

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

SINKING OF TOWING VESSEL *JACQUELINE* \* Accident No.: DCA23FM044  
A NEAR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH \*  
CAROLINA ON AUGUST 8, 2023 \*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: ROGER D. DAVIS, Mate  
*Jacqueline A*

Georgetown, South Carolina

Wednesday  
August 9, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CWO [REDACTED], Investigating Officer  
DDO Myrtle Beach  
United States Coast Guard

LT [REDACTED], Senior Investigating Officer  
Sector Charleston  
United States Coast Guard

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Roger D. Davis:

By LT [REDACTED]

4

By CWO [REDACTED]

5

I N T E R V I E W

(3:40 p.m.)

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2  
3 CWO [REDACTED]: The time is 1540, Coast Guard Station  
4 Georgetown, with Mr. Davis that was a mate on the *Jacqueline A*  
5 during the incident that took place on August 8th at 1700.

6 Lieutenant [REDACTED] from Sector Charleston; Chief Warrant  
7 Officer [REDACTED] from DDO Myrtle Beach.

8 Okay. So you want to start off [REDACTED]? You want to --

9 LT [REDACTED]: Sure.

## INTERVIEW OF ROGER D. DAVIS

10  
11 BY LT [REDACTED]:

12 Q. So Lieutenant [REDACTED]. Nice to meet you, sir.

13 A. Um-hmm.

14 Q. Roger is that fine?

15 A. Roger, um-hmm.

16 Q. So why don't you just tell us a little bit about yourself and  
17 your experience on vessels, on this type of vessel, doing this  
18 particular trip. Just --

19 A. I haven't been --

20 Q. -- all of that stuff.

21 A. I haven't been really on (indiscernible) boats most of my  
22 life. But when I was young coming up I went on boat -- my father  
23 had run boats all of his life, on all boats as the engineer for  
24 about nine months, and my wife or my girlfriend decided she wanted  
25 to marry me. So I got out of that career, and (indiscernible) I

1 tried to go ahead and get my license because I found out I was  
2 color blind. So I couldn't see good at nighttime on the colors of  
3 the lights and all of that if I (indiscernible). So anyway, I  
4 just come on, come on in to help just do a -- more like -- not  
5 like a career. Just enjoyable trip with them to help out whatever  
6 they need. And like I say, I (indiscernible) occasion I'd go down  
7 there and look at the engine room, make sure the bilges were good,  
8 check the levels on the engine, and just make a police walk around  
9 the boat. And when we left, left port everything was good.  
10 Running -- engines all running good. No problems with them.

11 And I started just at the time it happened, just before it  
12 happened, I started doing a little cooking before we got outside,  
13 and I just got through cooking, and I went over told David that I  
14 was going to go lay down for a few minutes. And then moment after  
15 that he's hollering at us that we were taking on water.

16 And time I laid down I went and looked at the engine room  
17 might have been 10 or 15 minutes.

18 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

19 Q. Were you on any time -- like a watch? Were you on like a --  
20 so you were just -- you were day working so you just --

21 A. I had day work, and then some occasion I'd get up and go to,  
22 go to night if I had to go use the restroom or something in  
23 (indiscernible) behind my bunk. So I just put some  
24 (indiscernible) on. I walked in there, looked at the engine room,  
25 and laid back down.

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. (Indiscernible) no watch, around the clock watch, no.
- 3 Q. Okay. So you, you all left Saturday morning from Weems Point  
4 in Virginia, right?
- 5 A. Sunday morning.
- 6 Q. Sunday morning. Got there Saturday on the other boat, and  
7 then left Sunday morning at --
- 8 A. Yeah. Saturday on the other boat. Just switched everything  
9 over in there Sunday morning.
- 10 Q. Sunday morning?
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. Sunday morning. What time was that when you all left?
- 13 A. I think around 6:30 or --
- 14 Q. Okay.
- 15 A. (Indiscernible).
- 16 Q. Okay. And then so pretty much during that time you were  
17 cooking, and making rounds of the boat in between cooking and your  
18 rest period. That was your role on the, on the vessel?
- 19 A. Yes, sir.
- 20 Q. At any time during that, like, your rounds that you were  
21 making, did you ever notice anything on the boat that was --  
22 seemed odd or --
- 23 A. No.
- 24 Q. -- mechanically, smells, noises --
- 25 A. No.

1 Q. -- vibrations, any of that, any of that?

2 A. Not at all, no, sir.

3 Q. Prior to getting underway do you recall anybody ever checking  
4 the, the lazarette space where the rudders are?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Opening any hatches, looking in there? Okay.

7 A. (Indiscernible) had the lazarette checked out, you know,  
8 prior to us getting on the vessel.

9 Q. Okay. So, so the whole transit from Weems Point out to Cape  
10 Fear River Inlet everything was going great?

11 A. Um-hmm. Everything was going good.

12 Q. Okay. When you got out into the ocean did -- what changed?  
13 Like, did anything change when you got out in the ocean that would  
14 have -- when things were going good to things going back in your  
15 opinion? Did you see anything that would have --

16 A. No. Just boat rocking more, you know, the tires splashing  
17 water up on the deck, but no, I didn't see nothing.

18 Q. Okay. When you say the tires splashing water on the deck,  
19 like, how much water was coming on the deck? Like a --

20 A. A spray like a -- you've got water dragging on the side, and  
21 just spray a little bit, and then they go right back out  
22 (indiscernible).

23 Q. Was there like enough water on the deck that if you'd have  
24 walked that your feet, your feet would have got wet? Or like --

25 A. A couple places it was on the deck, I guess, but, but I

1 avoided it. I didn't get --

2 Q. Okay. Do you remember, like, the two hatches over the  
3 lazarette were those -- you ever visibly remember seeing like  
4 water washing over the tops of those hatches?

5 A. It might have a time or two.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I didn't really pay much focus on that, you know. I'm just  
8 more or less looking at the rudders and stuff around the engine  
9 room and stuff.

10 Q. Okay. All right. And so when you all left, when you left  
11 Cape Fear Inlet, and you said you, you finished cooking, you made  
12 a round, and then you went and laid down.

13 A. Um-hmm.

14 Q. So you were in the rack when Captain David called for  
15 assistance that the boat was taking on water?

16 A. Yes. I was laying down (indiscernible).

17 Q. Okay. When Captain David calls for assistance and you got  
18 out of your rack, where did you go when you left your rack?

19 A. Straight to the engine room.

20 Q. What did you see when you got to the engine room?

21 A. Had water on the port side.

22 Q. Okay. Could you tell where the water was coming from?

23 A. Coming from some pipes above the bulkhead.

24 Q. Okay. And then -- both of those pipes port and starboard  
25 side were similar shape and -- like similar size?



- 1 A. Um-hmm.
- 2 Q. How big do you recall those pipes being?
- 3 A. I'd say at least around four inch maybe, five inch.
- 4 Q. And how much water was coming out of those pipes like?
- 5 A. It was, it was coming out pretty good.
- 6 Q. Okay. Did you -- were you ever directed to turn on the bilge  
7 pump?
- 8 A. Yes, I went in and turned, turned the bilge pumps on.
- 9 Q. Which pump did you turn on?
- 10 A. I turned on the port side first.
- 11 Q. The port side. Okay. And did --
- 12 A. (Indiscernible).
- 13 Q. Okay. Did you -- did that pump come on? Do you remember  
14 like hearing like the pump come on?
- 15 A. Yeah. Water was coming in my fact. Was spraying up on my  
16 face.
- 17 Q. Okay. But you -- did you -- were you able to ever tell if  
18 water was being pumped out of the boat? Like could you --
- 19 A. No, no.
- 20 Q. You just knew the pump was running --
- 21 A. Yeah.
- 22 Q. -- but you couldn't tell if it was literally taking water out  
23 of the boat?
- 24 A. No, sir. I couldn't tell.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I left from there, and I went and turned the one on the other  
2 side.

3 Q. Okay. And after the pumps were turned on then where did you  
4 go? What did you do?

5 A. We (indiscernible) to boat. Was starting to list pretty  
6 good.

7 Q. Okay. So you left the engine room, and went to the forward  
8 of the --

9 A. Went to the galley, and got my lifejacket, and got up to the  
10 wheelhouse.

11 Q. Okay. And then at that point you just waited on --

12 A. Yeah, the rescue.

13 Q. -- assistance. Okay.

14 A. And we didn't have time to get nothing, no valuables, nothing  
15 at all.

16 Q. Okay. So, I guess, is there anything that, like, looking  
17 back that you would say that you could have -- like, would have --  
18 could have done differently to change the outcome of it? Like is  
19 there any --

20 A. No (indiscernible).

21 Q. Nothing you would have done different or --

22 A. No.

23 (Crosstalk)

24 A. -- nothing visible by eye that you wouldn't really know. The  
25 boat wasn't down and the stern up, and just always the, always the

1 same.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. You walk down side of a boat you always just going to look  
4 down behind you, you know, and all the bulkhead and all looked the  
5 same height and all that.

6 Q. Right. Okay. How did you get like tied into the crew? Did,  
7 did say, hey, would you like to come with us and take this trip on  
8 this --

9 A. My David.

10 Q. Captain David?

11 A. Um-hmm.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yeah. We are distant kin.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I went on a voyage with him before. We brought one up here  
16 to Kellum Brothers.

17 Q. Do you recall, like, a discussion being had, like, you know,  
18 like going down the intracoastal waterway versus going out into  
19 the ocean? Did you all talk about that?

20 A. No, they didn't talk to me about it. I'm sure they did. I  
21 heard them talking about wanting to go outside to make up some  
22 better time.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. But I didn't, you know, didn't have the whole detail of --

25 Q. Right. Never, never was it brought to your attention that

1 there was like a concern, like, if we go outside sea state is  
2 going to be this or --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- going to be dangerous or --

5 A. No. Because they tried to catch the weather right to be, you  
6 know, for a safe trip.

7 Q. Okay. All right. When you got up -- so the boat's going  
8 down. You're -- you and the other two crewmembers are forward of  
9 the pilothouse.

10 A. Um-hmm.

11 Q. Do you recall seeing the life raft going into the water?

12 A. Yes, sir, it did.

13 Q. Okay. Did you ever see the life raft open up --

14 A. No.

15 Q. -- or anything like that? Okay. All right. Life rings.  
16 You familiar with what a life ring is? Do you recall how many of  
17 those were on the boat?

18 A. One on each side, and we (indiscernible) we got one of them  
19 to hang on with -- in case we had (indiscernible).

20 Q. Okay. No lights? You don't even remember a light being  
21 attached to the, to the life ring like a floating orange marker  
22 like?

23 A. No, sir (indiscernible).

24 Q. EPIRB. Do you know what an EPIRB is?

25 A. I head of them. It's something turn like the boat something

1 you turn upside down the beacon goes off.

2 Q. Right. Do you recall ever seeing one of those onboard  
3 anywhere?

4 A. No, sir, I didn't (indiscernible) a whole lot on the boat.

5 Q. Right. But you didn't see one mounted anywhere like on the  
6 boat, top of the pilothouse, side of the pilothouse, anything like  
7 that?

8 A. I really don't recall, no, sir.

9 Q. Okay. All right.

10 A. That's something I really wouldn't bring attention to myself  
11 what it is.

12 Q. Right. The life ramp, was it -- where was it mounted on the  
13 boat? Was it on top of the pilothouse? Was it after of the  
14 pilothouse?

15 A. It was (indiscernible) to the pilothouse, yes, sir.

16 Q. The back of the pilothouse?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Right by the stairway.

20 Q. Okay. All right.

21 CWO [REDACTED]: Do you have anything, [REDACTED]?

22 LT [REDACTED]: No. I'm sorry. Talking to the commander. No,  
23 I don't think so. It sounded like you were covering everything.

24 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

25 Q. Okay. Do you have -- is there anything, you know, outside of

1 the questions that I asked you? Is there anything that I missed  
2 that, that you saw or --

3 A. I just, I was kind of curious why (indiscernible) pipe was it  
4 coming through the bulkhead of the engine room. That's only thing  
5 I --

6 Q. Okay. So in your opinion would you say that if those where  
7 the water was ingressing the engine room through those two pipes,  
8 in your opinion that that had not have happened do you think the  
9 boat would have sank?

10 A. I wouldn't think it would have if water didn't get past the  
11 other bulkhead, you know, the bulkhead, it might have went down  
12 some. It might have --

13 Q. Right.

14 A. -- I wouldn't think, I wouldn't think it (indiscernible) I  
15 know any time you (indiscernible) in a small boat or something  
16 your (indiscernible) is open you're going to take on water when  
17 it's open, but you got (indiscernible) got floatation in them that  
18 they won't sink.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. I would think that would be the same thing as bulkheads  
21 stopping water to where it would (indiscernible).

22 Q. When you all went down in the engine room, was there in your  
23 opinion -- you all didn't try to, like, put any bed sheets or --

24 A. Didn't have time.

25 Q. There wasn't enough time? So it was coming in. It was

1 already too much water in there?

2 A. Yes, sir. It was already --

3 Q. Too late. Okay.

4 A. It started coming in pretty fast, and it started tilting, and  
5 I had a hard time just getting out of the engine room --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- to get to the galley to get my life jacket to get up on  
8 the wheelhouse.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And see if we'd have went down straight, I could have got  
11 more stuff that we needed off the boat, but I couldn't hardly  
12 stand up.

13 Q. You all did the right thing. You never go back in a -- I  
14 mean, that's -- you all did the right thing. You don't ever go  
15 back even for valuables and stuff like that.

16 A. No.

17 Q. That's just it is what it is because you, you, you all did  
18 right by that. There's no doubt about it.

19 A. Yeah.

20 LT [REDACTED] We're very happy you all got off.

21 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

22 LT [REDACTED]: We're very sorry that you lost all of your  
23 belongings.

24 MR. DAVIS: Thank you the Lord.

25 LT [REDACTED]: All right, that's all I have.

1 MR. DAVIS: Could I --

2 LT [REDACTED]: Um-hmm.

3 MR. DAVIS: I kind of come on this trip -- I get kind of  
4 emotional. I just lost a daughter the sixth of last month, and I  
5 figured it would be good therapy -- come on this trip. And my  
6 wife she's staying with my son. So I've been doing things, and I  
7 just figured it would help me emotional, and it has. Just hard to  
8 lose a child.

9 CWO [REDACTED]: Oh, absolutely.

10 MR. DAVIS: She fought a long hard time.

11 LT [REDACTED]: I'm so sorry.

12 MR. DAVIS: That's one thing it just -- it helped me out, and  
13 I stayed contact with my wife, and we talked, the son and so just  
14 to get through it. It was just over a month we lost her; 37 years  
15 old. We stayed in the hospital in Montgomery for almost two --  
16 over two months with her. Coming up from having just a heart  
17 problem aneurism. They got that fixed, and she flat-lined the  
18 next day. So her kidneys, her liver, all that shut down. We got  
19 her back. Got her back healthy. She got out of dialysis. We  
20 didn't know it when she was up there she developed a  
21 (indiscernible) infection in her blood, and it went to her brain.  
22 And I got almost all of my pictures of her on my phone.

23 LT [REDACTED]: Oh man.

24 CWO [REDACTED]: On your phone on the boat?

25 LT [REDACTED]: Was it backed up at all like a cloud or



1 anything?

2 MR. DAVID: I didn't get a chance to do it all, and I'm not  
3 real familiar with that iPhone. So I had to get my granddaughter  
4 to do it for me. My wife she's got -- she's got pictures so.

5 CWO [REDACTED]: Was it in a bag? Was it --

6 MR. DAVIS: It was in my medicine bag where it was at. No,  
7 not my phone, my phone (indiscernible), but I don't know where it  
8 went. When I went past it I looked for it, and I guess it was  
9 down (indiscernible) restroom.

10 CWO [REDACTED]: Well, we -- I can't, you know, hopefully get  
11 they the boat up. I mean, I won't say that they're lost. There  
12 may be a way that it stayed -- sometimes, I don't know, it could  
13 have got uploaded to the cloud.

14 MR. DAVIS: Right.

15 CWO [REDACTED]: Hopefully you can get those back, and hopefully  
16 they get the boat up, and get your phone, and there may be some  
17 way they can -- somebody can help you get them off of there.

18 MR. DAVIS: Maybe so. If not, I got it up here. So --

19 CWO [REDACTED]: Yeah.

20 LT [REDACTED]: Yeah.

21 MR. DAVIS: (Indiscernible).

22 LT [REDACTED]: I know your wife will be happy to have you come  
23 home.

24 MR. DAVIS: Yeah, yeah. I ain't got a chance -- I ain't  
25 talked to her today, but I talked to her last night when we got in

1 to let her know that we were safe. One of our nieces have been  
2 staying with our son too because kind of helping her out.

3 CWO [REDACTED]: We're going to try to get you -- we're going to  
4 get you all to that airport, and get you home tonight and all so  
5 you can go see them.

6 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

7 CWO [REDACTED]: And if they, if they run into any trouble and  
8 any problems up there, then I'm -- we've got to finish up these  
9 other interviews, but we'll -- we're going to see what we can do  
10 to get you on that plane, and get you home.

11 MR. DAVIS: Okay. I appreciate it.

12 LT [REDACTED]: All right. Off the interview. It's 1559.

13 (Whereupon, at 3:59 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:           SINKING OF TOWING VESSEL *JACQUELINE A*  
NEAR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH  
CAROLINA ON AUGUST 8, 2023  
Interview of Roger D. Davis

ACCIDENT NO.:               DCA23FM044

PLACE:                       Georgetown, South Carolina

DATE:                         August 9, 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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Katherine Motley  
Transcriber