

# CUI

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# CUI

## 1 UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

2  
3 PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW CONDUCTED ON  
4 BEHALF OF NTSB BY THE U.S. COAST GUARD

5  
6 REAR ADMIRAL [REDACTED]: The Fitzgerald collision. And  
7 ultimately when we speak again at a later date, you'll find  
8 out, and I'm going to repeat for now the purpose of the  
9 investigation is to do a couple of things. Try to figure  
10 out what happened and why it happened, and that's going to  
11 be real important for closure for the Navy, the Nation, and  
12 certainly for the Fitzgerald sailors.

13 Today, though, we don't want to talk about the  
14 collision. I've asked you to come over because I'd like to  
15 just sort of understand Fitzgerald, the ship, and I figure  
16 between you and the Combat Systems Officer, you two are  
17 probably in the best position to just tell me just a little  
18 bit about your ship, a chance to brag about your ship a  
19 little bit and tell me some of the good things that are  
20 going on, but help me understand how Fitzgerald does  
21 business.

22 In the room, I just want to make sure you're aware of  
23 who all is here. So, as a Lead Investigator, I have  
24 Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], she's my Legal Advisor and  
25 then my Counsel for that, LN2 [REDACTED] is our note taker,

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

2

1 she's going to keep notes on everything. And you'll see  
2 some of us writing things down, and that's just maybe a  
3 question that's popped into our head or something we want  
4 to ask.

5 Commodore [REDACTED] is DESRON 21, he's actually  
6 supporting the Coast Guard and the National Transportation  
7 Safety Board, so he's here as a liaison. And he doesn't  
8 work for me in that capacity; he's actually supporting the  
9 Coast Guard and the NTSB.

10 And over here is Lieutenant [REDACTED], um, and I'll  
11 let him introduce the Coast Guard folks that are with him.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, uh, just again, good morning,  
13 I'm Lieutenant [REDACTED]. I am the Senior Investigating  
14 Officer for U.S. Coast Guard Activities Far East Japan.  
15 And under the authority of Title 46, Code 6301 and Title  
16 46, CFR Part 4, we're conducting an investigation into the  
17 circumstances of the collision between the two vessels,  
18 which occurred on June 17th. This investigation is  
19 intended to determine the cause of the casualty to the  
20 extent possible and to obtain information for the purpose  
21 of preventing similar cases in the future.

22 To assist with the accuracy of our investigation, I  
23 want you to know that we will be recording our interviews,  
24 which are occurring today on the 21st of June at 9:15. And  
25 assisting me today, I have Mr. [REDACTED] from our

Alpha Transcription

678-646-5330

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

3

1 National Center of Expertise. I also have Lieutenant  
2 Commander [REDACTED], who works in our office and has  
3 prior experience as a CO of our Coast Guard Cutters. Thank  
4 you again for your time today.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, get Ops 1. Let's not talk  
6 about the collision, let's just talk about Fitzgerald, the  
7 ship, and her sailors, and help us understand, you know,  
8 how business is done onboard the Fitzgerald.

9 So, first of all, how long have you been on board as  
10 the operations officer, Lieutenant?

11 [REDACTED]: So, I checked onboard [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED]

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

14 [REDACTED]: And took on the role as Operations  
15 Officer, January 19th.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Great. And where was the  
17 ship -- what was the ship doing at the time that you  
18 checked on board. Were you guys in an underway period,  
19 SRA, what was the ship doing when you checked on board?

20 [REDACTED]: The ship was in a stand-down --

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

22 [REDACTED]: -- for the holidays.

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Good.

24 [REDACTED]: And it had just come out of the  
25 yards.

Alpha Transcription

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Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

4

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Um, so, you got the miss  
2 all of the yard period, then?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Oh, that's usually good for an  
5 operations officer. Uh, okay. So, um, can you tell me a  
6 little bit about what the ship was doing from the time that  
7 really from -- I was looking for January, cause that  
8 timeline works perfect. So, from when you took over as  
9 ops, up until, you know, last week, what kind of operations  
10 has the ship been doing? What has Fitzgerald been doing as  
11 far as how she has been doing underway, maintenance  
12 periods, et cetera? And I'm not -- I've never been an FDNF  
13 sailor. So, I'm not up to speed on everything that FDNF  
14 does, so. If you can just educate me on what the  
15 Fitzgerald has been doing since January.

16 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. Um, after a stand down  
17 concluded the ship began with sea trials, coming after the  
18 yard period. And then after that, ammo anchorage to get  
19 our weapons back unloaded and then we had exercises with  
20 the discharge squadron. So, we did get underway very  
21 shortly after that as well as based on an extended yard  
22 period that means certifications had to occur. So, going  
23 through different certifications, such as damage control.  
24 And after our exercise with the rest of the DESRON ships,  
25 we had adopted underway operations.

Alpha Transcription

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1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: What time, what time -- I'm not  
2 looking for exact dates, but what timeframe was that  
3 squadron, it was a group sail, I guess, with a squadron or  
4 DESRON sail or --

5           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. So, we are not actually  
6 part of the group sail, but we participated in exercise.

7           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Oh, were you guys like the Op-4  
8 Unit or just --

9           [REDACTED]: No, sir. We were just already  
10 underway.

11          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

12          [REDACTED]: So, we met up with everybody.

13          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, this drags you into it, since  
14 you guys were out at the op area, or was it already planned  
15 that you guys --

16          [REDACTED]: We knew we were scheduled, it was  
17 just had something else that we needed to conduct --

18          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

19          [REDACTED]: -- and that didn't involve us with  
20 the group sail.

21          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Was that really your first -- was  
22 that your first substantial underway since coming out of  
23 the, since coming out of the yard period?

24          [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. Um, and then  
2 after that, after that DESRON sail that you participated  
3 in, you were underway for additional operations, you said?

4           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

5           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Is there anything that you can  
6 tell me about that, the classification of some of the stuff  
7 that you guys do may be beyond what we talk about here, but  
8 what was that underway for?

9           [REDACTED]: Um, we had some specific operations  
10 in the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan, so, most of  
11 our time has been in those two locations.

12           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And when did y'all,  
13 roughly, when did y'all come back from that timeframe?

14           [REDACTED]: So, we just got back, um, the  
15 beginning of the month, sir.

16           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: The beginning of this month,  
17 June?

18           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

19           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And, um, were you in port  
20 -- when did you actually get underway for this most recent  
21 underway? What date was that on?

22           [REDACTED]: That was the 16th, sir.

23           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, the 16th. What day of the  
24 week was that, someone, I'm --

25           [REDACTED]: Friday.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Friday, I'm still adjusting to  
2 being here in Japan. So, you got away on Friday, the 16th?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And how long were you in  
5 port prior to that?

6 [REDACTED]: We pulled in the 7th of June, sir.

7 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: 7th of June. So, you pulled in  
8 on the 7th, and then back underway on the 16th. It just  
9 seems like, that's a pretty good amount of time you guys  
10 had underway since coming out of the yards then, over --  
11 how much, how many days do you think you were underway  
12 between coming out of the yards and this last period?

13 [REDACTED]: Um, I can't give a specific number,  
14 sir. We did have a few, um, port visits within that entire  
15 underway period. Um, but most of it was underway.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: But an opportunity for at least a  
17 few sea and anchor details --

18 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- with the crew? Okay. Well,  
20 good. All right. So, tell me about, uh -- what is sort of  
21 a typical underway day for Fitzgerald sailors? And what I  
22 mean by that is, you know, is it department head, do you  
23 guys have a call with the XO and then what is the sort of  
24 work routine after that? I mean, I just, I can clearly  
25 know how it was done onboard my ship, when I served in all



1 the ships that were in my squadron, but talk to me just  
2 about a typical underway day for a Fitzgerald sailor, what  
3 is that like?

4 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir. Reveille at 0630 and  
5 then immediately breakfast after reveille is called. And  
6 for department heads as well as departmental CPOs, we have  
7 XO's call.

8 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Do you guys do that in the XO  
9 stateroom or topside somewhere or?

10 [REDACTED] : Um, with one XO it was topside.  
11 The other XO it was moved to the board rooms.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

13 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir. If I'm not mistaken,  
14 though.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

16 [REDACTED] : And from XO --

17 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : I guess, I'm thinking about my  
18 cruiser days as an XO, bigger stateroom, e.g. XO, not as  
19 big that would be a bit crowded, I suppose.

20 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

22 [REDACTED] : And from there we go into our  
23 departmental khaki calls, where we pass information that  
24 was received --

25 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Sure.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

9

1 [REDACTED]: -- from XO call. And then from  
2 departmental khaki call, we proceed to -- well, they  
3 proceed to divisional quarters. And from divisional  
4 quarters, obviously, tasking, maintenance that needs to get  
5 done is disseminated to the sailors and then from there  
6 they execute their official business.

7 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And then sort of standard  
8 lunchtime, early Navy lunch, like early chow 11, 11:15 or  
9 something, 11:30, normal lunch?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

12 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you guys do officer training  
14 daily, weekly, monthly, is there any kind of wardroom  
15 training? I'm just curious to get a feel for how you guys  
16 do things.

17 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. Wardroom training wasn't  
18 as, hasn't been as consistent; however, it was scheduled  
19 for two times a week.

20 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. That seems to involve sort  
21 of the standard weekly --

22 [REDACTED]: Just depending on operational --

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Oh, absolutely. And then early  
24 Navy chow, I presume?

25 [REDACTED]: 1600.

Alpha Transcription

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1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: 1600, 1615 timeframe, and then  
2 normal, 1630. Okay. And then do you guys do, when you're  
3 underway, just doing routine ops or in the South China Sea  
4 or Sea of Japan, do you guys do a daily ops, intel brief --

5 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- anything like that? Okay.  
7 And what time do you guys do that at?

8 [REDACTED]: 1530.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: 1530?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you guys like the -- it seems,  
12 I was always an 1800, 1830 guy. So, you like the 1530  
13 timeframe, does that work out well for you guys?

14 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. What happens after dinner,  
16 any evening meetings, uh, with the XO or Captain or what  
17 happens after the evening meal timeframe?

18 [REDACTED]: As needed, I'll usually try to shy  
19 away from evening meetings to facilitate those that have  
20 um, different watches or to allow maintenance to continue  
21 to go on, sir.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And it's your ops/intel  
23 briefs that you do at 1530; is that where you would also do  
24 like un/rep briefs or gunnery exercise briefs? Do all the  
25 briefs happen at that time, 1530 or --

1 [REDACTED] : Not for un/rep briefs, sir. Those  
2 are usually held separately.

3 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

4 [REDACTED] : Um, because more of the crew needs  
5 to attend that and if they don't have the correct  
6 clearance, other than, they're not going to be attending  
7 the op/intel brief.

8 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : When do you all normally do  
9 those?

10 [REDACTED] : Um, prior to leaving.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : So, you're saying the day of or  
12 the day before or --

13 [REDACTED] : Depending on the time of the event,  
14 just making sure that we're within the criteria, of the 24-  
15 hour --

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Right. Do you all normally do  
17 mess decks or in the --

18 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : In the mess decks, okay. All  
20 right. Um, and then as far as a watch routine, I got a  
21 snapshot look at your watch bill, and it looks like you got  
22 some folks in 4 Section, and originally, we had asked the  
23 CSO to come over for this interview. Because as I  
24 understand, he's the actual Senior Watch Officer, he's the  
25 SWO. But can you tell us a little bit about the underway

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

12

1 watch routines? Um, it looks like there was a combination  
2 of some 3 Section, some 4 Section, and tell me about your  
3 OS's are they typical OS's in port and starboard or are you  
4 fortunate enough to put them in three sections? Just give  
5 me a little bit about the watch routine, itself.

6 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. I can't specifically  
7 speak to all the details, um, to the detail that the  
8 Surface or the Senior Watch Officer would be able to.  
9 However, yes, there are groups that in 4 Section and groups  
10 that are in 3 Section, just based on the number of  
11 qualified personnel that we have to stand the watches. And  
12 for the OS's, um, they are a bit more fortunate as some of  
13 our other sections are.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Well, good, I'm glad to hear  
15 that. Almost all of the OS's are -- in fact, every time  
16 I've tried to put OS's out of port and starboard in 3  
17 Section, they've always fought me and they seem to want to  
18 be in port and starboard, at least in the Atlantic fleet,  
19 maybe out there in FDNF it's a little different.

20 Um, okay. So, your OS's are in 3 Section. As TAO, do  
21 you guys stand in 3 Section or 4 Section?

22 [REDACTED]: We have been in 4 Section, sir.

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Oh, good for you, that's good.  
24 Um, and it looks like the bridge is also in 4 Section --

25 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

Alpha Transcription

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1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- as well? Okay. Um, and so  
2 how, talk to me, can you talk to me a little bit about who  
3 is on the bridge; I mean, I've seen, there's obviously a  
4 bunch of different combinations of OOD, JOOD, conning  
5 officer. How many officers do you guys usually, just based  
6 on how many you have, how many officers do you guys  
7 normally have on the bridge; do you know?

8 [REDACTED]: I can't speak for every watch team,  
9 sir, but at the minimum there is often, obviously the OOD  
10 and the JOOD and conning officer.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And then possible, they try to  
12 get like an OOD, UI, like --

13 [REDACTED]: Yes.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- if you've got like a fourth  
15 officer?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

17 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: How are you all doing for DIVO's.  
18 I mean, do you have -- a lot of ships have an overflow of  
19 DIVOS.

20 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: You guys pretty standard, like  
22 that, got a whole bunch of ensigns running around?

23 [REDACTED]: Yeah, any good number of DIVO's,  
24 sir.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

14

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Some of them, job likes RDIVO or  
2 ADMINO --

3 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- things like that?

5 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Understand. So, 4 Section on the  
7 bridge, usually three up there. And as, when you stand  
8 watch as TAO, do you guys always assign a CIC watch officer  
9 as well and a watch-supe, or when you stand TAO, do you all  
10 stand down the CIC watch -- I'm just curious as to how you  
11 guys do business?

12 [REDACTED]: We still have a CIC watch officer  
13 in most cases, sir.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Is that usually a junior officer  
15 or a combination junior officer, chief, OS1? I'm just  
16 curious as to who stands signal for you?

17 [REDACTED]: Usually a junior officer, sir. In  
18 some cases, it would be OSC.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And when y'all are out  
20 just doing routine ops in the um, in the Sea of Japan or  
21 South China Sea, are you all normally in [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED], is that why you have a TAO? Is that normally the  
23 routine that you guys are on?

24 [REDACTED]: I'm sorry, sir, can you say it  
25 again?

Alpha Transcription

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1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Are you guys normally in  
2 [REDACTED], um, such that you've got a TAO  
3 assigned?

4 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir, a TAO is assigned, sir.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. So, never -- I mean, most  
6 ships that I've seen today have, always have a TAO. Some  
7 ships, back in my day in Hawaii we used to get away with  
8 just a CAC watch officer. Department heads argue with me  
9 as the XO and see if they can get themselves stood down to  
10 do department head things. But I think most ships these  
11 days do have a TAO.

12 Who's um, who have you guys got standing TAO for you  
13 these days, since you're in 4 Section; I'm just -- is the  
14 Chang stand TAO?

15 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Well, good for the Chang. And,  
17 um, so, you CSO [REDACTED] [phonetic], are you guys the four  
18 TAO's, is there anyone else that's qualified TAO?

19 [REDACTED]: Not to my knowledge, sir.

20 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. It's always nice when you  
21 get some senior chief or someone else, one of those LDOs  
22 qualified as well. Okay. And talk to me about your night  
23 orders process. So, uh, does the navigator normally  
24 generate the night orders and then flow those through you  
25 and CSO? How do the night orders work on this ship?



Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

16

1 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir. The navigator has the  
2 night orders binder.

3 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

4 [REDACTED] : And from there he writes his night  
5 order section --

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Whatever nav writes in there?

7 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir. And, um, passes them to  
8 me so I can write my input and all other supporting  
9 entities such as engineering and combat systems generate  
10 theirs independently.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

12 [REDACTED] : And they are all consolidated into  
13 the binder.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

15 [REDACTED] : And then given to the XO Captain.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay. And what timeframe do you  
17 guys -- I mean, I know it changes day-to-day depending on  
18 operations, but if you had to try to choose a general  
19 timeframe, what timeframe do you all normally try to get  
20 the night orders out? I'm just curious.

21 [REDACTED] : We try to get them out at least  
22 during the 17 to 2200 watch.

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Sure.

Alpha Transcription

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1 [REDACTED]: Usually starting to be generated  
2 around chow. So, the early chow, 1600, a little bit  
3 earlier, sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Fantastic. Um, all right.  
5 Just a few more questions from me and then I'll see if the  
6 team or the Coast Guard has any for you as well.

7 So, as far as routine as you guys go, do you all  
8 normally keep -- do you know -- first of all, do you get to  
9 stand the OOD watch at all?

10 [REDACTED]: No, sir. I have not stood in the  
11 OOD watch since I've been on board the ship.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Do any of the department  
13 heads ever really stand OOD watch or is that just the JO's  
14 that pretty much do that? You guys are locked into TAO's,  
15 is that how that, is that how that works? You've brought  
16 special evolutions and stuff. Do you guys play a role in  
17 sea and anchor detail and -- I'm just curious now.

18 [REDACTED]: Not for sea and anchor, sir.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. How about line reps, do  
20 you guys, do you all have like -- when you all do underway  
21 replenishment, do you all have like a conn coach or  
22 anything? Is that a department head normally or is that a  
23 department normally or is that like the --

24 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

18

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- okay. All right. And how,  
2 when like you guys are coming alongside the peer, um, who,  
3 who, how do the CO and XO divide up their time, do you  
4 know? I mean, does one like control lines and tugs and the  
5 other works with the conn, I mean, any idea?

6 [REDACTED]: I can't speak to this CO and XO  
7 combination, sir. I have only witnessed it for the  
8 previous CO.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: That's right. Your CO did have  
10 change of command just last -- just last month.

11 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: All right. Okay. All right.  
13 Um, okay. Uh, is anything, to your knowledge, is anything  
14 on the bridge or in CIC ever recorded? Do you guys use any  
15 hand-held recorders to record bridge-to-bridge, either down  
16 in CIC or up in the bridge itself? Any ideas?

17 [REDACTED]: Based on specific tasking that we  
18 may have, it may be required.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Sometimes there's things that  
20 you're required to?

21 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: How about just, how about just in  
23 as, if it's not part of your specific tasking, just  
24 routine, if you're just steaming around in the South China  
25 Sea and you're going to request a port-to-port passage with

Alpha Transcription

678-646-5330

1 someone; I mean, is that -- would that sort of stuff  
2 normally be recorded on the bridge or CIS, to your  
3 knowledge?

4 [REDACTED]: Not to my knowledge, sir.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. Um, and when  
6 you guys are standing TAO, do you guys normally wear a  
7 headset and talk on [REDACTED] and have an external net at the  
8 same time, if you're just steaming around in the South  
9 China Sea or something?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

12 [REDACTED]: Or we have the ability to dial into  
13 [REDACTED] next to us.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

15 [REDACTED]: And that amplifies as well.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, when you're standing TAO --  
17 I'm just -- you've sort of got my curiosity now. When  
18 you're standing TAO, what sort of circuits -- what would  
19 you typically monitor, what would you be listening to, a  
20 combination of Navy, [REDACTED], fleet tact? I'm just curious as  
21 to how, when you're standing watch as TAO, what it is all  
22 the things you're listening to.

23 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. [REDACTED] is amplified in  
24 combat, so it is in an overhead speaker.

25 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

20

1 [REDACTED] : Not near my station. But loud  
2 enough for myself to hear --

3 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

4 [REDACTED] : -- as well as fleet tact.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Okay.

6 [REDACTED] : I'm saying when it comes to  
7 specific nets, nets that I monitor in my immediate area, it  
8 is [REDACTED], the internal net on the ship. And we have the  
9 [REDACTED] that is mostly engineering, combat systems and the  
10 bridge in a separate box that I am able to hear. And then,  
11 depending on our operations, which command that I need to  
12 monitor.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : So, normally [REDACTED], -- [REDACTED] in  
14 one ear and that there is some sort of command net, based  
15 on whatever it is your tasking is, your mission, that would  
16 be the thing that you're listening to in the headset?

17 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : And then [REDACTED], fleet tact,  
19 and [REDACTED] in speakers that you can be able to hear?

20 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] : Does your Captain have -- onboard  
22 Fitzgerald, is there an A-phone or is there a buzzer  
23 between the Captain and the TAO? How does the Captain  
24 communicate with you, if he wants to communicate with you  
25 while you're standing TAO?

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1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: He dials a number located in  
2 combat.

3 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. Do you guys  
4 still use an IVCS system, is that what you guys have?

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. There's so many different  
7 mods, um, every DDD in my squadron had a different way of  
8 doing business back in the day, so. Okay. Um, do you guys  
9 have the A-phone on your ship; do you even know what an A-  
10 phone is?

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: I do not know what an A-phone is.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay, then you don't have it.  
13 You're missing out. It's really, it's really a great piece  
14 of equipment. Um, so, with your watch standers all in  
15 different sections, you guys, um, for the 3 Section, is  
16 that a standard five-and-dime, is that what those guys  
17 stand, five on, ten off; do you know if there are 3  
18 Section? And when you stand in your 4 Section, is that a  
19 four-hour watch, six, how many hours do you all stand watch  
20 when you're in your 4 Section?

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: It's a five-hour watch for all  
22 watches, with the exception of the 2200 to 0200 in the  
23 morning watch, which is a four-hour watch, sir.

1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, okay, so, so everyone's on  
2 the classic five-and-dime schedule then. Um, you said  
3 everyone is on a five-hour watch?

4           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. So, the 0700 to 1200 --

5           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: 7 to 12, 12 to 17, 17 to 22, 22  
6 to 02 gets the four-hour --

7           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

8           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- and then 2 to 7.

9           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

10          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. So, I would call that a  
11 standard five-and-dimes, with the four-hour over the noon  
12 to midnight. And those rotations, just because you have 3  
13 and 4 Section, sometimes you'll be standing watch with the  
14 same folks in 3 Section and other times that will --

15          [REDACTED]: It will change, sir.

16          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: It will change up in all cycles.

17 Do you guys ever, um, if I use terminology you're not  
18 familiar with because I don't know how -- do y'all ever dog  
19 the watch, does anyone ever augment the 22 to 02 or the 2  
20 to 7, or are you always just in your rotation?

21          [REDACTED]: You're just in your rotation, sir.

22          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Yeah, sometimes I've been  
23 on some ships where there might be an officer that only  
24 stands the 22 to 02 or only stands the 2 to 7, so they  
25 augment that watch every night. Um, okay. Have you all

1 ever, as your Captain, either the old Captain or the  
2 current Captain, ever talked about putting you guys on a  
3 circadian battle rhythm, where you stand the same --

4 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- watch every day? Is that  
6 something you guys have been thinking about doing, or --  
7 I'm just curious --

8 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- because this came from the  
10 land fleet. So, we actually mandated and for all land  
11 fleet ships, SWO Boss was considering mandating it for tac  
12 fleet ships, uh, as well. So, is that something you guys  
13 have been talking about?

14 [REDACTED]: There have been discussions of it  
15 in the past and under the previous CO, we did attempt  
16 circadian.

17 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: It didn't work out or didn't like  
18 it or --

19 [REDACTED]: It was more of an issue with  
20 ensuring that all personnel were able to make it to meals  
21 on time.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Yeah.

23 [REDACTED]: And we couldn't do that because  
24 there were some in 4 Section, 3 Section duty.



1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: There's a lot more to it than  
2 just -- there's a lot more to it than just the actual  
3 watches. You've got to regulate your entire ship's routine  
4 and schedule, that's why I kind of asked about some of that  
5 as well. Okay. Um, I think most of my other questions  
6 would be relevant to the actual collision, and that will  
7 come at a later interview. Um, oh, I'm sorry, I did have a  
8 few others.

9 Uh, so, you said you got underway on Friday, the 16th?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: What was y'all's, what was your  
12 mission, what were y'all getting underway for that day?

13 [REDACTED]: Operations in the South China Sea,  
14 sir.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Got it. That tells me what  
16 I need to know. Okay. Um, and you guys were in route to  
17 your -- was there an op, I'm trying to keep this right, is  
18 there an op area that you go to? Is there a place that you  
19 go to your operations?

20 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And you guys were in route  
22 to that area or --

23 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

24 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. Um, okay. I  
25 think -- I think probably the remainder of my questions

1 will be relevant to the collision. We'll ask you to come  
2 back at a later time, uh, for those types of things. Um,  
3 I'm going to ask the Lieutenant if he's got any questions,  
4 again -- we're only focused today, this morning on just  
5 trying to understand the ship's routine and how business  
6 was done on the Fitzgerald and we're not here to ask you,  
7 you know, your opinions or assessments of how the ship was,  
8 but just sort of give us a feel for the day-to-day  
9 routines. So, I'll ask the Lieutenant if he and the Coast  
10 Guard have any and then I'll ask, you know, Commodore [REDACTED]  
11 if he has anything. He's an FDNF sailor, he commanded  
12 [REDACTED] so, he understands operations simply way better  
13 than I do. I haven't operated the 7th Fleet since 2003, so  
14 it's been a long time.

15 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Lieutenant, anything you want to  
17 add?

18 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Yes.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

20 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, just a couple of questions,  
21 again. My field is primarily with commercial vessels, so  
22 I'm hearing a lot of Navy jargon and things that um, I'm  
23 pretty sure are similar to commercial vessels, but I just  
24 want to ask a couple of questions to make sure that I know  
25 what we're talking about and make sure we're all on the

1 same page here. Um, so the first question, and I should  
2 have had this at the very beginning. What is your position  
3 onboard the vessel?

4 [REDACTED]: I'm TAO of the TAC watch officer.

5 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. That answers two questions  
6 there. I had no idea what TAC was, or TAO. And as a TAO,  
7 what are the normal day-to-day duties of your position?

8 [REDACTED]: So, my job as the TAO is to  
9 maintain the overall technical picture.

10 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: So, just to clarify, are  
11 you asking about her watch-standing role or her day job on  
12 the ship?

13 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: I said both.

14 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Okay.

15 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, um, and again, making the  
16 commercial vessel comparison, an officer would be like a  
17 second mate and so they are primarily updating like  
18 navigation logs, standing watch, and just taking care of  
19 the basic bridge items. So, as a TAO, your assignment is  
20 to maintain overall tactical picture and would that be  
21 telling the boss where we're going, getting us -- like --

22 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Kind of explain --

23 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Rough picture.

24 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: How do you -- how, explain to the

25 Lieutenant as a TAO how you work with the bridge, what

1 things you communicate to the Captain and sort of the role  
2 you stand to defend the ship as a Tactical Action Officer.

3 [REDACTED]: So, the overall combat team  
4 maintains essentially visual on the different radars and  
5 the radar feeds. And in the event that we need to inform  
6 the bridge or essentially concur or confirm that we are  
7 seeing the same thing and we have communications with them  
8 in regard to talking with the CO, the watchstanders, the  
9 TAO's, the TAO's; more so, talk to him in regard to  
10 tactical things such as equipment --

11 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

12 [REDACTED]: -- or different, um, tasking that  
13 may come down from higher headquarters he may not be aware  
14 of.

15 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. So, just to ensure I  
16 understand this, it's not on the bridge, it's in a separate  
17 space?

18 [REDACTED]: Yes, it is in a separate space on  
19 the ship.

20 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Is it close enough that like you  
21 could shout up the ladder and say, "Hey, guys, watch out  
22 for that?" or --

23 [REDACTED]: It is not.

24 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: It is not. Okay. So, it's radio  
25 communications that [REDACTED] may need?

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

28

1 [REDACTED] : Yes.

2 COMMODORE [REDACTED] : Okay.

3 LCDR [REDACTED] : The watch takes place in the Combat  
4 Information Center?

5 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir, it does.

6 LCDR [REDACTED] : And then on the DEG, the Combat  
7 Information Center is located amidships, directly behind  
8 the pilot house, how close in proximity is it to the pilot  
9 house?

10 [REDACTED] : Well, it is two levels, three --

11 LCDR [REDACTED] : Three decks down?

12 [REDACTED] : Yes, sir. It is down and then it  
13 is situated aft.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] : So, would it say amidships or --

15 [REDACTED] : Forward, amidships, however, aft,  
16 where the pilot house is.

17 LCDR [REDACTED] : Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

18 COMMODORE [REDACTED] : So, on some DD's, back in our old  
19 [Indiscernible 00:28:28] class, the TAO's frequently went  
20 to the bridge because you were just one ladder away. You  
21 could leave, you could leave your TAO station and go right  
22 to the bridge in a matter of 10 seconds. On the DEG's, the  
23 way the ship was assigned, several decks down, so the TAO  
24 doesn't go to the bridge, you remain in CIC. Good to keep  
25 that separation going. Okay.

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1 Um, just a couple of terms that were discussed during  
2 your interview here. You mentioned khaki calls?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes, so, officers, um --

4 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Is that, I'm sorry, is that C-A-C-I,  
5 or what's the --

6 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Khaki is the one, khaki pants.

7 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Khaki pants, okay.

8 [REDACTED]: So, officers and chiefs.

9 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. So, again, that's just kind  
10 of a department head meeting, talking about the --

11 [REDACTED]: With the rest of my --

12 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

13 [REDACTED]: -- officers and chiefs within my  
14 department.

15 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. And then from there after  
16 that, they break it down to divisions and hand out the  
17 individual cycles?

18 [REDACTED]: Yes.

19 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. Good. Okay. Uh, we kind of  
20 went into this a little bit, and I think I have the right  
21 picture, but I want to cover it again. The three watch or  
22 four watch, again, is a five hours on, ten hours off, basic  
23 rotation. And, again, I believe you said around the 22 to  
24 02, there's a four-hour watch instead?

25 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

30

1           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. How does that work for the 4  
2 Section?

3           [REDACTED]: So, the 4 Section, it's still a 22  
4 to 02, four-hour watch.

5           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. So, they would be in five  
6 15's; so, they would have five hours of watch and 15 off.  
7 That's still a better deal than the 5 and 10.

8           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

9           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. And, I think this is obvious,  
10 but again, you're talking about the circadian watch, would  
11 that be that, you know, more like a 4 and 8 sort of thing,  
12 where you're on at the same time or -- explain that to me,  
13 because I'm not sure if that lines up.

14          [REDACTED]: I'm not 100 percent --

15          COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, the --

16          [REDACTED]: -- versus beacon circadian, but  
17 there's more consistency to your routine in standing the  
18 same watch every day.

19          COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. And the whole idea is that  
20 you stand, whether you're in a 6 and 6, 4 and 8, whatever  
21 the routine is, it's the same watch every day, so that you  
22 establish a routine?

23          LCDR [REDACTED]: That's right, we do.

24          COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. And, and, so that's what  
25 we're familiar with on the commercial side, is that most

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1 crew are on a four-hour watch, 8 hours off, and then  
2 they're on again, 12 hours. So, they're always on like 4  
3 and 8, whether it's a.m., p.m., 4 and 8, that's when  
4 they're doing their duty, so. Okay.

5 LCDR [REDACTED]: All right. You had mentioned that the  
6 vessel had their dry dock period, uh, last year, holiday  
7 period, and then the basic underway, getting  
8 certifications, all of that kind of happened earlier this  
9 year, around January. Are you aware of any issues from  
10 following that dry dock period or any ongoing mechanical  
11 bugs that were plaguing the system onboard the vessel?

12 [REDACTED]: I can't speak to that.

13 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

14 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: When you come back for the second  
15 interview, we, probably for all the watchers, all the  
16 typical things we'll ask is, what active cas reps you would  
17 have had on any of your systems on the day of the event,  
18 whether they be, you know, engineering or combat or  
19 navigation related, just sort of understand what you all  
20 would have had active.

21 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

22 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: Since we were just talking about watch  
24 standing a little bit, I'll ask this question then. Is --  
25 when you get put on watch, is there a familiarization



1 period, like do you get slowly broken into it or do they  
2 say, "You've got the 12 to 17 for today, get out there?"

3 [REDACTED]: Are you speaking just more in how  
4 do we know which watch we have?

5 LCDR [REDACTED]: Well, that's part of it, but --

6 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Do you guys have under  
7 instruction before you stand TAO for the first time, do you  
8 stand TAO-UI?

9 [REDACTED]: Yes, we have an under-instruction  
10 process and then we have a qualification process that's  
11 conducted by the Captain, the final one.

12 LCDR [REDACTED]: I think what the Lieutenant may be  
13 asking, how does your turnover process work? So, let's  
14 say you're going to take the um, the 7 to 12 watch, what  
15 would be your process for once you get up, have breakfast,  
16 and, you know, getting ready to go stand watch? What's a  
17 typical turnover routine for you as the TAO?

18 [REDACTED]: As the TAO, it's walking into  
19 combat and then observing anything that may be on the  
20 displays and then talking to the TAO that is currently on  
21 watch about any major events that had happened or are  
22 upcoming as well as anything that our boss essentially,  
23 DESRON, or any other higher headquarters may be requesting  
24 information on.

1 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, that certainly does help. Uh, I  
2 do, but the other question was relevant as well in terms  
3 of, as you mentioned, the under-instruction process and the  
4 qualification process. How long does that usually take?

5 [REDACTED]: That is very, it varies --

6 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

7 [REDACTED]: -- based on again operational  
8 commitments. It's -- varies based on the CO's confidence  
9 in a particular person onboard, whether he feels confident  
10 qualifying them faster than another person.

11 LCDR [REDACTED]: Would you say this takes as short as a  
12 week, a month?

13 [REDACTED]: I can't put a timeline on it.  
14 Again, it's, it varies from person-to-person.

15 UNKNOWN SPEAKER 12: May I ask how long your  
16 qualification took?

17 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, based on operational commitments  
18 that we had, I believe I was qualified in March.

19 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

20 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Do they have a TAO POQs?

21 [REDACTED]: There is a TAO POQ. Yes.

22 LCDR [REDACTED]: As part of Watch Department school?

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: Um, is, do you guys, is there, is  
24 there a routine between the bridge and CIC; in other words,  
25 is there a methodology for how you turn over TAO or is

1 there sort of -- is there a mandate that as TAO you turn  
2 over last? Um, is, in other words, I've been on some ships  
3 where you may be air and surface turnover first and then  
4 the CSC would turn over and then once all the subordinate  
5 watches are turned over, then the TAO would turn over, um,  
6 and the same sort of thing on the bridge. I know you said  
7 you haven't been standing bridge watch, but usually the OOD  
8 is the last, you know, boatswain Quartermaster etc. is  
9 there any sort of mandated routine by that or as TAO you  
10 just turn over when you arrive and -- how does that work  
11 onboard the Fitzgerald?

12 [REDACTED]: Specifically for the bridge and  
13 TAO, um, those two stations, the bridge is already on watch  
14 and they've turned over before the TAO. And then the TAO  
15 turns over after the bridge is already taken over.

16 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, is that mandated on a standing  
17 order, someone says the OOD turns over in --

18 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

19 LCDR [REDACTED]: -- half hour and

20 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: -- quarter till or something, okay.

21 And then after --

22 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: : I'm sorry, I jumped in,  
23 Lieutenant. Prompted me to think of a few things.

24 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: : After, is there -- do you do a  
25 [REDACTED] or any kind of turnover brief, once you have the

1 watch as the TAO, is there some sort of, you know, this is  
2 the TAO, we're in condition, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED]. Do you do any sort of [REDACTED] turnover, once you  
4 take the watch as TAO and the bridge listens in?

5 [REDACTED]: No, sir.

6 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Nothing like that?

7 [REDACTED]: Just announce that the new TAO has  
8 the watch.

9 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

10 LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you turn to one, does anyone, does  
11 anyone, either the bridge or the TAO report their relief to  
12 the Captain when they turnover?

13 [REDACTED]: If the Captain is on the bridge,  
14 then the conning officer as well as the OOD report their  
15 relief or request permission to --

16 LCDR [REDACTED]: Right.

17 [REDACTED]: -- resume the deck or to relieve  
18 the conning officer. However, there is no call that's made  
19 to the Captain, if he's not on the bridge.

20 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, if he's like at dinner or lunch  
21 and the watch turns over, no one calls? Or like when the,  
22 if the OOD comes down for, for lunch and the Captain is in  
23 there, he wouldn't say, "Captain, Lieutenant, so-and-so is  
24 relieving me as officer of the deck?"

25 [REDACTED]: No, sir.

1 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay. Just curious. Different ships  
2 do it different ways, just curious. And there is no  
3 prescribed way to do that, it's just personality of the CO.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And again, this is showing my  
5 ignorance of Navy operations. Could you give me, I guess,  
6 a rundown of who's in charge of what watches because I'm  
7 hearing conn officer and TAO and this fellow and this lady  
8 over here, and I'm not quite sure who does what.

9 [REDACTED]: The officer of the deck is the  
10 person that is in charge on the bridge. And the Tactical  
11 Action Officer is the person that's in charge in combat.

12 LCDR [REDACTED]: Why don't you give the Lieutenant who  
13 works for the OOD and who works for you as TAO, just the  
14 main support net watch stations for you?

15 [REDACTED]: So, for the officer of the deck,  
16 they have a junior officer of the deck that works with him.  
17 The conning officer, the quartermaster of the watch. The  
18 Boatswain Mate of the watch. The helmsman. Those are the  
19 main watches on the bridge.

20 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay.

21 [REDACTED]: And for the tactical action  
22 officer, the main controlling stations are the CSC --

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: Combat --

24 [REDACTED]: Combat Systems Coordinator.

25 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: And then you have the anti-air  
2 worker board. The surface worker board. And those are the  
3 main --

4 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay. Commodore [REDACTED], hopefully, you  
5 guys have anything?

6 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Certainly a few things more than  
7 what's on the commercial ship, but for good reason. And  
8 one of the questions I had originally, I just want to come  
9 back to. Tell me about the mission in general of the  
10 Fitzgerald, what -- what are you guys specialized at?

11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: We are an AEGIS Class Destroyer.  
12 So, our radars are essentially built for protecting the  
13 carrier and air warfare.

14 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. So, primarily air defense?

15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, AEGIS is an air defense  
16 system.

17 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, more often than not, you're not  
18 going to be going out by yourself just to cruise around.  
19 You will be more likely connected with a larger fleet?

20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: It is very mission specific. So,  
21 there are plenty of times where AEGIS destroyers do operate  
22 independently and there are times when they also operate  
23 within a strike group with a carrier or an [Indiscernible  
24 00:41:04].

1           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, all of the destroyers here in  
2 7th Fleet are all [REDACTED] destroyers, are they not?

3           [REDACTED]: No, sir, they are not.

4           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: They are not, okay. But the  
5 Fitzgerald is?

6           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

7           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, the Fitzgerald is also a  
8 [REDACTED] ship. So, some of the operations  
9 she has, I haven't been able to talk about her specific to  
10 those missions, where if she is out there doing a [REDACTED]  
11 mission. And usually you guys are alone --

12          [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

13          COMMODORE [REDACTED]: On those? Okay.

14          LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: I have a quick question,  
15 again, looking at these notes. Um, I've heard that you  
16 guys may have had shipmen on the ship? Is it -- did you  
17 guys have some shipmen on the ship?

18          [REDACTED]: Yes, ma'am.

19          LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Um, do you know how many  
20 you may have --

21          [REDACTED]: Twelve.

22          LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Twelve. And when did  
23 they get to the ship, if you know?

24          [REDACTED]: They got to the ship on the 14th.

25          LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: On the 14th, okay.

1       COMMODORE [REDACTED]: What were the mids, was it was part  
2 of their summer, one of their summer cruises?

3       [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

4       LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: And were they at all  
5 sort of -- I know when we have mids on our ship, we sort of  
6 augment the watch with the midshipmen. Do you know  
7 whether, you may not be able to speak to this, but do you  
8 know whether they augmented any of the bridge watches or  
9 any of the combat watches with the midshipmen?

10       [REDACTED]: I cannot speak to any combat  
11 watches because I did not see any midshipmen on combat  
12 watches and I did not physically see any midshipmen on a  
13 bridge watch. However, I know that they were going to  
14 stand watches with their running mates. So, with someone  
15 who --

16       COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Was this a First Class or Second  
17 Class crew, do you know, were they officer running mates or  
18 petty officers or a combination?

19       [REDACTED]: Both, yes, sir. So, we had two  
20 First Classes that were on the ship and so the First Class  
21 with the officer running mate would have stood bridge watch  
22 with their officer running mate.

23       COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Was there anyone else, and I'm not  
24 looking for, I'm not looking for a list of everyone, but in



1 general, were there any other riders you guys had with you,  
2 while you were with this last underway?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I've heard, I've heard you all had  
5 some DESRON riders and some ATG riders, as well. Any other  
6 organizations besides the DESRON and ATG?

7 [REDACTED]: SPAWAR.

8 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: SPAWAR, okay. Were you all actually  
9 doing any specific certifications that you all were trying  
10 to do during this underway period, once you got underway on  
11 the 16th?

12 [REDACTED]: Uh-huh, yes, sir.

13 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: What EOC or any, any engineering or  
14 tactical? I'm just curious, what else was on you all's  
15 plate for that underway?

16 [REDACTED]: Um, for the underway, we were  
17 scheduled to do our engineering, 1.3 Charlie Assessment.

18 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

19 [REDACTED]: And then also to complete our MOB-  
20 Alpha 1.4 Bravo Night DOQ portion.

21 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay. So, those are just things as  
22 part of the ship's training that they would have been  
23 doing. So, uh, you have to do certain daytime and  
24 nighttime landings with helicopters and then for the  
25 engineering, I will not bore you with the entire, how we

1 certify the engineering plan, but, um, if she says they're  
2 at the 1.3 Charlie, they were very close to finishing up  
3 their engineering certification, so.

4 LCDR [REDACTED]: And this would have been from the  
5 original dry dock period and certifications from earlier  
6 this year?

7 [REDACTED]: Yes, and 7th Fleet certifications  
8 are often ongoing over a longer period of time.

9 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay. Um, just to be clear, um, you  
10 arrived here [REDACTED] --

11 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

12 MR. [REDACTED]: -- [REDACTED] All right. Um, you assumed  
13 your -- you assumed your duties January --

14 [REDACTED]: 19th.

15 MR. [REDACTED]: -- January 19th. So, in that 20 days,  
16 you were doing what?

17 [REDACTED]: Because the ship was on stand-down

18 --

19 MR. [REDACTED]: Uh-huh.

20 [REDACTED]: -- and my -- the person I was  
21 relieving was on leave. And so, there was no turnover  
22 process during that time. And I was essentially just  
23 familiarizing myself with the ship as best as I could. But  
24 also, just based on some maintenance or land casualties, I

1 couldn't really explore the sheer drives on the ship as  
2 much as I wanted to.

3 MR. [REDACTED]: So, you assumed your duties January  
4 19th. You got qualified in March, I think. So, during  
5 that timeframe, you know, what exactly were you doing?

6 [REDACTED]: Um, the operations for the ship.  
7 So, getting the ship underway, sea trials, ammo unload, ]  
8 exercise that we participated in with the other DESRON  
9 ships and that was my main focus during that time.

10 MR. [REDACTED]: So, the person that you were relieving  
11 was on leave when you got there nav.

12 [REDACTED]: They picked me up from the airport.  
13 So, he was there and then checked out.

14 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay. So, after January, between  
15 January and March, was that handover taking place or had  
16 they departed ship?

17 [REDACTED]: No. The handover took place before  
18 -- the turnover took place before January 19th, as we went  
19 through essentially the status of the department that I was  
20 about to take charge of. And then he left in order to do  
21 some schooling; however, he is still attached to the ship.  
22 He took another position on the ship.

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, typically, most for the department  
24 head level, so for the operations officer, the chief  
25 engineer, those officers will usually have about a week's

1 worth of sort of turnover and then that other officer will  
2 depart the ship and the new officer will have the job. We  
3 have one department head on a destroyer, the weapons  
4 officer, who will be there for 18 months and then fleet-up  
5 to become the combat systems officer. He will turn over to  
6 another officer. Sometimes, as ops mentioned, there's a  
7 case or a reason where an officer might remain on the ship  
8 for some reason, awaiting a school, or awaiting his next  
9 assignment. But usually for the operations officer and for  
10 the combat systems officer, the supply officer, the chief  
11 engineer, those officers transfer as soon as the handover  
12 is done. All right.

13 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: And just to clarify in  
14 case this wasn't clear before, you said your day job is as  
15 operations officer. And you took that over in January and  
16 had a good week or so turnover time before you took over  
17 that job.

18 [REDACTED]: Yes, ma'am.

19 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Your watch standing  
20 capacity is that as tactical action officer. For that, you  
21 were training during -- from January to March before you  
22 qualified and then took over those duties?

23 [REDACTED]: Yes, ma'am.

24 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Okay. I don't know if  
25 that's helpful or not, but just to clarify.

Audio transcription - [REDACTED]

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1 MR. [REDACTED]: And just the last question. Where were  
2 you stationed before the Fitzgerald?

3 [REDACTED]: I was stationed for shore duty at  
4 CNIC, in Washington DC, and previous to that, my two sea  
5 tours were on USS McCampbell out here at 7th Fleet.

6 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: What did you do on the McCampbell?

7 [REDACTED]: I started in -- well, technically,  
8 I started in combat as the CA or OI DEBO and then a few  
9 months after I moved to engineering for the remaining two  
10 years. And then I flected up to be the fire control  
11 officer.

12 LCDR [REDACTED]: It's a pretty well-rounded -- first,  
13 how long were you on the McCampbell, three-and-a-half, four  
14 years?

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Four-and-a-half years, sir.

16 LCDR [REDACTED]: Four-and-a-half years.

17 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

18 LCDR [REDACTED]: Well, I'm just curious. What did you  
19 do at CNIC?

20 [REDACTED]: I worked in emergency management --

21 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

22 [REDACTED]: -- at the watch board that they  
23 have there, sir.

24 LCDR [REDACTED]: Captain [REDACTED], was he an IC when you  
25 were there?

Alpha Transcription

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1 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

2 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: If you could give us just a minute  
3 to kind of look over and see if there is any other  
4 questions that came up.

5 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I've got a couple of questions, if I  
6 may.

7 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay. Go ahead.

8 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I assume this is the generalized  
9 cycle of the ship. I assume you guys do navigation  
10 transit, pilot transit, [Indiscernible 00:49:21] educating  
11 with [Indiscernible 00:49:28]

12 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. Navigation research, our  
13 standard underway.

14 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Right. Do you guys, are you guys in  
15 the habit of briefing overall transplants; like, for  
16 example, you know, you did a nav brief, you get underway to  
17 go to ammo, anchorage and then you go to nav brief to go  
18 down a [Indiscernible 00:49:42] flight ops, right? And  
19 then from there you were going to transit to go to the  
20 South China Sea?

21 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

22 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Do you guys have ops intel or in a  
23 separate brief, do you guys get your ship control together  
24 and discuss the overall transit plan? It's not a

1 requirement. Not all ships do it, I'm just curious, as to  
2 what you guys do on the Fitz.

3 [REDACTED]: No, sir.

4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Okay. Um, um, CO, XO, kind of flow,  
5 battlefield circulation on the bridge, and the other major  
6 control stations. Can you give us a sense for, you know,  
7 how frequently the CO and XO kind of cycled through the pod  
8 house other than the times when they were required to be  
9 there, right, sea detail, un-reps, maybe flight operations,  
10 typically on the bridge, but just wondering what the daily  
11 flow, say in open-ocean transit, how frequently would the  
12 XO and CO come cycle through the bridge?

13 [REDACTED]: I can't speak to the bridge, sir.  
14 But I, I --

15 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Did they come through combat on a  
16 regular basis or?

17 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

18 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: All right. You kind of ran us  
19 through who was on a typical bridge watch team. I didn't  
20 hear you talk about lookouts. Can you, can you give us a  
21 sense for are there dedicated lookouts on the bridge watch  
22 and if so, you know, where they stand, is it aft lookout,  
23 is it bridge lookout?

1 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir, we do have an aft  
2 lookout. I can't speak to the rest of the watch, though.  
3 The senior watch officer would be able to speak to that.

4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Okay. And, if I'm tracking this  
5 right, so, you're an FDNF warrior. You did your back-to-  
6 back tours here on McCampbell and you came back to the ops.  
7 So, you obviously got your TAO, excuse me, your OOD qual  
8 when you were here as an JO. You reported in December you  
9 took over the ops job in January. And if I understood you  
10 right, you requalified OOD in March, is that correct?

11 [REDACTED]: That was speaking to tactical  
12 action officer, yes, sir.

13 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Okay. So, you got your CO qual in  
14 March. Were you required to requalify as an OOD, and if  
15 so, what was that process for you?

16 [REDACTED]: The process was under the previous  
17 Captain in which I got my OOD re-qual and I was the conning  
18 officer for a transit inbound to Sasebo.

19 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Okay. So, was it -- am I hearing  
20 you right where it's a standcon proved to me you can drive  
21 the ship and then you got a re-qual letter; is that how  
22 that happened? So, you --

23 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

24 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: So, it sounds like you did not, you  
25 weren't required to stand in a series of watches as an OOD



1 under instruction, but you were getting requalification.

2 That's all I have.

3 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: And all right. Just one follow up.  
4 And you may not know, it's really a question for the CSO,  
5 but you might know based on second tour DIVO's, et cetera.  
6 Is the -- is the re-qual for OOD's, whether it be for a  
7 department head or a second tour DIVO, is that typically  
8 just based on their experience, like if you had a DIVO that  
9 came from a frigate, I presume they would get some sort of  
10 tailored qual, as opposed to maybe a DIVO that came  
11 straight from another, you know, FDNFDG, their re-qual  
12 might be similar to yours, you know, accomplishes, any  
13 ideas?

14 [REDACTED]: I can't speak to that, sir.

15 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: That's fine, I was just curious.  
16 We're running out of frigates, almost everyone is coming  
17 from a DEG navy cruiser or in that, I guess.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Mr. [REDACTED], I believe you had  
19 some questions.

20 LCDR [REDACTED]: Sure. So, do you happen to know that  
21 the yard period work was prior to any sailings that took  
22 place in 2017?

23 [REDACTED]: Are you talking about the extent of  
24 the yard training, what equipment was worked on, sir?

1 LCDR [REDACTED]: I wouldn't necessarily go that  
2 detailed, just was it a major overhaul, just a dockside?

3 [REDACTED]: Actually, at this moment, I cannot  
4 confirm that, sir.

5 LCDR [REDACTED]: No worries. I know it was before you  
6 were aboard, so. I just was curious. Um, I had on every  
7 branch of service does it a little bit differently with  
8 regards to PCS reporting, um, how was the PCS transfer  
9 seized and either managed on a typical basis; is it, you  
10 know, you lose a little bit of the crew or is it like a,  
11 for Coast Guard, for example, it's typically a July through  
12 September timeframe of when transfers will take place. Uh,  
13 usually large portions of the crew will change out versus  
14 smaller drafts over the course of the year.

15 [REDACTED]: I can't speak to specific  
16 percentages of the crew that leave; however, winter and  
17 summer are often times where a number of transfers take  
18 place across the Navy --

19 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

20 [REDACTED]: -- just fitting in with the  
21 specific cycle.

22 LCDR [REDACTED]: And then you had mentioned several  
23 times about the watch layout. How is the, uh, watch  
24 schedule communicated?

1 [REDACTED]: So, it is, um, it's posted in  
2 specific locations on the ship. And then, when our lan was  
3 working or when our [Indiscernible 00:54:49] working, also  
4 posted on our internal share point. Our internal ship  
5 website.

6 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, both electronic and hard copies  
7 were present?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes.

9 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Can, how about watch bill changes,  
10 if the watch bill change happens, is that just -- would the  
11 cabin XO's or someone just do a pen and ink on the watch  
12 bill or for some reason you're going to change; how does  
13 that occur?

14 [REDACTED]: In the event that it needs to  
15 happen instantaneously, the Captain will authorize it and  
16 will physically write on the watch bill. However, if there  
17 is enough time, it will be re-routed --

18 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Rerouted.

19 [REDACTED]: -- with the anchor people, reassign  
20 it.

21 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: So, when you talk about the routing  
22 process, how far in advance is that watch bill drafted?

23 [REDACTED]: Uh, senior watch officer would have  
24 to address the timeline of routing watch bills, that's  
25 online.

1       COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

2       LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Is this planned each  
3 day?

4       [REDACTED]: Yes, we do.

5       LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Does that get posted?

6       [REDACTED]: Yes, it does.

7       LCDR [REDACTED]: I had one more question before, if the  
8 Commander doesn't have any. Um, you mentioned that there  
9 is a turnover, a team between the bridge and, uh, CIC. Um,  
10 so is this specifically -- and I gave you sort of an  
11 example, but is it specifically mandated that the bridge  
12 turns over at a certain time and CIC turns over at a  
13 certain time?

14       [REDACTED]: The general has read the standing  
15 order, sir.

16       LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you know what those times are? I'm  
17 just curious.

18       [REDACTED]: Uh, I can't --

19       LCDR [REDACTED]: We can look at the standing order.

20       [REDACTED]: -- I can't quote it, quote you sir.  
21 I can't quote it from the top of my head, sir.

22       LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. But there are sort  
23 of -- that's the -- there is a mandated CIC turns over  
24 here, bridge turns over here, bridge's subordinate, you  
25 know, turns over first and -- okay.

1 [REDACTED]: It still in need of a standing  
2 order.

3 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay, we'll look at that. Okay.

4 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: And so, I have as your primary duty  
5 is the operations officer and your watch assignment is TAO.  
6 Do you have other associated collateral duties that are  
7 part of your day-to-day operations?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes, I am the -- the [Indiscernible  
9 00:56:55] not part of my daily operations, sir.

10 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: How about not part of your daily  
11 operations?

12 [REDACTED]: There is a seaman ship training  
13 team, I think.

14 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Is that the only team that you're  
15 part of?

16 [REDACTED]: That is the only collateral duty  
17 that I have.

18 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Are you -- you're not the safety  
19 officer as well or --

20 [REDACTED]: No, sir. They started -- ceased  
21 doing that upon second tour DIVO's.

22 COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 [REDACTED]: So, that's actually among what the  
24 FPO should get safety officer in there and their  
25 requirements as well in there.

1           COMMODORE [REDACTED]: Okay.

2           LCDR [REDACTED]: So, as ops officer, what are your  
3 daily duties?

4           [REDACTED]: So, I am in charge of the in-ship  
5 schedule, the POD is something that I write, just ensuring  
6 that the schedule routine is continuing on.

7           LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

8           [REDACTED]: Overall, outside ship schedules as  
9 well, there is a lot of coordination with higher  
10 headquarters.

11          LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay. When is the POD usually  
12 published?

13          [REDACTED]: Try to get it out prior to chow.  
14 So, the 1600, early chow, that's, that's the ultimate goal.  
15 But again, based on certain evolutions and events that  
16 happen throughout the day and meetings. It may vary.

17          LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you have any responsibilities  
18 during flight ops?

19          [REDACTED]: I do not, sir.

20          LCDR [REDACTED]: So, that's all the questions I have.

21          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Anything further? Anybody  
22 else? Are there any questions you have for us, something  
23 that we can address or answer for you?

24          [REDACTED]: I don't believe so, no, sir.

1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. Fantastic. So, we'll um --  
2 so, this afternoon, we'll start interviewing bridge watch  
3 standers and then we'll, after break, try to move on to  
4 CIC. So, at some point we'll ask you to come back in and  
5 we'll talk about specifics at that point of the actual  
6 interview. But thank you very much for your time. You've  
7 given us the understanding and feeling about the Fitzgerald  
8 and how business is done. That will help us understand the  
9 routines that the ship is in. So, once we start asking  
10 sailors questions, we'll at least have a feel for how  
11 business is done routinely onboard the ship, so.

12           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir. I do have a question,  
13 just based on the timeline you just gave. Can I be  
14 expected to come back today for an interview or --

15           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: I don't see that happening. We're  
16 gonna -- we normally start junior to senior.

17           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

18           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Um, so, we'll start with the  
19 junior bridge watch standers. I think we'd probably be  
20 fortunate to get through a couple of them today. Um, so I  
21 think that the earliest would be tomorrow.

22           [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

23           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And we're not going to ask anyone  
24 to do any interviews on the weekend. We don't have any  
25 planned for that. So, what's, today is Wednesday?

1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

2 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, I think there's a possibility,  
3 um, we would ask you to come back tomorrow. But I think  
4 just in, probably, probably looking at Friday.

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And we'll work very closely with  
7 the ship based on everyone's individual schedules. There  
8 is a liaison that we're working through at DESRON 15, to  
9 sort of set up. But you, as the TAO, on the day of, you  
10 would be one of the last people we would speak to from the  
11 CIC perspective. That's sort of our expectation.

12 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: If that answers that, answers the  
14 question.

15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: So, you're asking for --

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, not today.

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Yes, sir.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: We would have no expectation that  
19 we would do further interviews --

20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- up until to today.

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Thank you, sir.

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Great.

24 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: I have one quick one and  
25 that's just obviously you're a witness for this



1 investigation. So, just don't talk about anything we  
2 discussed here.

3 [REDACTED]: And in regard to the questions or -  
4 - I don't know -- I know this is an investigation, just  
5 legality, formality, under oath or when and --

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: I'll touch upon that a little bit.  
7 Again, primarily, our investigation on our side is fact-  
8 finding.

9 [REDACTED]: Yes, sir.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: We're not putting you under oath.  
11 We're not taking you to court or anything like that. It's  
12 really truly what happened so that we can try to make  
13 sense of it all. Because eventually, more than likely,  
14 this is going to go to our superiors, um, as a foundation  
15 for their official board. Um, where it will be a little  
16 bit more formalized, a little bit more under oath, and  
17 reported that way. So, this is really just us trying to  
18 find the basic facts of what happened here, so we can make  
19 that report upwards.

20 LCDR [REDACTED]: I'll let Commander [REDACTED] address the  
21 Navy side of that.

22 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: Sure. So, um, so the  
23 Navy's side of this investigation is a, um, what we call a  
24 dual-purpose Admiral Team Letter Report, it's helpful. Um,  
25 but it's essentially, even contemplation of, um, future

1 litigation the Navy might get. Um, so, there's a couple  
2 purposes to the investigation. We certainly want to find  
3 out what happened. Um, and we have some mandates that we  
4 have to hit, um, in our own appointing order. Um, so in  
5 terms of the formality and legal things, um, you are  
6 certainly able to consult with counsel, if you'd like to.  
7 Um, that would be at the [REDACTED], which is  
8 just right across the street in the PCS building on the  
9 second deck. Um, at this time, you're not being, um, read  
10 your Article 31 Bravo Reg. If that happens in the future,  
11 you will get read those and then, um, you are. But you  
12 have the option to consult with counsel, if you like. And  
13 I can show you where that is, uh, it's right across the  
14 street.

15 [REDACTED] I just wanted to --

16 LCDR [REDACTED] So, for all the interviewees, there's  
17 no intention to read anyone their rights. If we felt  
18 during the proceedings, um, that that would become a  
19 necessity, we would stop and whoever the interviewee is, we  
20 would say, "We think it's appropriate to read you 31 Bravo  
21 Rights." So, but that will not be our entering argument  
22 with anyone coming in.

23 [REDACTED]: I just wanted to make sure, sir, a  
24 goal --

25 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]: It's a fair question.

1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. All right. Thank you for  
2 your time, Officer.

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*Redacted portions of this page have been designated as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) or as Personally Identifiable Information (PII) by the US Navy.*