

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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HAFNIA AMESSI TANKER ALLISION WITH

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PIER BRAVO ON THE COOPER RIVER,

*

AT JOINT BASE CHARLESTON,

*

NEAR CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA,

*

ON JANUARY 14, 2024

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Interview of: CAPT. DOUGLAS LOGAN, Pilot

Charleston Branch Pilot Association

Charleston Branch Pilots
 Association
 Charleston, South Carolina

Tuesday,
 January 16, 2024

APPEARANCES:

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

ANDREW EHLERS, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

JOHN CAMERON, Consultant to
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I N T E R V I E W

(2:09 p.m.)

LT [REDACTED]: Good afternoon. This is Lieutenant [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] from the Coast Guard, Sector Charleston. It is January
16th, 2024, and the time is 1409.

We're here to conduct an investigation of the incident that
happened on Sunday, January 14th, 2024, involving the tank vessel
Hafnia Amessi and Pier Bravo at the Joint Base Charleston on the
Cooper River.

And we're here interviewing Captain Douglas Logan with
Charleston Branch Pilots Association.

And, Captain Logan, do you consent to being recorded?

CAPT LOGAN: Yes, I do.

LT [REDACTED]: Okay. we're going to go around and do
introductions of everyone in the room.

MR. CAMERON: John Cameron. I'm the executive director of
the harbor pilots and I'm here also representing the Commissioners
of Pilotage for the Lower Coastal Area as the consultant to the
Commission.

MR. WARING: My name is Brad Waring. I'm with Butler Snow,
and I represent the Charleston Branch Pilots Association.

CAPT WALTERS: My name is Crayton Walters. I'm the president
of the Charleston Branch Pilots Association.

MR. EHLERS: This is Drew Ehlers, the investigator-in-charge
for the NTSB.

1 MR. HOUSEAL: Sean Houseal. Good afternoon.

2 CAPT LOGAN: And I'm Douglas George Logan, Charleston Pilots.

3 MR. HOUSEAL: I'm here on behalf of the vessel's owner.

4 Sorry.

5 MR. GILSENAN: Ryan Gilsenan, counsel for Captain Logan.

6 LT [REDACTED]: And that completes introductions.

7 INTERVIEW OF CAPT DOUGLAS LOGAN

8 BY LT [REDACTED]:

9 Q. So, Captain Logan, why don't we just start off by you telling
10 us about your experience as a mariner and as a pilot, just kind of
11 go through your background.

12 A. Okay. I graduated from New York Maritime College in 1988.
13 I've been -- was granted a commission in the NOAA Commission
14 Corps. I served as a commissioned officer up to the rank of
15 lieutenant for 9 years. I was a navigation officer during my
16 tenure there. I was offered and completed full-time university
17 training. I received a master's degree from NC State in coastal
18 physical and oceanography. The title is marine science but that
19 was my specialty. I started my apprenticeship here in 1997. I
20 hold a master unlimited tonnage license along with first class
21 pilot, and I've been doing this on my own as a pilot since 2000.

22 Q. Can you clarify what you mean by on your own?

23 A. So after I finished my apprenticeship, I was piloting ships.
24 So I've been a pilot since 2000. I started my apprenticeship in
25 '97, and I completed the 3 year apprenticeship.

1 Q. Were you a pilot explicitly in this area?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. In the Port of Charleston.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. So about how many ships do you sail a year or maybe a
6 week?

7 A. I think the calculations per year probably go between 2 and
8 300 but, you know, can provide data for that. I think over the 23
9 years that I've served here, I think I've probably done over 5,000
10 trips through the river, through some part of Charleston with my
11 apprenticeship combined also.

12 Q. And about how frequently do you sail in the Cooper River near
13 Joint Base Charleston or north?

14 A. I was last up at Joint Base Charleston on December 26 of
15 2023.

16 Q. Okay. About how frequently? Like when was the last time
17 before then?

18 A. I think it was October. So, you know, it's probably, you
19 know, a handful of times a year. We can provide that data. It's
20 no more or no less than any other pilot.

21 Q. Okay. Thanks. And have you ever sailed on the *Hafnia Amessi*
22 before?

23 A. I have not, to my knowledge.

24 Q. Have you sailed on other ships about that size?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. So why don't you go through and tell us everything
2 that happened from the time you got on board? Actually start with
3 when you joined up with the Moran tug.

4 A. Okay. I climbed aboard the *Diane Moran* to ride up to the
5 INEOS terminal at North Charleston port terminal, and I went up to
6 the wheelhouse. And everything was pretty uneventful but the one
7 thing that I did emphatically do when I was speaking with Andrew
8 Yarbrough, the tug captain, I said I want you to ride along with
9 me as an escort because of the incident that happened over a year
10 ago. We climbed aboard. The master-pilot exchange was thorough
11 and uneventful. I thoroughly read the pilot card. There were no
12 discrepancies. The docking pilot, Ryan Kern (ph.) assumed the
13 conn in for the docking, and then with the assistance of the *Diane*
14 *Moran* and the *James*, they completed the undocking and turned the
15 vessel downriver as normal. The last line was 0948.

16 I assumed the conn from the docking pilot as the ship aligned
17 with the fairway downriver approximately one to two ship lengths
18 off the dock at dead slow ahead. Prior to boarding the ship --
19 excuse me.

20 So the voyage downriver was uneventful with one exception.
21 When I came around Buoy 80, I noticed an exceptional amount of
22 tidal current on Buoy Number 80 just before the subs. You can see
23 on AIS and I also saw it real time where it reduced my speed less
24 than 5 knots, and in all my years working down here, I never seen
25 a wake on a buoy at that location to be so strong.

1 So the *Diane* stayed with me alongside going downriver. On
2 Range D, while setting up for the turn for Range C, I favored the
3 red side of the channel to allow to set for the full current on
4 Range C. I kept the engine at slow ahead. What I did notice was
5 I found myself creeping toward that bank more than I had planned
6 or expected. As I was coming up on the turn, I decided to test
7 the rudder of the ship responding to my initial rudder command of
8 port 10. I just put it on very quickly just to see if I would get
9 some kind of rate of turn and I did. It all seemed normal.

10 When I started coming around Marker 72, the rate of turn
11 decreased to 0. In response, I first ordered port 20, and there
12 was no rate of turn. Then hard to port, and still the rate of
13 turn remained 0. With Pier Bravo dead ahead, I ordered the engine
14 full ahead to increase flow over to the rudder and again with no
15 result, no rate of turn.

16 At that point, I realized I had to do something differently.
17 I then ordered full astern and for the *Diane Moran* to push on my
18 starboard bow and I said, you know, give me all you got. The
19 *Diane Moran* began pushing as the bow was about halfway across
20 Range C. The rate of turn still remained at 0 for some time.
21 Eventually, however, just prior to the impact with Pier Bravo, we
22 got a small rate of turn to port. It was finally achieved, but
23 the *Diane Moran* had to back away from being damaged herself by
24 being too close to the pier, and they stayed as long as they
25 could.

1 In the ensuing allision, the northeast corner of the Pier
2 Bravo signal tower dolphin carried down the overboard side of my
3 vessel. I didn't feel anything on the bridge. I walked out to
4 the bridge wing, and I -- that was only then I knew that I made
5 contact with the pier. I did see a small piece of concrete
6 dislodge from the pier when we were scraping the dolphins.

7 After passing the pier, I went from full astern to half ahead
8 as the ship finally, you know, completed scraping along the pier.
9 I was afraid of backing down on the thing that I just scraped on.
10 And then I was able to turn back into the river and keep going.

11 At no point was there any evidence of a steering or
12 propulsion failure. I didn't hear any alarms. Once I started
13 steering back into the river, I requested the docking pilot to
14 board the ship, and we made up the tugboats on either side of the
15 bow because I still didn't know if there had been any damage to
16 the ship. We continued down. We thought we were going to anchor,
17 but we were ordered to go to Columbus Street Terminal.

18 The ship's master, as we were going downriver assured me that
19 he and his crew were taking all appropriate measures to survey
20 damage both internally and externally. The master continued to
21 apprise me of the results of the Go Pro images on the external
22 hull and also the results of tanks soundings. The (indiscernible)
23 survey and tank soundings yielded no indication of a hull breach.

24 I conn'ed the ship Columbus Street Terminal, with the tugs
25 mated up for the rest of the voyage. There were no incidents with

1 any shipboard systems. The docking pilot assumed conn upon
2 entering Custom House Reach, turned the ship and docked at berth
3 5.

4 We initially planned to go portside. We thought that was the
5 obvious requested side but we were told upon the evolution to go
6 starboard side to. So it created a little bit of a delay but I
7 disembarked the first line and returned to the pilot office to
8 submit to a drug and alcohol test.

9 Q. All right. Thank you. After you assumed the conn, what was
10 the engine order at?

11 A. I believe it was at dead slow ahead.

12 Q. Okay. And do you recall when you made the next engine order?

13 A. In was a short amount of time after, I don't recall exactly,
14 but I increased it to slow ahead.

15 Q. Okay. And then you said when you came around buoy 80, you
16 noticed a significant indication of current from the buoy tail.

17 A. Yes, ma'am.

18 Q. And that your speed slowed down. What was your speed before
19 and after that area?

20 A. I don't know what the speed was before. I can give a window,
21 but I know the speed after was less than 5 knots because I noticed
22 it -- because I, seeing the current there, I wondered how much it
23 would slow me down, and I looked at my iPad and it was less than 5
24 knots.

25 Q. But you're not what the speed was before then?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Just know you were slowing down.

3 A. It was probably around between 6 and 7 knots.

4 Q. Is that what's about what's expected for slow ahead?

5 A. Yes, I think so.

6 Q. Okay. When you were on Range Delta approaching the turn
7 adjacent to Joint Base, approximately what was your speed then?
8 Were you still at slow ahead.

9 A. Yeah, it was about 7 knots.

10 Q. Okay. So slow ahead?

11 A. Yeah, still at slow.

12 Q. I just want to make sure I get the timeline of events right.

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Could you show me, maybe on your PPU, about where you think
15 you were when you noticed that the ship wasn't responding as you
16 expected in regards to turning?

17 A. So I would say somewhere on this approach here, I noticed
18 that I had no rate of turn. So --

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: About 72Alpha?

20 CAPT LOGAN: Where 72Alpha used to be. Maybe a little bit
21 after.

22 BY LT [REDACTED]

23 Q. Thank you. And can you point to where you think you were
24 when you initiated the 10 degree port rudder?

25 A. Probably --

1 Q. -- when you said you were testing to make the turn?

2 A. Probably right about here.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But I took it off right away. You know, I just gave port 10
5 and I noticed that the arrow on the -- when this is functioning
6 with its link with the ship, it gives a rate of turn and it's just
7 a red -- it's a number but it's also a red arrow and a green
8 arrow, and all I wanted to do was to make sure I saw that arrow go
9 red and I just took it right off. So, you know, I didn't start a
10 turn and then take it off. I just wanted to see if there was any
11 kind of a response.

12 Q. Yeah. And just to clarify, when you're maneuvering down the
13 Cooper River, you're not navigating on a specific track line. Is
14 that correct? You're just kind of eyeballing it?

15 A. At this part of the river, the bends are so extreme --

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. -- and you really have to, you know -- it's a different type
18 of piloting. It's a piloting that involves looking out the
19 window, being conscious of where you're turning, you know, your
20 center of turning is, and it's very fast paced and you don't
21 adhere to way points --

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- because everything is very dynamic.

24 Q. Right. And you said when you were approaching this specific
25 turn, you wanted to stay towards like the red side of the channel

1 to account for the upcoming full current around the bend, right?

2 A. That's right. And also I mean obviously everyone's goal is
3 to miss this giant pier that's sticking out. So the more of that
4 pier you have on your starboard side and the less turn you have to
5 make, when you finally get around there, the better off you are.

6 Q. Okay. Approximately where was the ship in these turns when
7 you kind of let it come a little bit more to the red side of the
8 channel? Had you been trying to stay in the center of the channel
9 before that area?

10 A. Well, you can see up here, I was to the right of the channel.

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. And I wasn't, you know, there was some intention to get over
13 a little bit on the red but not that far. One of the things that,
14 you know, since we're talking about this, is this is a process of
15 looking out the window and seeing where things are and reacting.
16 That -- if this Buoy 72Alpha had been there, it shows my track
17 line going right over it, but if I could see myself minutes
18 before, you know, like when I'm up around Buoy Number 73 and
19 looking and I'm bearing right down on 72Alpha, that would have
20 given me the tools to come more to the right and the information
21 that I needed to avoid that spot and avoid getting sucked into
22 that bank. I think it was, you know, not having the time to
23 react. I wish I had more. That would have given me minutes and
24 not seconds. I think that I experienced bank suction along here
25 that pulled me in, wouldn't allow it to break, and then also with

1 the successive flood tide, the gradient was about 7 feet from the
2 low water before to the high water. As you know, this is all
3 dredged here. So what happens is all this water flow is squeezed
4 through here like a jet because of this pier. So it's like thumb
5 on a fire hose. And when the thumb on the fire hose, when that
6 water comes through, it's bouncing off of Wharf Alpha and then
7 coming back over here. So then I'm also fighting that in addition
8 to the bank suction.

9 Q. What would you estimate the current was yesterday or do you
10 know based on --

11 A. Yesterday or Sunday?

12 Q. Or sorry, Sunday.

13 A. You know, by the astronomical tide calculations, what did we
14 have, John? 1.7 knots.

15 MR. CAMERON: The prediction of 1.07.

16 CAPT LOGAN: 1.07 but through my background of physical
17 oceanography, the astronomical tide is only a certain component of
18 what you experience out there. That's why, you know, the week
19 before Christmas, people have their garages flood obviously
20 including mine, you know, where the astronomical tide was not
21 predicted to do that. So you know, there is also a weather
22 constituent (indiscernible).

23 BY LT [REDACTED]:

24 Q. As you were preparing for this trip or when you were on the
25 ship, what were you aware of in regards to the tidal window?

1 A. I knew that our policy, it was okay for me to sail the ship
2 at that tide window, and that, you know, we sail ships at flood
3 tide.

4 Q. Um-hum. What was the expected low tide and high tide for
5 that day?

6 A. So the low tide beforehand was about negative 1.1 feet, and
7 then the high tide was 6 feet.

8 Q. And what time was that happening?

9 A. So at Snow Point, there was a 6 foot tide at 11:04.

10 Q. Okay. And was that something you were like thinking about
11 beforehand or at the time what did you know?

12 A. Yeah. And then what reinforced it was coming around Buoy 80,
13 you know, I realized that I had a lot of tide to deal with.

14 Q. Okay. So at the time you were on the ship, you knew that it
15 was nearing high tide and it was like a flood current?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. That's what you were expecting. Okay. Other times when
18 you've taken ship down bound near Joint Base Charleston around
19 this tun, is that always done on like a flood current or near high
20 tide?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. So that's an intentional --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Can you explain that?

25 A. Well, you can imagine that pier sticking out at the Naval

1 Weapons Station. Can you imagine going around that where the
2 water is sweeping you down even faster? So I mean, you know, it
3 would carry me down and, you know, you'd be fighting a current
4 pulling you towards the pier even faster.

5 Q. Okay. You said after the impact, you went out to the bridge
6 wing and saw the scrapes on the platform side of the ship?

7 A. I saw the ship scraping the quarter, yeah.

8 Q. You saw that, in fact. Where did you see the ship impact at?
9 Like onto what part of -- what part of the ship impacted with what
10 part of the pier?

11 A. So it was the side of the ship, the starboard side of the
12 ship, beyond the bow --

13 Q. Okay. Midships.

14 A. -- was rubbing alongside. Not midships, forward of midships.
15 I guess it's best described as the shoulder but --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- you know.

18 Q. And then it was just on the very end of the pier?

19 A. On the very tip of the pier.

20 Q. Did you see which parts of the pier were hit?

21 A. So we were making contact with that one dolphin that was on
22 end, and then just the quarter of the pier, we were rubbing the
23 concrete as we were going by.

24 Q. Okay. And then after the ship passed the pier -- or I guess
25 before the -- before you even made contact, you ordered full

1 astern. Right. You ordered full astern and ordered the *Diane* to
2 come over and help assist.

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. And then after passing, you next ordered half ahead.

5 A. I ordered stop engine for a second, just to keep everything
6 working.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. And then I ordered half ahead because I didn't want to back
9 down on the pier that I had just passed --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- in order to minimize the damage.

12 Q. And so then the ship went on past the pier, and it looks like
13 from the playback that we saw that you either stopped or backed up
14 a little bit before you --

15 A. Well, first of all, there was some dispute looking at the AIS
16 track. I mean I didn't, I didn't hit pier where I was. So I
17 think we can kind of question where everything is on the chart.

18 Q. Yeah. This was like how the ship was moving. Did you stop?
19 Did you back up?

20 A. So I --

21 Q. What happened after that?

22 A. I experienced the contrary bank cushion because, you know,
23 the thing is, for these academic exercises, water is an
24 incompressible fluid. So when I got toward that bank, that water
25 had nowhere to go. So it pushed me off, and pushed me back toward

1 the center of the channel, and that's why I got back in the
2 channel.

3 Q. The tug didn't pushed you over?

4 A. After I cleared the pier, the tugs were touching me yet.

5 Q. Okay. Interesting. It almost looks like the ship, like,
6 backed down and then went forward.

7 A. Well, I was backing down as I was passing the pier.

8 Q. Did you ever like actually get to 0 speed though? Like did
9 the ship ever actually stop or did it just continue forward the
10 whole time?

11 A. We can look at the AIS if you want.

12 MR. GILSENAN: It got down to about 0.7 knots --

13 CAPT LOGAN: Yeah.

14 MR. GILSENAN: -- and then it continue.

15 BY LT [REDACTED]:

16 Q. Okay. But you didn't, like, go in reverse or back up?

17 A. No, because then I would have hit the pier.

18 Q. Yeah. Okay. Around -- when the ship was in that area like
19 when you said you experienced like the bank cushion, do you know
20 what the depth sounder was reading after that?

21 A. There was a lot going on, and I didn't have time to look at
22 the depth sounder.

23 Q. Do you think the ship grounded or touched bottom?

24 A. I don't, because I think like the way we came in and
25 everything, if we grounded, we'd still be there. You know, that's

1 why I think that bank cushion saved me and just pushed me off.

2 Q. Yeah. Okay. It's just something I have to look, if there
3 was also a grounding.

4 A. Right, right. That was the biggest surprise of the whole
5 thing. I expected to be up in the trees and, you know, and I'm
6 back in the river and it must have been all that water had nowhere
7 to go. So it just pushed me away.

8 Q. Okay. And then speaking of the depths, did you take note of
9 what the ship's depth sounder was reading at any time during the
10 transit?

11 A. I probably looked at it, but I cannot recall. I cannot give
12 you exactly times of when I was looking at what sounding or
13 whatever.

14 Q. Okay. Was anyone reading it or calling it out or did anyone
15 have concerns about the depth of the water?

16 A. No one had expressed any concerns about the depth of the
17 water, and I don't know if anyone was looking.

18 Q. Okay. Where were you standing on the ship? Like where were
19 you positioned when you were up there?

20 A. When I was conn'ing, I was probably somewhere around midships
21 in the window area. When I called the *Diane*, I stepped out on the
22 bridge wing, and I was conn'ing from the bridge wing --

23 Q. Starboard bridge wing.

24 A. -- starboard bridge wing, for some time and communicating out
25 on the bridge wing. And then coming back in at a certain time,

1 too, and then when we went on, went back into the wheelhouse.

2 Q. Okay. And when you were in the wheelhouse, I assume you were
3 in front of the console, just the forward most part?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. Behind the window.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Just explain like the tools you were using? I know you
8 mentioned just your seaman's eye in this river, that's what you're
9 largely relying on as you're navigating. You have your PPU. Were
10 there any other like instruments on the bridge?

11 A. All the standard ones. There was a rudder angle indicator,
12 an ECDIS, a radar.

13 Q. That you had visibility of or like --

14 A. Well, I had the whole access to everything on the bridge, VHF
15 radios, everything. So.

16 Q. But what were you actually looking at or what were you
17 reading as all of this is going on? What are you --

18 A. Primarily looking out the window and making sure, you know.
19 That's the way to conn a ship in that part of the river. You
20 can't get involved -- this is an aid, and this is just in addition
21 to your information. It's a way of handling a ship that involves
22 looking out and being very visual and seeing what's going outside
23 the wheelhouse.

24 Q. Um-hum. What was the rest of the environment like on the
25 bridge? Like what were your communications like with the captain

1 and the rest of the crew?

2 A. The captain seemed very calm and professional. One of the
3 things I noticed that was, and it was until like we were rubbing
4 against the pier that he came out to the bridge wing and wanted to
5 know what was going on, and I found that odd. And also there was
6 a lot of communication in non-English between him and the crew
7 that I didn't understand what was going on.

8 Q. Do you know what language it was?

9 A. Probably Hindi.

10 Q. All right. Indian.

11 A. Yeah, it was some Indian language.

12 Q. Okay. But you and the captain didn't talk about what was
13 happening or he didn't express any concern about getting too close
14 to the pier or anything like that?

15 A. No, no, it wasn't until we were rubbing against the pier that
16 he said like, what's going on out here? You know.

17 Q. Did he say anything after that or did you --

18 A. Oh, yeah, he had a lot to say after that. A lot of it was
19 primarily -- I would say 95 percent of his conversation was he was
20 afraid of the Coast Guard. And he was concerned what the Coast
21 Guard would do to him, and I tried to assure him that the Coast
22 Guard's investigating just as a safety matter and that he's not in
23 trouble, and you know, they're just going to, you know, just for
24 him to cooperate and everything will be fine. But it was more
25 putting him to ease. He was just very upset about any kind of

1 enforcement.

2 LT [REDACTED]: Um-hum. And for the record, Mr. David Galloway
3 just stepped into the room.

4 BY LT [REDACTED]:

5 Q. All right. I have a few more questions. So back to the very
6 beginning. You mentioned when you joined on the *Diane Moran*,
7 everything was uneventful, and you were talking to the captain,
8 Mr. Yarbrough and you asked him to escort with his tug --

9 A. Right.

10 Q. -- after the -- once the ship was sailing south. Can you
11 speak a little bit more to that or what that was based on?

12 A. Sure. Based on the experience of the *Bow Triumph*, and I
13 said, you know, Andrew, I would like an escort all the way down
14 'til I relieve you. I just said I would like you to escort me
15 through the area because of the *Bow Triumph*, and he said, oh,
16 absolutely.

17 Q. Okay. What -- okay. And that was the plan to be like him
18 lay off to the side or anything. What was your expectation? Just
19 that he would --

20 A. That he would ride along and I thought --

21 Q. Just follow along.

22 A. -- that he would follow along and that if something was
23 working, that he could, you know, get up on the bow and push.

24 Q. So, how that ended up going down? Was that pretty much what
25 you expected or what was -- what would have been desired?

1 A. Well, I think, you know, we could give that tugboat some
2 credit that, you know, I mean I could have hit that pier dead on
3 and, you know, the thing was, we just grazed it where we couldn't
4 even feel it on the ship. But, if we had hit that dead on and as
5 compromised as that pier was, it was a death trap, you know. That
6 tower could have fallen and some poor Indian seaman could have
7 been killed or, you know, started a fire or whatever, you know, on
8 board. So, you know, and even with that AIS track, you can see
9 where the *Diane* was pushing, it made a world of difference.

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. It changed up, you know, a smack dead on collision to a
12 scratch down the side.

13 Q. Yeah. So, let's go back. It sounds like you know a little
14 bit about the *Bow Triumph* obviously, the condition of the pier and
15 everything. How much did you know about that incident? Like what
16 was briefed to you? Like what was your understanding of that
17 incident, what the causes were, consideration that should be
18 taken?

19 A. The major takeaway was that I got from that is you take a tug
20 with you, and that's what I walked away with. And that's what
21 changed my behavior on Sunday that caused me to take a tug escort.

22 Q. Okay. Were any specific like directions or guidance given to
23 you or the other pilots as far as like risk mitigation such as
24 using the tugs? Like was there any other discussion about it or
25 any other direction specifically?

1 A. Well, specifically to take a tug escort, you know. I don't
2 think it's the job of the Association to tell each pilot how to
3 exactly move his ship, you know. The thing is that that was the
4 major takeaway was that you take a tug escort with you.

5 Q. Have you ever made that transit when the temporary buoy,
6 72Alpha, was in place there?

7 A. I cannot recall.

8 Q. Okay. Do you think that would have made a difference?

9 A. I do, because as I stated before, that because it's a game of
10 looking out the window, I would have seen that my ship was coming
11 dead on Buoy 72Alpha and it would have given me minutes to react
12 and correct instead of seconds when I realized something was wrong
13 and I was experiencing that bank cushion -- bank suction, excuse
14 me.

15 Q. And you said through all of this but prior to the impact, you
16 didn't hear any alarms on the bridge?

17 A. No alarms.

18 Q. When you would give like a rudder command, were you visually
19 looking for indications of rate of turn or were you also looking
20 at the rudder angle indicator to --

21 A. I can tell you from the first day at my apprenticeship,
22 riding on the ship, the first that is pounded into you is that
23 that for any rudder command you will give, you look at that
24 indicator. And if it's not doing what you're planning for it do,
25 you fix it.

1 Q. Okay. So no issues or delays.

2 A. No issues.

3 Q. The helmsman was moving it over and it was responding.

4 A. Yes.

5 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. I'll take a break and give it to you.

6 BY MR. EHLERS:

7 Q. Okay. Let's go back to the master-pilot exchange. Did the
8 captain give you any equipment issues, any problems?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Nothing. Okay. Do you recall what type of rudder the ship
11 had? Was it --

12 A. Semi balanced.

13 Q. Semi balanced.

14 A. Like it's indicated on the pilot card, too.

15 Q. Okay. All right. The -- this is somewhat of a repeat of
16 Lieutenant [REDACTED] asked, but I want to be clear. Did the
17 helmsman respond to all your orders appropriately?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Who was responding to engine orders, EOT orders? Do you
20 recall?

21 A. There was a young female mate was doing most of it because I
22 remember because I'm kind of formal on the bridge and when I say,
23 half ahead, I usually follow with a sir or ma'am, and it trips me
24 up when I say half ahead, sir, and then a female voice half ahead.
25 So I say half ahead, ma'am, you know.

1 Q. Okay. And did she respond to your orders appropriately?

2 A. She did.

3 Q. Let's see here. You mentioned you would -- I think the words
4 you used, you were creeping in the bank a little bit more than you
5 wanted to or intended to.

6 A. Right.

7 Q. What was your visual cues of that? Was it your PPU? Was
8 it --

9 A. No, I was just looking out, and I was like I'm getting close,
10 closer.

11 Q. Okay. And is that the point that you tested your rudder or
12 was that after you tested your rudder?

13 A. I tested my rudder after.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But it was a short period of time, you know, I'm talking
16 seconds because then I have to get ready for the turn.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because I notice I'm close to the bank. So I wanted to make
19 sure I would be okay and I tested the rudder.

20 Q. Okay. And then you said you ordered port 20 and then hard to
21 port. That was still at slow ahead, correct?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Okay. And then you increased the speed?

24 A. I went from half to full.

25 Q. Half to full.

- 1 A. I didn't mess around. I mean that pier is right there.
- 2 Q. Right.
- 3 A. There's no time.
- 4 Q. Well, that's kind of my next question.
- 5 A. Yeah.
- 6 Q. Between port 20 and full --
- 7 A. You're talking about two different things. Port 20 and hard
- 8 port, is that what you're talking about?
- 9 Q. What's that?
- 10 A. The engine.
- 11 Q. From port -- that whole sequence, how long would you say that
- 12 was?
- 13 A. Seconds.
- 14 Q. Seconds. Okay.
- 15 A. Yeah. I needed to know -- there is a decision that that pier
- 16 was dead ahead of me. I know that where I was all I needed was a
- 17 small rate of turn to avoid it, and if I could get the flow of the
- 18 rudder to just even get a small rate of turn, I would have been
- 19 okay because I was so much farther, you know, I was pointing
- 20 toward the end of the pier, not like the middle. And when I
- 21 realized it was like a game of chicken, you know. It's like I put
- 22 it full ahead and there was still 0 rate of turn and then I
- 23 realized, okay, this is not going to happen. And then I just went
- 24 from full ahead to full astern.
- 25 Q. Okay. And the crew responded appropriately?

1 A. Yes, yes.

2 Q. Okay. And so is the first time you were able to get a rate
3 of turn was when the *Diane* came alongside?

4 A. Right. It wasn't until the *Diane* started pushing a
5 tremendous amount of -- I mean it was pushing, pushing, pushing,
6 pushing, pushing, that I got any kind of a rate of turn.

7 Q. Okay. All right. I'm sorry. I'm jumping around just a
8 little bit here. Other than the escort tug and I believe you said
9 also you sail it at flood tides, at the end of the flood tide, is
10 it correct or just during a flood tide?

11 A. We can comply with the tide windows --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- when we sail.

14 Q. Okay. So there's a procedure or policy or you said a window
15 that --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- that would be good to have. Okay. And are there any
18 other -- you said one of your takeaways is to have an escort tug.
19 Were there any other restrictions, policies for you or other
20 pilots operating in that section of the river?

21 A. Not that I'm aware of.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Can you give me --

24 Q. Well, you know, speed --

25 A. No.

1 Q. Nothing. Okay. All right. Do you recall what the drafts
2 were --

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. -- on the --

5 A. I have the pilot card.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So the aft draft was 8 meters or 26.25 feet, and the forward
8 draft was 6.5 meters or 21.33 feet.

9 Q. Okay. And if you can help me, is that partially loaded, in
10 ballast?

11 A. Partially loaded.

12 Q. Partially loaded. Okay. All right.

13 MR. GILSENAN: That ship is in ballast.

14 CAPT LOGAN: Okay. All right. Sorry.

15 MR. GILSENAN: She had discharged everything and ballasted
16 (indiscernible).

17 LT [REDACTED]: What did you say the forward draft was?

18 CAPT LOGAN: 6.5.

19 MR. GILSENAN: She was 1.5 meters by the stern, trim to the
20 stern.

21 MR. EHLERS: Gotcha. Okay.

22 BY MR. EHLERS:

23 Q. Any effect of winds or other weather?

24 A. No, it was a clear, nice day.

25 Q. Okay. Visibility was good.

1 A. Visibility was great.

2 Q. Okay. All right. Do you review sounding data for the river
3 in that area every time you sail, regularly, occasionally?

4 A. Yes, I can tell you I'm the head of the Navigation Technology
5 Committee for the Charleston Pilots, and I've worked with John
6 Cameron. I have John Cameron to thank that this year that we have
7 a program where we have all the pilots automatically download the
8 latest Army Corps data. All they have to do is connect with any
9 WiFi source and we have a subscription that we get the most up-to-
10 date Army Corps data for every pilot.

11 Q. Okay. Does that include that area near the Weapons Station?

12 A. Yes. It's -- whatever's available to us is the key word.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Is that section of the river prone to silting?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is that particular bend prone to silting?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Do you know when the last time that area was dredged?
20 Any idea?

21 A. We can look it up. I think it was a little over a year ago.

22 CAPT LOGAN: John, do you have that?

23 MR. CAMERON: It was right about a year ago. It was being
24 dredged about a year ago. I forget when it finished, but we don't
25 know where in that area that it was dredged.

1 BY MR. EHLERS:

2 Q. Okay. Perhaps I'm reaching back to your coastal
3 oceanography, how does that affect your maneuvering through that
4 area?

5 A. Okay. So, we discussed bank cushion and bank suction, and
6 we'll start with the assumption that we all do, that water is
7 incompressible. So if you remember from college, the Bernoulli
8 effect, you know. It's kind of, you know, air over wing of a
9 plane, that you have them in two dimensions. You have them on the
10 bottom and then you also have it on the side of your ship when
11 you're coming near a bank that, you know, when you squeeze that
12 area and that water is rushing by, it creates an area of low
13 pressure which causes a pulling effect. And the contrary happens
14 with bank cushion because it's incompressible that, you know, you
15 come alongside it, and the water has nowhere to go, and you bank
16 off.

17 Q. Okay. Is there any way to judge based on your previous
18 transits of that area if the hydrodynamic effects are getting more
19 pronounced?

20 A. Yes, the ship doesn't turn.

21 Q. But do you believe like over the last year, has that become
22 more pronounced possibly due to silting?

23 LT [REDACTED]: Or over your career maybe.

24 CAPT LOGAN: Over my career? Yeah, I would say, you know,
25 that that's a factor. You know, I mean the way it's silting up up

1 there, it's harder to get around that bend.

2 BY MR. EHLERS:

3 Q. Okay. Just one last. If you could, can you explain the 3
4 year -- you went through the 3 year apprenticeship process, and I
5 believe it's somewhat different for each port and harbor. Can you
6 just basically give an overview of the apprenticeship process for
7 Charleston?

8 A. Sure, sure. It's 3 long years. You have very little time
9 off. You start out learning all aspects of the business, driving
10 a pilot boat, dispatching, doing whatever. I rode during my
11 apprenticeship about 1300 transits through the river, and one of
12 the key things that I think you can take away from this is that
13 back then we would handle 500 foot ships all the way up and back
14 from Nucor Steel which is 6 miles above the river than INEOS.
15 And, they put us apprentice on basically every job going up there
16 and back where we became so good at it that we -- you're almost
17 like sharp shooters, you know, like we could make turns and we
18 just had -- our skills were so honed from learning how to get
19 around those buoys and everything. It was a great training
20 exercise, and also it was a lot of training on that part of the
21 river.

22 Q. Okay. And is it a progressive, you start observing and --

23 A. Right. You start out observing. Then you're coached and
24 then finally you solo.

25 Q. Okay. And once you've finished the apprenticeship process,

1 you are a full branch pilot?

2 A. No. No, sir. You start out as what's called a short branch
3 status and you do that for 3 years where these gentlemen, they all
4 got it, but -- and that's after -- we're tested every 6 months and
5 if we pass, we get bumped up in draft and tonnage.

6 Q. I see.

7 A. So we start out on the very small ships and then we move up
8 and then finally at the end, we're handling ships like everyone
9 else is.

10 Q. And is that during the apprenticeship or after the
11 apprenticeship?

12 A. After the apprenticeship.

13 Q. Okay. All right.

14 A. So it's 3 years of an apprenticeship where you're riding
15 ships with a pilot, and then 3 years, you're a pilot but you're
16 limited in your draft and tonnage.

17 Q. I see. And once you are designated a full branch pilot, is
18 there any evaluation, regular evaluation of your skills? Does the
19 Commission --

20 A. We do continuing training I guess is the best thing I can say
21 about that, is that, you know, I've been to ship handling school
22 where we've gone over emergency ship handling situations. It
23 allows you to do things that, you know, you can't test out, you
24 know, for obvious reasons.

25 Q. Simulation.

1 A. Simulation, but they're manned models. So I -- everyone's
2 been to different training centers, but I was up at -- it was run
3 by Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and we had manned models that
4 we would drive around like, you know, all day, testing out. They
5 had simulations of like the Houston Ship Channel and stuff like
6 that, and you'd see how the ships would react. And we also had
7 bridge resource management training and other simulation training
8 where we got into MITAGS and things like that.

9 Q. Okay. Is that done on a regular basis?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. How often?

12 A. I can provide you that information as far as, you know, like
13 how many years or whatever but we take advantage of it regularly.
14 I've been to bridge resource management several times in my
15 career.

16 Q. Okay. All right. I think that's all I have. Thank you,
17 Captain.

18 A. Thank you.

19 LT [REDACTED]: I have a couple of clarifying questions.

20 BY LT [REDACTED]:

21 Q. Going off your experience and stuff, what's your work
22 schedule like now?

23 A. We work week on, week off. So like we have a batting order.
24 When we're on duty, and we do three jobs and then you go to the
25 bottom of the list and then move up. Like this week right now,

1 I'm off duty. So.

2 Q. About how many transit do you do like on average during your
3 duty weeks?

4 A. I would say it depends on how much business we have, but it
5 can range as low as 9 and as high as like 14 or 15.

6 Q. Okay. And you mentioned a few minutes ago about the sounding
7 data from the Army Corps. Did you say that each pilot like
8 individually uploads it --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- to the PPU's?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It's done automatically. All they have to do is just have
14 WiFi and push a button and all the latest charts are put on their
15 iPad.

16 Q. So that --

17 A. The Army Corps soundings but the charts are handled through
18 SEAiq so that they're the NOAA charts.

19 Q. Okay. So that's just something that every pilot just
20 regularly does or you're supposed to do it at a specific time?

21 A. Yeah, every pilot regularly does it, and the thing is when
22 we're linked with WiFi we're notified by a prompt, and you can go
23 in and look and download the latest information.

24 Q. So how is -- how are you using this sounding data like when
25 you're sailing? Does it like overlaid load onto that or --

1 A. Yeah, it's overlayed on my chart. If I zoom in, I can show
2 you a sounding data on here.

3 Q. Oh, okay. So the soundings that are showing there --

4 A. Yeah, this --

5 Q. -- are the updated ones of the Army Corps of Engineers.

6 A. It's just because it's a vector chart --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. -- if you zoom out too much, it takes that clutter away.

9 Q. Okay. How do you know there's new soundings that are
10 published by Army Corps or do you know?

11 A. John is -- John Cameron is in communication with the Army.
12 We get emails from the Army Corps. Both John and I have worked
13 very hard to have a pipeline of the most current information
14 getting to every pilot as far as sounding data.

15 Q. Okay. Is there any difference in that normal process when
16 you're talking about the Joint Base Charleston's sounding data?

17 A. Yes, and John can answer questions regarding that. I don't
18 have direct access or communication with Joint Base Charleston --

19 Q. So when --

20 A. -- as far as sounding data.

21 Q. So when you're getting the sounding data, it doesn't include
22 the JBC sounding data?

23 A. No, and the thing is -- well, it comes -- John can explain it
24 better.

25 Q. Okay. It's coming through like a separate avenue, not when

1 you all do the automatic downloads?

2 A. Well, the automatic downloads are set up by us.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. But John can explain to you, you know, how often we get data

5 from Joint Base Charleston.

6 Q. But when you all are doing the downloads, are the JBC channel

7 soundings included in that or --

8 A. If they're there. If they're available, yes.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah, it's not -- okay. I think I know where you're going.

11 It's not a separate iteration.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It's all the same.

14 Q. It's just one time that you're getting sounding data and --

15 A. Right.

16 Q. -- and you may or may not have soundings from specific areas

17 or not.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. You're just getting whatever's available --

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. -- to you, and some of that might be made available

22 separately from Mr. Cameron.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Gotcha. Okay. I think that's all I have.

25 MR. CAMERON: Nothing from me.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing.

2 MR. GILSENAN: I have a few.

3 BY MR. GILSENAN:

4 Q. Doug, you mentioned the echo sounder. Was there any under
5 keel clearance alarms at any time?

6 A. I didn't hear one.

7 Q. Okay. And you have no reason to believe there was one?

8 A. I don't know.

9 Q. Okay. It was following the *Bow Triumph* that you asked an
10 escort tug to be available along the side?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. He was not astern of you?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. He was there and ready.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And that was the *Diane*. Who put Buoy 72Alpha in
17 place, when and why?

18 A. So, Buoy 72Alpha was put in place after the *Bow Triumph*
19 incident. I don't know why it was taken away other than I think
20 they took it away for dredging, but I don't know why it's not
21 there now.

22 Q. So -- but why was it put there? Like who requested it?

23 A. I think we requested it.

24 Q. Of the Coast Guard.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. So Coast Guard puts out Buoy 72Alpha. Do you know,
2 and that was to mark the silting shoaling area on the red side of
3 the channel?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Who removed it if you know?

6 A. I don't know.

7 Q. Okay. Was there any announcement or Notice to Mariners that
8 it's removed?

9 A. I think there was, yeah.

10 Q. Any -- do you know why they didn't put it back?

11 A. I have no idea.

12 Q. All right. But you thought at the time it would have helped
13 you if it would have been there?

14 A. Oh, absolutely. Like I said before, you know, by seeing
15 where I was in respect to that buoy, it would have given me
16 minutes to react and correct the situation that I needed, that I
17 no longer had now. I only seconds to react and it was too late.

18 Q. Right. And you're head of the Navigation Committee here?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. All right. And so I understand that the Army Corps of
21 Engineers regularly updates on its website which makes it way to
22 your PPU, the soundings data for the federal channels, correct?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Is the data -- soundings data for Joint Base Charleston
25 updated less frequently?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. All right. Any idea why?

3 A. I don't know. I think -- I always heard that it was a
4 security matter, but I don't really know or understand why they're
5 not providing as frequent data updates as the rest of them.

6 Q. Okay. Well, as a pilot of commercial ships in those waters,
7 would it help you to have that data updated more frequently?

8 A. Absolutely.

9 Q. And as frequently as the federal channel data is updated?

10 A. Absolutely.

11 Q. All right. Do you consider it a handicap that it's sparingly
12 updated?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. All right. And that's something that you as a pilot have no
15 control over?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Do you think that the silting contributed to this accident?

18 A. I do.

19 MR. GILSENAN: All right. That's all I've got.

20 MR. EHLERS: I have a follow-up question.

21 BY MR. EHLERS:

22 Q. So Ryan asked you if you had no control over the silting and
23 such. As a pilot you can refuse to sail a ship, can you not, if
24 you feel it's unsafe?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. All right.

2 BY MR. GILSENAN:

3 Q. But to do that, you would have to know that it's silted over,
4 right?

5 A. Right, and I would also have to know -- I mean how silted
6 over. I mean, you know, to make the decision not to sail a ship
7 is a big decision.

8 Q. You don't have your own side scan sonar?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. All right.

11 BY LT [REDACTED]:

12 Q. Is there like a maximum draft that you know of that is
13 acceptable to you all when you're sailing a ship in that specific
14 area?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. What that be?

17 A. We can provide that for you.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We've taken it down obviously. We
19 have that adjusted as we get soundings, you know. We adjust that
20 down as soon as we know.

21 BY LT [REDACTED]:

22 Q. So who determines that?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There's two gentlemen from the Weapons
24 Station here.

25 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. Can you tell them we're almost done?

1 We'll be just a minute.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

3 LT [REDACTED]: Thank you.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

5 LT [REDACTED]: I lost my train of thought.

6 CAPT WALTERS: As far as the draft, we determine -- as soon
7 as we get soundings and we just react to the soundings, and we
8 drop the drafts down. If we dredge, then we go back up.

9 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. So who's making that determination for
10 like having that assessment for each particular ship? Is it a
11 pilot or like whoever's scheduling?

12 CAPT LOGAN: I think it would be directors make decision on
13 when -- what that draft limit will be.

14 LT [REDACTED]: But like who's applying it to each ship, like
15 assessing, okay, this ship has a draft of 28 feet. Is that within
16 the allowable limit?

17 CAPT WALTERS: All ships are one and the same. So that we
18 don't treat one class of ship any different than any other. When
19 we set a draft limit of 28 feet, 29 feet, at that area, that's the
20 draft limit for any ship that transit that area, and I'm talking
21 off the top of my head, and I have to go in and look and see what
22 it is right now, but --

23 LT [REDACTED]: But who's assessing each ship to determine if
24 their specific draft is acceptable on that given day?

25 CAPT WALTERS: We're giving -- again, you're asking me --

1 we're giving -- when an agent calls us for the ship to sail, they
2 give us the draft of that ship they're sailing. They -- they give
3 us a time and draft, and we say okay. So we're informed of the
4 draft of that ship, and the agents are very aware of what our
5 draft limits are and our time limits because they have to deal
6 with it every day. So whenever we, you know, if an agent calls
7 and says we're going to sail the *Hafnia Amessi* at 26 feet, what
8 are the restrictions? So they give us a draft when they give us
9 orders.

10 LT [REDACTED] Okay. So it's really like an assessment that's
11 made before the pilot's getting on board the ship?

12 MR. CAMERON: Oh, yes.

13 BY LT [REDACTED]:

14 Q. And the rudder, did it have a Becker rudder?

15 A. No, ma'am. It was a semi balanced one.

16 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. I think that's all I have.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good.

18 LT [REDACTED]: All right. I think that concludes it. So it's
19 1510, and that will conclude the recording.

20 (Whereupon, at 3:10 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

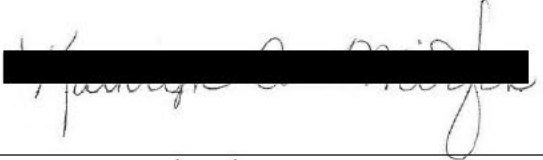
IN THE MATTER OF: *HAFNIA AMESSI* TANKER ALLISION WITH
PIER BRAVO ON THE COOPER RIVER,
AT JOINT BASE CHARLESTON
NEAR CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA,
ON JANUARY 14, 2024
Interview of Capt Douglas Logan

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FM018

PLACE: Charleston, South Carolina

DATE: January 16, 2024

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.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber