



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Marine Safety

Interview Summary

Casualty: Contact of *Miss Mollye D* tow with Bayou Ramos Bridge (NTSB No. DCA22FM008)

Date: December 23, 2021, at 0326 CST

Location: Bayou Boeuf, Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, near Amelia, Louisiana, 29°40.67' N, 91°8.37' W

Person Interviewed: Mr. Anthony Cashio, Back Watch Deckhand, Towing Vessel *Miss Mollye D*

Interview Participants: Mr. A. Ehlers, NTSB
LT [REDACTED], US Coast Guard
LTJG [REDACTED], US Coast Guard
Mr. Z. D. Deloach, Deloach Marine Services
Mr. W. Schwartz, representing Deloach Marine Services
Mr. J. Devall, representing Mr. Joseph Giordano
Mr. A. Hayes, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Ms. Rebekah Esnault, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Mr. D. Forrester, Ingram Barge Co.

Summary Provided By: Mr. A. Ehlers, NTSB

OVERVIEW

Mr. Cashio was interviewed via Zoom video conference on January 26, 2022. The interview was conducted in conjunction with the investigation into the December 23, 2021, casualty involving the contact of the *Miss Mollye D* tow with the Bayou Ramos Bridge near Amelia, Louisiana. Unless specifically delineated by quotes, the text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. It has been developed from notes of the interview.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

At the time of the casualty, Mr. Cashio was the back watch (0000-0600/1200-1800) deckhand of the *Miss Mollye D*. He described himself as a "level 1" deckhand whose responsibilities included:

- "Boat work," including preservation (chipping and grinding).
- Engine room basic maintenance and cleaning, to include checking oil, draining diesel tanks, sweeping and mopping. He added that he had also changed a starter on a diesel engine, but this was because he had prior diesel-engine mechanic experience.
- Any work directed by the captain.

Mr. Cashio stated that there was no set schedule of rounds during watch. He typically communicated with the wheelman via the vessel's intercom system.

Mr. Cashio's normal work schedule is 28 days on/14 days off, but he can be extended as needed by the company if agreed to by him. During the casualty voyage, Mr. Cashio was on his first hitch as a deckhand which was an extended hitch (he got off a few days before the planned end of his hitch for a medical issue). He started the hitch on the front watch (0600–1200/1800–2400) but switched to the back watch after a crew change. As a "green guy," he was under the instruction of the leadman, deckhand Matt Parker, and he "did not do too much by myself." Deckhand Marvin Robb was also on board to train him.

At the time of the interview, Mr. Cashio had worked for Deloach Marine Services (DMS) for 1.5 months. Prior working for DMS, he had worked various welding and mechanic jobs. He applied to work at DMS upon the recommendation of a friend who worked for DMS. The friend did not work on the *Miss Mollye D*. Mr. Cashio's principal training throughout his working career had been on the job.

Mr. Cashio stated that, if he detected a problem in the engine room during his watch, he would notify the deckhand on the previous watch and notify the wheelman. There were no issues with steering or electrical systems during the casualty voyage.

Mr. Cashio stated that, for a change of watch, the oncoming deckhand was given a wake-up call 30 minutes beforehand. Once on deck, the oncoming watch was told "anything we need to know." The off-going watch then went to sleep.

Mr. Cashio was asked to describe the events of the accident voyage. The *Miss Mollye D* picked up 6 barges in Houston, and from the pick-up to the casualty, he did not recall any problems. Just before the casualty, the tow transited through the Bayou Boeuf Lock. Mr. Robb assisted Mr. Cashio during the transit. Mr. Robb attempted to "catch a line" to a bollard on the lock wall on the port side. Mr. Robb reported a "tight line," and then the line parted. Mr. Robb retrieved another line from the starboard side and was able to secure the tow. There were no other issues after the line parting. Mr. Cashio did not remember an assist tow during the lock transit. The tow went through the lock intact. There had been some fog while in the lock, but it cleared up.

After the lock transit, Mr. Cashio went to the engine room to pump oil out of the bilges into the built-in slop tank. The oil was in the back of the engine room, and he used a portable pneumatic pump. He was assigned the task by Mr. Parker at the beginning of the watch, and it was the first time he had done this task. He spent about 2.5 to 3 hours in the engine room pumping bilges, before the pilot called him. While in the engine room before the call, Mr. Cashio had heard the engines change speed. He could not tell where the tow was when this happened. He did not feel anything, like a bump, that would indicate that the tow struck something, and nothing was knocked over or needed to be cleaned up.

When called by the pilot, Mr. Cashio went up to the wheelhouse, where the pilot "seemed fine." The pilot told him that the steering and tow had "loosened up" and instructed him to go out on the tow and make sure everything was tightened down. Mr. Cashio found all of the wires were loose on the tow. He tightened them, but several of the ratchets were "bottomed out." He called the pilot via radio to let him know that he needed to contact the leadman (Mr. Parker) about the wires and ratchets, but the pilot told him, "Don't worry about it." Mr. Cashio did not see any damage on the barges, but he did not check the port bow. He returned to the *Miss Mollye D* about the time to start cooking breakfast and get ready for the next watch.

Mr. Cashio learned about the bridge strike at lunchtime. Mr. Parker asked Mr. Cashio why he hadn't told him about the bridge strike when he turned over the watch, and Mr. Cashio responded that he didn't know that something had happened. Mr. Cashio was informed at that time that the Coast Guard was coming out to the *Miss Mollye D*.

Mr. Cashio did not know of any issues with the steering systems, generators, or engines since the casualty.

When asked, Mr. Cashio stated that he had served as lookout while transiting through bridges. He stated that he had never stood lookout during fog.

END SUMMARY



A. Ehlers
Marine Casualty Investigator