

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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BARGE COLLISION ITV *CAROL McMANUS*
& ITV *BIG D* NEAR ANGOLA, LOUISIANA
ON JANUARY 9, 2023

Accident No.: DCA23FM010

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Interview of: GARVIN O'QUINN, Master
ITV *BIG D*

ITV *Big D*
Angola, Louisiana

Thursday,
January 12, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CWO [REDACTED], Investigating Officer
US Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment Vicksburg

CWO [REDACTED], Investigating Officer
US Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment Vicksburg

KENNY UNDERHILL, Director of Operations
Ingram Barge Company

RICK TORRES, Director of Compliance
Florida Marine Transporters

DAVID REISMAN, ESQ., outside counsel Ingram Barge
Liskow & Lewis

JASON KENNEY, ESQ.

LANCE BULLOCK, ESQ., outside counsel for Ingram Barge
Liskow & Lewis

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Garvin O'Quinn:

By CWO [REDACTED]

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 CWO [REDACTED]: Good afternoon. This Chief Warrant Officer
3 [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard from MSD, Vicksburg,
4 investigating officer. We are onboard the motor vessel *Big D*.
5 This is an investigation into the collision between the *Big D* and
6 the *Carol McManus*, occurred on 9 January.

7 First, we are going to go around the room and just do a quick
8 intro to everyone that is present.

9 MR. BULLOCK: Lance Bullock, Liskow & Lewis, outside counsel
10 for Ingram Barge.

11 MR. REISMAN: David Reisman, Liskow & Lewis, outside counsel
12 for Ingram Barge.

13 MR. UNDERHILL: Kenny Underhill, Ingram Barge, director of
14 operations.

15 CWO [REDACTED]: Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED], US Coast Guard,
16 MSD, Vicksburg.

17 MR. TORRES: Rick Torres, director of compliance, Florida
18 Marine.

19 MR. KENNEY: Jason Kenney, Staines, Eppling & Kenney, counsel
20 for Florida Marine Transporters.

21 MR. O'QUINN: Garvin O'Quinn, marine captain on the motor
22 vessel *Big D*, for Florida Marine.

23 CWO [REDACTED]: Awesome. Thank you.

24 INTERVIEW OF GARVIN O'QUINN

25 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

1 Q. All right. Mr. Garvin, so, to get us kicked off here, tell
2 me your story. Tell me your background, how long you've been in
3 the maritime industry, how you became a Master of a vessel. Just
4 start at the beginning.

5 A. Started at deckhand for Florida Marine in 2007, been here
6 sixteen years this year. Worked my way to the wheelhouse.

7 Q. So, you've only worked for FMT?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. How long have you worked for FMT then, Florida Marine?

10 A. Sixteen years.

11 Q. Sixteen years, you said? Has it all been on-the-job
12 training, or have you attended any sort of like maritime academy
13 or anything like that?

14 A. On-the-job training.

15 Q. So, what license -- Merchant Mariner license do you hold?

16 A. Master of Towing.

17 Q. How long have you been the Master of the *Big D*?

18 A. I'm the relief captain on the *Big D*. I've been on here three
19 years.

20 Q. What is the work schedule like in terms of a hitch? Like,
21 how many days on and off is your schedule?

22 A. Twenty-eight, fourteen.

23 Q. So, twenty-eight days working and then fourteen off?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. Is it the same for the entire crew? Or, is that like the

1 Master's schedule?

2 A. The entire crew. The whole boat works twenty-eight,
3 fourteen.

4 Q. Does the entire crew rotate at the same time? Like, you have
5 one crew and you all work together and you all get off the boat at
6 the same time?

7 A. No. We've got crew changes every two weeks.

8 Q. So, it's kind of scattered is what you're saying?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. So, on the day of the incident, how long was it into your
11 current hitch?

12 A. I got on the boat December 29th, of '22.

13 Q. December 29th you said?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. So, about a week?

16 A. About a week.

17 Q. About a week into it. Could you talk about the crew makeup
18 on this vessel? Just how many total crew members, their positions
19 for a standard hitch.

20 A. You got an engineer, four deck crew, and two wheelhouse guys.
21 Seven people.

22 Q. That's typical for this size vessel?

23 A. Yes, sir. For us.

24 Q. So, were there any changes to the watch schedule or personnel
25 during this hitch? This voyage?

1 A. Yes. We done crew change. I'd have to look at the logbook
2 to tell you exact date, but we done a crew change in St. Louis.

3 Q. All right. So, could you describe the vessel, the *Big D*?
4 So, kind of go over its capabilities, its maneuvering
5 capabilities, engines, that type of information.

6 A. Has 6000 horsepower, 140 by 42 feet.

7 Q. Okay. How do the throttles work in the wheelhouse for the
8 engines?

9 A. You got electric throttles.

10 Q. They're electric? Do you know the last time that there was
11 maintenance conducted on the engines or rudders?

12 A. I'd have to pull the paperwork up to see. It's been dry-
13 docked in the last year.

14 Q. It has been dry-docked in the last year, you said?

15 So, on your time on the *Big D*, have you ever had any problems
16 with the rudders or engines?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Could you describe all of the navigation equipment that's in
19 the wheelhouse? And, like, they're location.

20 A. You've got port and starboard radar. We've got Rose Point on
21 port and starboard computer. We've got AIS. We have wind meter.
22 Swing meter, and it's on the front of the dash.

23 Q. Does the vessel have internet capability?

24 A. Yes. It does have internet capability.

25 Q. Where are the radios located in relation to the sticks?

1 A. We've got one on the port -- well, actually we've got two,
2 one port and two starboard. And the mics are right underneath the
3 sticks.

4 Q. Are personal cell phones allowed while on watch on the
5 bridge?

6 A. No. Per company policy, no.

7 Q. Okay. So, what's the company policy?

8 A. We're not supposed to have cell phones on watch.

9 Q. Is there a crew cell phone? Like, for the boat?

10 A. Yes. We do have a boat cell phone up there.

11 Q. And that's on the bridge?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. What is that cell phone used for while on watch?

14 A. Company business.

15 Q. What kind of company business would be conducted over that
16 phone?

17 A. Order changes. Crew changes.

18 Q. So, you said you got onboard the 29th, right?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. So, I guess, starting from then, could you kind of talk about
21 your voyage? How many barges, where'd you pick them up, the
22 cargo, where you were going.

23 A. Well, we got on at -- me and Jackie got on and I posted him
24 up the river to Naples, Illinois. We did drop barges in St.
25 Louis. Picked up barges, returned the boat, Naples, Illinois.

1 Come down and the other pilot got off and they put Jackie on back
2 watch. And, come down to Cairo, picked up more barges and take
3 them on down.

4 Q. So, what was the final destination for this voyage?

5 A. Myrtle Grove.

6 Q. Is that a -- where's that? What state?

7 A. South of New Orleans.

8 Q. Oh. New Orleans. South of New Orleans, okay.

9 Is this a regular route for the vessel?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. So, how many times would you say you've made this voyage?

12 A. I've made the voyage many, many, times. I mean, I can't give
13 an exact number, I know it's a bunch.

14 Q. So, prior to your getting underway on this voyage, did you do
15 any sort of departure checks with the rudders, engines?

16 A. Yeah. We did a whole voyage plan.

17 Q. What were the results?

18 A. Everything worked great.

19 Q. So, after getting underway, how was the vessel steering? How
20 was it handling?

21 A. It was handling great. It had no problems.

22 Q. The night of the incident, could you talk to us about how the
23 pass down went, between you and the pilot? Before -- when you
24 were coming off watch?

25 A. Pointed out some places because we did have a slight rise in

1 the river that -- to watch out for and gave him a run-down of
2 crew. And, I think that was about it. Did our normal watch
3 change checklist.

4 Q. So, what was the -- what was your specific concern that you
5 were just talking about in terms of these points you were talking
6 with him about?

7 A. Just telling him to watch bends.

8 Q. So, the location of the incident, was that one of the spots
9 that you were concerned about?

10 A. No, sir.

11 Q. What was your first indication that there was an incident
12 occurring? Or, that there was an accident?

13 A. When the general alarm sounded.

14 Q. So you heard the general alarm?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. And what did you do when you heard the general alarm?

17 A. Jumped out of bed, grabbed my lifejacket and went straight to
18 the wheelhouse.

19 Q. So, when you first got to the wheelhouse, what did you see?
20 What did you observe was happening?

21 A. *Carol McManus* tow fixing to touch up on our tows.

22 Q. So you got up to the wheelhouse prior to the collision?

23 A. Maybe seconds.

24 Q. So, what did Jackie say to you when you first got up there?

25 A. He cut in front of me.

1 Q. I'm sorry?

2 A. He cut in front of me.

3 Q. Oh. He as in the other vessel cut --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. So, what actions, if any, did you take, you know, once
6 you got up there?

7 A. I was just telling him we need to get the port face wires,
8 they started breaking. Told him we need to get the other ones
9 trapped back in the boat breaking the face wires, they wouldn't
10 break, and went and touched up and the deck crew threw them off of
11 the boat.

12 Q. So, did you take any -- did you take the controls at all
13 while you were up there?

14 A. We gathered three barges, hung them off on the *Carol McManus*
15 tow, and we was grabbing the barge and I caught the capstan and I
16 took over, I caught the capstan and he took back over and I ran
17 downstairs and got clothes on and he went and touched up on
18 another barge and tied it off. And, I started walking the red
19 flag barge, checking it out, make sure it was okay.

20 Q. Okay. So, once you got up to the bridge, you're saying you
21 did take control of the vessel? As in, you were steering and --

22 A. Just for a very few minutes.

23 Q. And what were you trying to do when you were --

24 A. I just caught the capstan line on the BIG barge and then he
25 took back over so he can grab a bottle of water for a second.

- 1 Q. Okay. So, you took over so that Jackie could get water?
- 2 A. Yeah. I knew, I mean, I wasn't there a couple of minutes.
- 3 Q. So, how long were you on the bridge for before you left to go
4 downstairs and start helping with whatever was going on outside?
- 5 A. I couldn't give exact time. It was all going so quick. I
6 know we had time to grab three and *Carol McManus* got his tow on
7 the bank, and we landed them three on the end and tied it off.
8 And, we grabbed a -- and went over there and started finding other
9 barges, and that was the BIG barge. I can't give the exact time.
- 10 Q. What was the weather like during the incident?
- 11 A. During the incident, when I first got up there it was clear.
- 12 Q. So, the incident occurred pretty much right at a turn, at a
13 bend. Is there anything unusual about that location?
- 14 A. Not really. A normal bend on the river.
- 15 Q. Were there any areas of concern in that bend?
- 16 A. There's a dyke on the point side of it. Other than that, no.
- 17 Q. How much sleep do you typically get in a twenty-four hour
18 period while onboard?
- 19 A. Twelve hours.
- 20 Q. So you sleep for twelve hours?
- 21 A. Well, we work a six hour watch, and we do our watch change,
22 come down and eat. I'm off for twelve hours, off the bridge,
23 twelve hours a day.
- 24 Q. So, how much sleep do you -- would you guys say you get in a
25 typical day?

- 1 A. Ten hours. Eight hours.
- 2 Q. Prior to the accident, how would you describe the quality of
3 sleep you got that day?
- 4 A. I slept fine.
- 5 Q. Do you drink any caffeinated beverages?
- 6 A. Yeah. About one a day.
- 7 Q. Is that soda or coffee?
- 8 A. Yeah. Diet Pepsi.
- 9 Q. So, how long have you worked with Jackie as a pilot?
- 10 A. This trip.
- 11 Q. So this is your first time working with him?
- 12 A. Yes, sir.
- 13 Q. How would you assess his skills as a boat driver, as a
14 wheelman?
- 15 A. He does a good job.
- 16 Q. Are there any situations where, if you were not on watch,
17 that you would come up and take control of the sticks? Whether,
18 some sort of difficult maneuver or going through a location that
19 you thought was tricky?
- 20 A. If he asked me to, I would.
- 21 Q. So there's nowhere that you know of that you would say, oh,
22 I'm going to come drive the boat, regardless?
- 23 A. I've gotten up and looked at -- watched him make bridges and
24 all, but never took over the boat.
- 25 Q. Have you ever written or provided any sort of negative

1 evaluation of Jackie's performance as a wheelman?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. All right, Garvin. Is there anything else that you can think
4 of that we would need to know for this investigation that would
5 help us?

6 A. No, sir.

7 Q. No? All right. Well, I thank you for your time. I
8 appreciate you.

9 CWO [REDACTED]: That concludes this interview.

10 (Whereupon, 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: BARGE COLLISION ITV *CAROL McMANUS*
 & ITV *BIG D* NEAR ANGOLA, LOUISIANA
 ON JANUARY 9, 2023
 Interview of Garvin O'Quinn

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM010

PLACE: Angola, Louisiana

DATE: January 12, 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.



Angela Allen
Transcriber