if there's nothing in  
17 there. I mean, you can take an extinguisher in there or you can  
18 drag a fire hose in there, but it's not real world. And to me,  
19 being aboard two aircraft carriers in the Navy, we trained on  
20 trying to do enclosed space firefighting even though we weren't  
21 firefighters. But they, they made sure you had your oxygen  
22 breathing apparatus. We had glass. We had helmets. We had  
23 everything.

24 Q. Sure.

25 A. And that's, that's the difference.

1 Q. So as part of your Navy training you've obviously done some  
2 training in, in shipboard firefighting, and I believe you talked  
3 about it. What is the concept of containment when it comes to  
4 fighting fire onboard a ship?

5 A. Well, to me containment is to make sure the fire doesn't  
6 spread. You, you, you want to try to hold it in one spot until  
7 actual firefighting people, professional firefighting people can  
8 come in there and, and take over.

9 Q. And if you contained it in one spot you could presumably cool  
10 the boundaries?

11 A. If, if -- yeah. If everything's hot that's when you could  
12 use your, your wash down or your firehose to really keep it warm.  
13 But we, we checked. There was no, there was no residual heat  
14 coming through our, our bulkhead there.

15 Q. And so the concept is, you know, essentially you, you, you  
16 contain it in one space so that it doesn't spread to the rest of  
17 the ship. Is that true?

18 A. That was, that was the idea. We had a lot of little people  
19 and along with their parents, and my idea was, hey, I'm not sure  
20 what it's going to take to put it out, but the main thing is is to  
21 try to control it just so we don't have to worry about it while  
22 we're dealing with our, our guests on here.

23 Q. And did you actually see that the watertight door between the  
24 galley and the engine room, did you actually see that door close?

25 A. The door between the engine room and the galley was locked

1 when they first got down there. It was not -- it wasn't locked.  
2 It was, it was dogged when we got down there. And when we got,  
3 got ready to come out of it I made sure that the galley door or  
4 the engine door was dogged back down.

5 Q. Fully dogged.

6 A. Mm-hm.

7 Q. Which means -- what, what does it mean if it --

8 A. Well, we have a, we have a big wheel with about six or eight  
9 spokes, about six or eight spokes and you take and you turn it as  
10 tight as you can and that seals the, the room off.

11 Q. Okay. I believe it was Lieutenant [REDACTED] was asking you  
12 about preventive maintenance and preventive maintenance programs  
13 and preventive maintenance items. So going back to the engine  
14 rebuild on the port main diesel engine, after that engine had been  
15 rebuilt and put back into service at the end of May were there any  
16 preventive maintenance items to do in between the engine being put  
17 back, back into service and the, the fire on June 7th?

18 A. No. Once, once it was put back into service and we were  
19 operating as normal the only things we did was to keep an eye on  
20 it for our oil changes. That's every 250 hours. It doesn't  
21 matter if you've had the engine rebuilt or not. We still maintain  
22 our, our operational readiness program for oil changes and keep an  
23 eye on coolant, keep an eye on anything that you feel maybe that  
24 need to be looked at every, every day.

25 Q. And kind of going back to the, the date of the incident, did

1 you actually see the, the transfer of, of guests from the Spirit  
2 of Norfolk to the Victory Rover?

3 A. I was up on the first deck after I came back off of the, the  
4 bow and helped to get the PFDs, the flotation devices handed over  
5 so that the people waiting at the door could make sure our guests  
6 had them on prior to them stepping over to the Rover.

7 Q. And then you, you actually got on the Rover as well.

8 A. Yes, sir. I, I was the last person off the boat.

9 Q. And as unfortunate as this incident was, are you aware that -  
10 - of anybody being hurt or injured during that process?

11 A. No. I wasn't aware of anyone getting hurt. No one seemed to  
12 be overexcited. I think our wait staff did a great job of keeping  
13 the calm. And the, the kids, of course, I think thought it was a  
14 big adventure.

15 MR. DENLEY: I don't have any further questions, thank you.

16 CDR WADDINGTON: Lieutenant [REDACTED] do you have any follow-up  
17 questions?

18 BY LCDR [REDACTED]

19 Q. I just have one follow-up question. Earlier I asked you  
20 about hazards in the engine room and when you, you know, training  
21 your members to become designated as senior crew members. What  
22 type of hazards do you teach them about in the engine room?

23 A. Tripping. It's a very big hazard entering a machinery space.  
24 Being cut. We do have things down there that, you know, you, you  
25 hit it just right you're going to hurt your hand, your foot, kick

1 it, your knees, whatever. The main thing is we try to make sure  
2 people understand that you've got to look at every part of the  
3 engines and generator when you're checking them. You can't just  
4 look at your gauges and turn and walk off. Hazard-wise from that  
5 there's not a lot that you can get yourself tangled up with on the  
6 engines and generator because any belts are out of the way.  
7 There's nothing really that you can catch yourself on. I, I do  
8 tell them about leaning back checking your bilges, your sump pumps  
9 where your shafts are. There have been cases I understand where  
10 people with long hair have somehow managed to get their hair  
11 caught in something. That's, that's a general hazard, not just  
12 the hair but your clothing. You don't want to wear a lot of loose  
13 clothes when you're working around shafts that may be turning. So  
14 those are, those are just the general things that I go through  
15 when I'm down there.

16 Q. Those are all very, very important. What about hazards for  
17 vessel safety and fire prevention? Are there any things that you  
18 discuss with them regarding fire prevention and vessel safety?

19 A. No. We, we talk about safety and preventing things is, is  
20 one of the big deals we, we look at every day of a cruise we have  
21 people in now that, that machinery space. And the idea is to get  
22 them to look at everything. There can be five or ten things that  
23 might possibly have caused a problem if you're not aware of what  
24 you're doing, but we don't let people go down there if they don't  
25 know what they're doing. And we certainly don't let them go down

1 there by themselves, especially when they're new people.

2 Q. Thank you very much.

3 CDR WADDINGTON: Mr. Karr, do you have follow-up?

4 BY MR. KARR:

5 Q. Yes. Hi, Mike Karr with the NTSB. Mr. Enloe, with regard to  
6 hazards can you describe any hotspots that you recall on any of  
7 the main engines on the Spirit of Norfolk?

8 A. The only ones that I do on the Norfolk are you don't want to  
9 reach and grab hold of the turbos. And that's (indiscernible)  
10 them. That's the only thing as far as hot. You can put your  
11 hands on parts of the engine and they may be warm, but you're not  
12 going to -- it's not going to burn you there. I think the big  
13 thing is that as long as you show people and make them understand  
14 that engines are not playthings, that they have to watch when  
15 they're around them, that should -- you know, people are clueless  
16 as to what not to do. We don't try to beat up on things in the  
17 engine room on mains or generator. We try to do, do whatever we  
18 can to, to make sure that we don't contact them in the wrong way.  
19 I don't think there's anyone gets mad or anything about something  
20 that they feel maybe they had a problem with, but that's part of  
21 our overall training is to make them understand that they're part  
22 of a big team. If you got a problem, talk about it. And we  
23 don't, we don't take it out on our machinery spaces.

24 Q. All right. Thank you, sir.

25 CDR WADDINGTON: Mr. Enloe, you are now released as a witness

1 at this formal hearing. Thank you for your testimony and your  
2 cooperation. If I later determine that this team needs additional  
3 information from you, I will contact you through your counsel. If  
4 you have any questions about this investigation, you may contact  
5 the investigation recorder, Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The time is  
6 3:33. We will reconvene at 3:45. Thank you.

7 (Whereupon, at 3:33 p.m., 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: FIRE ONBOARD *SPIRIT OF NORFOLK*  
NEAR NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, VIRGINIA  
ON JUNE 7, 2022  
Interview of Robert Enloe

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM022

PLACE: Virginia Beach, Virginia

DATE: January 27, 2023

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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Teresa Holevas  
Transcriber