

# CUI

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## ATTENTION

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UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

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

CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Ms. [REDACTED], I'm Captain [REDACTED]. I'm the Navy Representative to the Coast Guard Investigative Board that's charged with finding out what happened and how as far as the collision goes. Any questions about that?

[REDACTED]: No sir.

CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Good afternoon.

[REDACTED]: Good afternoon.

LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: I'm Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

I'm the Senior Investigating Officer for the U.S. Coast Guard Activities Far East here in Japan. Under the Authority of Title 46, U.S. Code 6301 and Title 46 CFR Part 4 an investigation is being conducted into the circumstances of the collision between the USS Fitzgerald and the ACX Crystal which took place on June 17, 2017. This investigation is intended to determine the cause of the casualty to the extent possible and to obtain information for the purpose of preventing similar casualties in the future. To assist with the accuracy of our investigation, we will be recording today's interview,

1 which is taking place on June 29, 2017 at 14:08 in the  
2 morning. Assisting on this investigation, I have Mr.  
3 [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard's National Center of Expertise  
4 for Investigations. I also have Lieutenant Commander  
5 [REDACTED] who is at the same unit as I am and has previous  
6 experience as a CO of Coast Guard Cutters. Captain [REDACTED],  
7 again, is working as a Liaison Officer and a subject matter  
8 expert uh for his operations with the Navy. I also have  
9 Captain [REDACTED] in the room here who is the Commanding  
10 Officer of my unit. Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] who is  
11 from the Navy Safety Investigation Board and then Mr. [REDACTED]  
12 who is also from our National Center Expertise for, for  
13 Casualties.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Before we begin, if I could get  
15 the spelling of your first and last name please.

16 [REDACTED]: It's [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED].

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Fantastic. Thank you so much.

19 Mr. [REDACTED].

20 LCDR [REDACTED]: So good afternoon. May I have your  
21 age please?

22 [REDACTED]: [REDACTED].

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: Um, and uh may I have your  
24 commissioning source?

25 [REDACTED]: Uh ROTC, [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

1 LCDR [REDACTED]: And so that resulted in a direct  
2 commission or a uh, or did you have to go through OCS?  
3 [REDACTED]: Direct commission.  
4 LCDR [REDACTED]: All right and uh when did you join the  
5 Navy?  
6 [REDACTED]: It was uh [REDACTED] I got  
7 commissioned.  
8 LCDR [REDACTED]: And is uh the Fitzgerald your first  
9 unit or?  
10 [REDACTED]: This is my second ship.  
11 LCDR [REDACTED]: And what unit were you at before?  
12 [REDACTED]: USS Ashland (LSD-48).  
13 LCDR [REDACTED]: Where is she stationed?  
14 [REDACTED]: Sasebo, sir.  
15 LCDR [REDACTED]: And, uh what was your role on Ashland?  
16 [REDACTED]: I was the Electro and (inaudible -  
17 00:03:10).  
18 LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay and then on Fitzgerald what is  
19 your role on Fitzgerald?  
20 [REDACTED]: I'm the Anti-Submarine Warfare  
21 Officer.  
22 LCDR [REDACTED]: All right, so if we could, uh the 16th  
23 the day the Fitzgerald got underway, if you could walk me  
24 through your routine. So, starting from the time you got  
25 up and the actions you took.



1 [REDACTED]: Uh, so I got up at 0400 so I could  
2 make it to the ship by 0600. The trains, or the buses  
3 don't run to the train station before 5:45, so I had to  
4 walk to the train station. Uh, I got to the ship at 5:45.  
5 We change headquarters at 6, got ready to get underway, uh  
6 we had the sea and anchor brief at around 8:30, 9 o'clock,  
7 set sea and anchor at 10:30. I had uh, I was Surface UI  
8 for sea and anchor so I was in Combat. Uh, once we  
9 anchored, I went out and started being a safety for the ammo  
10 movement. That took about three or four hours. I think we  
11 were done by 15, 1530-ish. And then we set sea and anchor  
12 again. Uh, after sea and anchor we started doing Flight  
13 Ops.

14 LCDR [REDACTED]: Did you have a role in the, uh getting  
15 underway from anchor? Sea and anchor detail?

16 [REDACTED]: Uh, I was back in Combat, sir.

17 LCDR [REDACTED]: Back in Combat?

18 [REDACTED]: Yes sir, it was the same watch bill  
19 for both sea and anchors. I didn't have a role for Flight  
20 Ops, so I used that time to just get some Admin done. Uh,  
21 I caught about an hour nap before I went on watch, or I  
22 started getting ready for watch at about 2100.

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: and which watch did you have?

24 [REDACTED]: The 2200 to 0200 sir. Uh, when I got  
25 on watch, we were, uh we had just manned the boat deck and

1 we were getting ready for, for Boat Ops. And I took the  
2 deck before we load, lowered, and launched the boat.

3 LCDR [REDACTED]: Was the Captain on the bridge for  
4 relief?

5 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. He was on the bridge until  
6 we completed Boat Ops and that's when he left at about  
7 midnight.

8 LCDR [REDACTED]: All right, so for Boat Ops, you were  
9 uh close in shore for uh RHIB Ops?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. We went into about a mile  
11 off of uh whatever island we were, we were dropping them  
12 off on.

13 LCDR [REDACTED]: And about a mile there uh was there  
14 any uh navigation detail set for being close proximity to  
15 land?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. We had uh the Navigator up  
17 on the bridge and most of the nav team as well.

18 LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you know when approximately you  
19 secured from Nav Detail?

20 [REDACTED]: No sir, I don't. It would've probably  
21 been around midnight 15, midnight 20. Once we finished  
22 with Boat Ops, we came up to 20 knots and went -- and got  
23 away pretty quickly. I remember we secured CHT, or uh we  
24 brought back up CHT at about 3 miles around midnight 05.

1           LCDR [REDACTED]: Okay, so during uh Boat Ops what was,  
2 what was the traffic picture looking like?

3           [REDACTED]: It was pretty light most of the, most  
4 of the vessels were out more in the middle of the channel.  
5 We were pretty close to the island. There wasn't much  
6 fishing traffic at the time, so we didn't really have  
7 anything in our way until we started heading outbound.

8           LCDR [REDACTED]: And uh, could you indicate on the  
9 chart as to where you uh felt the traffic started to get  
10 heavy?

11          [REDACTED]: I'm trying to remember where the  
12 island is that we were.

13          LCDR [REDACTED]: Others have indicated up here for the  
14 island you were off of. Maybe a little bit -- so this was  
15 your Flight Quarters box.

16          [REDACTED]: Okay. And then we headed south from  
17 there so it was probably -- this was -- I think it was this  
18 island that we were dropping them off at. Uh,

19          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, just to get you oriented, right,  
20 so here's the Miura Peninsula, right. This is the channel  
21 to Tokyo Bay, this is Yokosuka. So I think you did --  
22 here's the SESEF range, right, so you probably did Boat Ops  
23 here.

24          [REDACTED]: Probably we were --

25          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Off the peninsula here.

1 [REDACTED]: Uh, yes sir, that looks about right.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Then you begin your transit to  
3 the southeast in the depth.

4 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. So, I don't know where on  
5 the track we were. At, at the time of the collision we  
6 were going 190 and that was like the track like we were on,  
7 so.

8 LCDR [REDACTED]: Yeah. Unfortunately, your uh, your  
9 track lines aren't drawn on this chart.

10 [REDACTED]: Right. So, probably, probably right  
11 around here. So, as -- at about midnight-30 uh I called  
12 the Captain for a group of like 5 inbound vessels that were  
13 gonna cross our bough at about 1500 yards, and they ended  
14 up crossing us at about 10 o'clock in the morning. By the  
15 time they all got past us we had those four vessels. I  
16 could -- and we actually picked up the Crystal and the  
17 ship behind them about 12 miles out from that position  
18 wherever we were at. We had three other outbound ships uh  
19 that we were passing pretty quickly. They had a strong  
20 left bearing drift and we had two more inbound ships beyond  
21 the group of four and the Crystal and the ship behind them.

22 LCDR [REDACTED]: How'd you know it was Crystal or was  
23 that in hindsight?

24 [REDACTED]: That's in hindsight, sir.



1           LCDR [REDACTED]: Yeah. So, if you could uh help us out  
2 radar picture-wise, give us a time stamp, and what you were  
3 actually looking at on the radar. If you could remember  
4 range scales.

5           [REDACTED]: So, uh, we were in about a 12-nautical  
6 mile range scale. Uh, I had trigger up, I don't know if  
7 that matters but uh we had our STC and FTC pretty low cause  
8 it was not too choppy. We had the STC I think on like 15%  
9 or something just to kind of keep our clutter manageable.  
10 Uh, we kept bouncing back and forth between 12 and 24  
11 nautical miles as it kind of opened up and once we got back  
12 around the island down here we closed it back down to 12.  
13 Um, so we were on our 190 track, so we were doing, that we  
14 were going 20 knots. I had four inbound vessels in a line  
15 with a 1500 CPA, a 1500 CPA with all four of them, uh,  
16 within 12 nautical miles when these were about right here.  
17 I had two, two contacts like that. I had three outbound  
18 vessels on that side, and I had two more on this side.

19          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Could you put vectors on those  
20 contacts so we get a sense of their, what their reeling  
21 motion would have been?

22          [REDACTED]: So, if I remember right, these were  
23 all going about 12 knots. These were going about 14, I  
24 don't remember what those were going, but these were  
25 inbound as well. And, then for these two down here, I

1 actually couldn't get the radar to pick them up. Well like  
2 they were picking them up but I couldn't get it to hook.  
3 Um, so, once these cleared and we kept going south we  
4 prioritized these two just cause we couldn't get a good  
5 radar uh, radar track on them. By the time the radar got a  
6 solid track on them they were about 5 miles out, maybe 4.  
7 Uh, visually we thought they were going to pass the stern  
8 of us, and when radar finally picked them up it gave us  
9 that same solution. It said uh 1500 north CPA, uh on the  
10 starboard quarter stern of us. So once, once I got that  
11 for what turns out to have been the Crystal I left them  
12 hooked but I dropped their information, brought up the  
13 information for the ship behind them, and started just kind  
14 of working out what I was going to do to get around that  
15 ship. These we had already passed. These were about here  
16 at the time. Uh

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Which one, indicate which one is  
18 Crystal. Okay.

19 [REDACTED]: I dropped the information for the  
20 Crystal and started looking at the ship behind them. Uh, I  
21 actually considered turning and passing stern of them, but  
22 I think I had to go like 240 or 250, and we were, we were  
23 somewhere around here at this point, and that would've  
24 driven us straight towards land and since visually they  
25 looked like they were going to pass the stern and then when

1 the radar came back with that same solution I just decided  
2 to maintain course and speed. Uh, I eventually decided --  
3 we actually, when we were looking at dealing with the  
4 second ship the JOOD and I actually considered or talked  
5 about slowing down, but again because we thought the  
6 Crystal was going to pass behind us we decided to keep  
7 going. Um, and I was actually about to call the Captain uh  
8 -- our solution, what we decided to end up doing, or what I  
9 decided to end up doing was just keep going south, pass our  
10 waypoint, which was somewhere around here, and just take a  
11 wide turn to come back to 220, which is our next leg. Uh,  
12 the Captain wanted to know if we were more than 1,000 yards  
13 off track, so I was going to call him and give him the  
14 solution for, for these two vessels, give him my plan as  
15 well and let him know we were coming off track and by the  
16 time we realized the Crystal was not gonna pass behind us  
17 uh -- my initial order to the Conn was hard right to try  
18 and come around them but I cancelled it before he said  
19 anything before he got the order out uh cause I could tell  
20 we weren't going to make it. So, I took the Comm from him  
21 and gave a hard left and uh all I did was head flank, and I  
22 don't know whether the Conn or the Helm didn't hear me or  
23 didn't understand but uh she our Boatswain Mate ended up  
24 having to take the Helm. I gave the order again and I ran

1 out to the starboard bridge wing and our engines didn't  
2 even have time to spin up.

3 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How long before the collision would  
4 you say, how many, how much time? Did you have SA on those  
5 two, two tracks and you knew it was gonna be, even though  
6 you thought it was gonna be safe it was gonna be a close  
7 CPA. How much time did you have to work with?

8 [REDACTED]: So, I thought we were going to have a  
9 59-yard CPA of stern until I looked up and saw them. By  
10 the time we could actually see their superstructure and see  
11 that they were not at the angle we thought they were, maybe  
12 a minute.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So a uh, uh a minute of in  
14 extremis is what I would say. Is that fair? Okay back it  
15 up from there. How long had you actually been considering  
16 those tracks, those contacts.

17 [REDACTED]: We picked them up, or we saw them on  
18 the scope at 12 miles, um, and we kept a pretty good eye on  
19 them until the radar picked them up and kind of confirmed  
20 what we thought we were seeing. So, we had been looking at  
21 them for a while.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, visually 12 miles or radar  
23 12 miles.

24 [REDACTED]: About -- radar 12 miles, visually at  
25 about 10, maybe 9.



1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Who was the first one on the  
2 bridge to spot them visually?

3 [REDACTED]: It was either me or the JOOD. I don't  
4 know exactly. I was bouncing back and forth between the  
5 bridge wings and the scope. I usually try to time going  
6 outside um when the JOOD was inside just so that someone  
7 was by the bridge-to-bridge at all times, but I don't know.  
8 I can't say honestly which of the two of us saw them first.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, how would you describe the  
10 watch. Was the watch particularly busy?

11 [REDACTED]: After Boat Ops not really. Um,  
12 traffic was moderate for Seventh Fleet or for this Op area.  
13 Um --

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So on a scale of 1 to 10 what would  
15 you rate traffic as 10 being the worst, 1 being the least?

16 [REDACTED]: Probably like a 5, 5 or a 6.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And, who was the designated Lookout?

18 [REDACTED]: Uh, it was our Conn, actually he was  
19 uh the one doing most of the correlation between visual and  
20 -- or he was the one pointing out most of the ships, but he  
21 was extremely new. I think this was only his first or  
22 second week on the Fitzgerald. So, the JOOD was helping  
23 him out a lot with that.

24 LCDR [REDACTED]: And how about communication flow?  
25 Would, would you say most of the communication was uh

1 training related or was it uh more or less just the normal  
2 watch discussions?

3 [REDACTED]: We were trying to do some training  
4 where we could, but we had enough going on that we were  
5 more focused on trying to keep track of the 10 ships that  
6 we had around us. There was a couple of slow moments where  
7 we were able to kind of start training the Com on lights  
8 and visual aids.

9 LCDR [REDACTED]: Did uh, did at any point in time did  
10 that feel uh too distracting for what you had going on? So  
11 are you shaking your head no -- just indicating no for the  
12 recording?

13 [REDACTED]: No. Sorry.

14 LCDR [REDACTED]: And then how about discussion with  
15 other watch stations? Was there uh, was there chatter  
16 amongst uh the Helm. Any uh chatter coming up from Combat  
17 over radio circuits?

18 [REDACTED]: The Helm was mostly, there was, there  
19 was a few of the up there as UI so they were mostly doing  
20 their own training. Um, up until that point they had been  
21 maintaining course and still being able to do the repeat-  
22 backs properly so I didn't really feel the need to stop  
23 them from doing training. The only communication between  
24 us and Combat the whole night was us passing course and  
25 speed changes.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: What does the Captain's standing  
2 orders say about uh their requirement for CIC to track and  
3 report surface contacts?

4 [REDACTED]: I think in the battle orders it says  
5 that Surface is supposed to report all contacts within  
6 20,000 yards.

7 [REDACTED]: Okay.

8 LCDR [REDACTED]: Is there anything in the Commanding  
9 Officer's standing orders for Moboard solutions and when  
10 they should be carried out?

11 [REDACTED]: Uh, not Moboard solutions  
12 particularly, it's just kind of do them as you need them.  
13 His reporting criteria is any vessel with a CPA of less  
14 than 6,000 yards must be reported within 20,000 yards but  
15 uh because we didn't have a solid track and just the way  
16 the solution was developing, like I decided to try and  
17 handle it and make sure that everything was going to be  
18 okay before I got distracted with trying to put the report  
19 together and call him.

20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you guys do a Moboard at all on,  
21 on your watch?

22 [REDACTED]: Uh, I don't know if the JOOD did for  
23 this one, sir. I got so wrapped up with other, other  
24 things.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you have any communications with  
2 the TAO or Surface regarding the collision vessel?  
3 [REDACTED]: No sir, they didn't say anything.  
4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you talk to them at all?  
5 [REDACTED]: No sir.  
6 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you prompt them at all?  
7 [REDACTED]: No sir.  
8 LCDR [REDACTED]: Just to readdress the Moboard. Did  
9 you do a Moboard for any contact on your watch, not just  
10 that last one there?  
11 [REDACTED]: I personally did not do one sir.  
12 Again, I don't know what, if the JOOD did one or not.  
13 LCDR [REDACTED]: And, uh, so during your watch about  
14 how many contacts do you think you were actively tracking  
15 at the most during your transit through this area?  
16 [REDACTED]: No more than 15.  
17 LCDR [REDACTED]: And in, in the half hour before the  
18 collision about how many contacts were you actively  
19 tracking, if you recall?  
20 [REDACTED]: Uh, a half hour before is when I had  
21 those four vessels, like actively coming in, in front of  
22 us, so those were the four I was most focused on, but we  
23 had about 10, maybe 12 other contacts on the scope.



1 LCDR [REDACTED]: And how was the radar picture that  
2 night? On the 73 radar? How was the radar picture? How  
3 was the return?

4 [REDACTED]: We were getting decent return on the  
5 larger vessels. Um, a little bit of trouble with the  
6 smaller boats, but like I said it was having trouble  
7 hooking contacts, so it was -- they were showing up but it  
8 wasn't, it was having trouble actively hooking them, so  
9 when I hooked the Crystal and the ship underneath it, uh  
10 the circle showed up and it would blink and then it would  
11 just start drifting upwards. Uh, so I had to manually re-  
12 inquire several times. Uh, I didn't get a solid track  
13 until about 4 to 5 miles.

14 LCDR [REDACTED]: And how was uh the nighttime  
15 environment. What was what was the environment like?

16 [REDACTED]: Visibility was about 10 miles, 10 to  
17 11 miles. Seas were, it was about sea state 1, maybe 2.  
18 Uh, it was dark. The moon didn't rise until or we didn't  
19 see the moon until about midnight-30-ish. But there was no  
20 fog really.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So do, do you feel like your ability  
22 to maintain a proper lookout was impeded anyway by the  
23 environment?

24 [REDACTED]: No sir.

1           LCDR [REDACTED]: If I could get you back up onto the,  
2 the board. So if you could draw me the visual picture you  
3 had from the bridge when you first made visual contact of  
4 the vessel you believe was the Crystal and uh, uh do it in  
5 relationship so draw own ship and then draw where you  
6 believe the Crystal was.

7           [REDACTED]: All right. So, this was us, and this  
8 is 190. Uh, I had one ship here, one behind them here, not  
9 that close, but one behind them there, and then I had  
10 another one inbound as well, and they were all coming this  
11 way, (inaudible - 00:26:19) like that. Um, and then 12  
12 miles or 11 miles out uh you could just see the red running  
13 light and light, uh mast light of the Crystal and it looked  
14 like they were following a lot of that same course. So,  
15 these were all coming down, and then I had two other ships  
16 outbound along this and I had some DIW fishing boats up  
17 here.

18           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And tell, tell us again. When did you  
19 establish the identity of that particular track as motor  
20 vessel Crystal?

21           [REDACTED]: After the fact, sir.

22           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: After the collision. So, uh you did  
23 not correlate ARPA video with AIS to determine the identity  
24 of that vessel?

25           [REDACTED]: No sir.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

2 LCDR [REDACTED]: And so, uh, to shift gears to Rules of  
3 the Road. So, what kind of situation was presented to you  
4 here?

5 [REDACTED]: So, with just this right now?

6 LCDR [REDACTED]: Yeah, and I'll specifically isolate  
7 you and the Crystal.

8 [REDACTED]: All right so between us and the  
9 Crystal it was crossing. We would've been on stand on uh  
10 I, I had a 1500-yard CPA. I didn't assess a risk of  
11 collision to exist. They didn't come -- I didn't hear  
12 anything over bridge-to-bridge to indicate that they  
13 thought this collision existed, so I maintained course and  
14 speed.

15 LCDR [REDACTED]: So to be clear, who was the stand on  
16 vessel?

17 [REDACTED]: We would've been, or we were.

18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you try hailing the collision  
19 vessels?

20 [REDACTED]: No sir. Like I said, at first, I  
21 thought we had a 1500-yard CPA. I didn't feel it was  
22 necessary to call them. By the time it was, by the time we  
23 realized we did not have a 1500-yard CPA I, I got so  
24 focused on trying to maneuver or do anything that I just  
25 didn't have time.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So at the time you believed, it was  
2 your assessment that you were the stand on vessel. Is that  
3 still your assessment?

4 [REDACTED]: If you just look at us and the  
5 Crystal, yes. If you look at the whole picture it wouldn't  
6 really, I mean it's multiple ships, and Rules of the Road  
7 situations only apply to two ships.

8 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So I'm, I'm just going to run  
9 you through some of the Rules of the Road. So, uh in your  
10 own words, uh but as close to the Rules of the Road as  
11 possible, define what a meeting situation is.

12 [REDACTED]: Meeting or crossing?

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Meeting.

14 [REDACTED]: So meeting would be two, uh two  
15 vessels on um reciprocal or nearly reciprocal courses of  
16 each other.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. And what is their  
18 responsibility in, in that situation?

19 [REDACTED]: If risk of collision exists they would  
20 have to alter starboard and pass port-to-port.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: One or both?

22 [REDACTED]: Uh, both.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How about an overtaking  
24 situation?



1 [REDACTED]: When two power-driven vessels and one  
2 is approaching the other greater than 22.5 degrees about  
3 the beam, the vessel being overtaken is the stand-on  
4 vessel.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, what's the responsibility  
6 of the burdened vessel in that situation?

7 [REDACTED]: To -- they could pass at either side  
8 but it's just to remain clear.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay and crossing?

10 [REDACTED]: Uh so two power-driven vessels if risk  
11 of collision exists and the stand-on vessel is uh the one -  
12 - the other -- the give-way vessel is the one with the other  
13 to their starboard side and the stand-on vessel is the one  
14 with the other to their port side.

15 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, by that definition you just  
16 gave me, look at that picture again and tell us whether  
17 that night Fitz was give-way or stand-on.

18 [REDACTED]: We were give-way.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. All right.

20 [REDACTED]: Sorry. Was I saying stand-on earlier?

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You did.

22 [REDACTED]: Oh, my apologies.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, now that we've cleared that  
24 up, um so as the give-way vessel your calculus was hey I'm  
25 going to pass ahead of this guy. He's going to have a

1 1500-yard CPA stern of me, so that, that risk was  
2 acceptable in your calculus?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Did you make a contact report  
5 to the Commanding Officer to report that situation?

6 [REDACTED]: I was um, like I said I was um trying  
7 to make sure that the whole situation was safe before I  
8 called him. I was in the process of drafting a report.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

10 [REDACTED]: To do an after the fact report.

11 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And after the fact report? What does  
12 that mean?

13 [REDACTED]: Just was, that they were already within  
14 reporting criteria um, it was basically one of those  
15 maneuver first and report later situations.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay, so based on the culture of Fitz,  
17 and the way you guys stand bridge watch in those situations  
18 is the expectation from the Captain is that you're, you're  
19 gonna do what you gotta do and then just immediately call  
20 him and tell him what you can in real time or is the  
21 expectation that you're gonna write the full report?  
22 Thereby, eating more time off the clock?

23 [REDACTED]: So, if, if you have the time he would  
24 like it beforehand. If it's necessary he would prefer that  
25 you maneuver first and report as soon as possible.

1 LCDR [REDACTED]: What uh, what actions per the Rules of  
2 the Road can be taken to avoid risk of collision?

3 [REDACTED]: We could've maneuvered. Like, I said  
4 I considered maneuvering uh stern of them further on but I  
5 didn't want to drive straight towards land and with a 1500-  
6 yard CPA I didn't think it was necessary. Um, we could've  
7 slowed down earlier. But --

8 LCDR [REDACTED]: Was that recommendation made to you at  
9 all to slow down?

10 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. Like we said, we actually  
11 talked about slowing down in regard to the vessel that was  
12 behind the Crystal, but again at the time we thought the  
13 Crystal was going to pass the stern of us, so we decided to  
14 not slow down so as to not make that CPA with them -- or  
15 what we thought was going to be the CPA with them worse.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, um, we've heard the 240 discussion  
17 before. So, the 240 option you guys were discussing was  
18 potentially an avoiding course, right?

19 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. What was the range to the  
21 collision vessel at the time that you were talking about  
22 the 240-course change, roughly?

23 [REDACTED]: Maybe 7 miles.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. And your concern was if you  
25 came to 240 at that point it was gonna drive you know

1 uncomfortably close to Miura Peninsula -- to the Izu  
2 Peninsula right?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir, both land and there were um  
4 some of the other ships that were out there were also going  
5 that way um.

6 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So, you, for whatever reason  
7 you felt constrained from coming that far right, right?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Did you, did you consider just  
10 waiting and coming right later with a less drastic course  
11 change and still passing the stern?

12 [REDACTED]: Not with the other two outbound  
13 vessels behind us, sir.

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: What was the range? So those were the  
15 guys off your starboard quarter there?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: What, what was the approximate range  
18 of those vessels?

19 [REDACTED]: We had just overtaken them, so they  
20 were only three or -- like maybe 3 miles behind us.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. What was their speed?

22 [REDACTED]: Uh, about maybe 15 knots.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So you had a 5-knot speed advantage?

24 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

25 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.



1 LCDR [REDACTED]: And I, and I think I just wanted to --  
2 so when you said we had discussed uh who specifically had  
3 recommended slowing down?

4 [REDACTED]: It was a discussion between myself and  
5 the JOOD.

6 LCDR [REDACTED]: JOOD. Thank you.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Uh, did you have any degradations to  
8 bridge equipment that night? 73?

9 [REDACTED]: The 73 had been having issues for a  
10 while. It was supposed to have been replaced in our dry  
11 dock and then it was supposed to have been replaced during  
12 our sea map that got cancelled. Um --

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How was it, how was it  
14 underperforming?

15 [REDACTED]: So during the last patrol, it wasn't  
16 maintaining heading. We had to manually re-enter our  
17 heading multiple times uh per watch. Like I said, it was  
18 having trouble, uh acquiring tracks, so you could see it on  
19 the scope but it was, it would take forever to acquire,  
20 you'd have to manually reacquire.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, if I, if I understand you  
22 correctly the auto-track feature was unreliable?

23 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: But you could of, you could of taken  
25 ranges of bearings.

1 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Plot em on a Moboard and come up with  
3 a Moboard solution? Right?

4 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Uh, how about VMS?

6 [REDACTED]: VMS at the time was fine.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Both? Both computers? Chart table  
8 and the conn?

9 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. I was using the conning  
10 station the whole night and it was fine.

11 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: AIS?

12 [REDACTED]: Uh, AIS was working as far as I know.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. And our understanding is that  
14 on your particular configuration AIS is not integrated with  
15 ARPA?

16 [REDACTED]: No sir.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Um, nav lights?

18 [REDACTED]: Were bright.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: On bright? Okay. SPA-25?

20 [REDACTED]: Uh, it was up. I don't know exactly  
21 how it was configured?

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So you weren't, you weren't using it  
23 that watch?

24 [REDACTED]: No sir.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How common is it for Fitz  
2 bridge watch standards to use the ARPA?

3 [REDACTED]: Uh, we use 73 always.

4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Oh, I'm sorry, uh SPA-25?

5 [REDACTED]: We don't use it that often. We use it  
6 basically during sea and anchor and that's about it.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Right. It's manned by an OS during  
8 sea and anchor right? So the, the bridge team proper under  
9 normal standing conditions it sounds like you do not use  
10 the SPA-25? Why is that?

11 [REDACTED]: I think that I might be the only JO  
12 that semi knows how to use it.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

14 [REDACTED]: Uh, we don't do much training with it.

15 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So lack of familiarity, lack of  
16 training.

17 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Uh, how long you been on, how  
19 long you been on board?

20 [REDACTED]: A little over a year sir.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So you reported what [REDACTED]?

22 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How many transits have you done as a  
24 bridge watch stander either inbound or outbound through  
25 that transit route?

1 [REDACTED]: Only three or four sir.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

3 [REDACTED]: On the Ashland when we were pulling in  
4 and out I was down in the plant (sic - inaudible 00:38:20)  
5 and I was in Combat for most of our other transits.

6 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. When did you complete your OD  
7 qualification?

8 [REDACTED]: Uh onboard Fitzgerald, January. We  
9 were --

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So you re-qualified January 2017?

11 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

12 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And when did you get your original  
13 qualification?

14 [REDACTED]: It was in March of 2014.

15 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Uh, what are your, what are your  
16 supervisor quals in CIC?

17 [REDACTED]: Uh, CICWO, ASW, uh ASWC as well.

18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay, so you got a warfare qual,  
19 warfare coordinator qual, and you've got a CICWO qual?

20 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. I was working on Surface.  
21 Sorry that was 2015 sir, not 2014.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Got it. For your OOD qual,  
23 March of 20 -- March of 2015?

24 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.



1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Uh, our understanding is that  
2 the CO and XO lay below after Boat Ops around 2300.

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did they ever come back up to the  
5 bridge prior to the collision?

6 [REDACTED]: No sir.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: To your knowledge, did either one of  
8 them pass through Combat during the midwatch?

9 [REDACTED]: Uh, I don't know sir.

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. If they had, is there a habit  
11 of you know the Combat announcing on Net 15 Captain's in  
12 Combat?

13 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So probably not based on that?

15 [REDACTED]: No sir.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Uh, were you ever hailed on bridge-to-  
17 bridge during your watch?

18 [REDACTED]: No sir.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you hail anybody?

20 [REDACTED]: No sir.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Did you make any calls to the  
22 Commanding Officer?

23 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. I called him at about  
24 midnight 30 for those four vessels that were crossing our  
25 bough.

1           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Any other calls to the Captain?  
2           [REDACTED]: No sir.  
3           LCDR [REDACTED]: When you made that call at 12:30 did  
4           uh the Commanding Officer give you any guidance for contact  
5           reporting in the future?  
6           [REDACTED]: No sir.  
7           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, so the standard uh Captain's  
8           standing orders direction on the uh threshold for CPA  
9           reporting is 6,000 yards right?  
10          [REDACTED]: Yes sir.  
11          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Um, were you operating under any kind  
12          of modified CPA reporting standard on your watch?  
13          [REDACTED]: No sir.  
14          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You didn't get, you didn't get a  
15          verbal mod from the Captain before he laid below?  
16          [REDACTED]: No sir.  
17          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: No separate guidance?  
18          [REDACTED]: No sir.  
19          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So how many ships would you say  
20          you took in side of 6,000 yards during the course of the  
21          transit?  
22          [REDACTED]: Just those four sir.  
23          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Just those four?  
24          [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How uh, how confident are you  
2 proficient in the use of the ARPA and the 73?

3 [REDACTED]: I'm pretty, I'm all right with it,  
4 sir.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: I mean can you tune it?

6 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You can build --

8 [REDACTED]: I'm, I'm the one that tunes it every  
9 watch.

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You can build tracks? You feel  
11 proficient?

12 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How about with AIS?

14 [REDACTED]: Uh, the only thing we have on the  
15 bridge, sir, is the the transponder that gives us MMSI  
16 numbers and course and speed. We don't have the actual  
17 laptop up there.

18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Is there, where else is AIS  
19 information available?

20 [REDACTED]: Combat, sir.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. What, what does that look like?

22 [REDACTED]: Uh, it sits next to the Surface  
23 console. It's just a laptop where they have uh the  
24 capability to use it to do all of the CPA calculations.

1           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So you said there were probably  
2 15 plus or minus major vessels that you were tracking,  
3 monitoring --

4           [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

5           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: -- managing over the course of the  
6 watch. Did, was there any coordination or collaboration  
7 between you and, and Combat on those vessels?

8           [REDACTED]: No sir.

9           CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Is that lack of interaction  
10 normal?

11          [REDACTED]: It depends on the Surface, sir.

12          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

13          [REDACTED]: Sometimes, sometimes they'll call up  
14 often. Sometimes they don't call up at all.

15          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How involved is the TAO on your  
16 particular watch and then in general on Fitz?

17          [REDACTED]: Uh, I'm not, I'm not sure sir. Like -

18 -  
19          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, TAO is on Net 15. Uh, he or she  
20 is hearing everything that's going on on Net 15, monitoring  
21 reports between the Bridge and CIC. Um, and should be  
22 tuned into the cadence going on between the Bridge and  
23 Combat for contact management, right? Um, on a night like  
24 this where the, the only real task is to get through the  
25 traffic safely uh you know I would certainly expect as a

1 former FDNF DD GCO -- I used to spend a lot of time out  
2 here, uh I would expect that the TAO would be attentive and  
3 if it was a lack of backup or a lack of demand either  
4 push/pull like pull from the Bridge or push from Surface  
5 that the TAO would step in and say something about it. So,  
6 my question is did, did the TAO on the watch with you  
7 engage at all?

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

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. The way, uh the way Fitz stands  
10 watches and combat is it fair to say that there's an  
11 expectation that the TAO is a supervising, certainly the  
12 Surface module in Combat and as the Senior Watch Stander on  
13 watch on the ship that they maintain SA of ship safety,  
14 safe navigation, contact management?

15 [REDACTED]: I would say that's the expectation,  
16 yes sir.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: In your experience, how often does, do  
18 the TAOs live up to that expectation? Like on a scale of 1  
19 to 100. Give me a percentage.

20 [REDACTED]: About 70% sir.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Tell us about your  
22 relationship. How is the relationship or the dynamic  
23 between the three of you on the bridge? The three  
24 officers, you, the JOOD, and the Conning Officer?



1 [REDACTED]: Like, I said the Conn was fairly new,  
2 so we basically just told him to look out the windows and  
3 report everything that he saw. Um, the JOOD and I have  
4 been on watch together a couple of times. We worked  
5 together pretty well, uh normally. Um, we just like we did  
6 a lot of discussion together. We would work together to  
7 try and solve you know some perceived problems just with  
8 other ships. Like I said, we had a lot of discussion about  
9 what to do with the Crystal beforehand. We were the ones  
10 that, or we were the two that were talking together about  
11 slowing down, about maybe turning, um and we, we just both  
12 came to the conclusion together that it would just be  
13 better to maintain course and speed.

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Any, any interpersonal dynamic  
15 issues that might've influenced decision making and watch  
16 standing on the bridge that night?

17 [REDACTED]: No sir.

18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How about other human factors between  
19 you and the Captain or you and the XO, or you and the  
20 Navigator or you and the Senior Watch Officer, you and the  
21 TAO on watch that, that night. Any, any issues there that  
22 might've influenced reporting, might've influenced decision  
23 making?

24 [REDACTED]: No sir.

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So aside from the 73 radar that was  
2 having trouble maintaining uh, uh auto-track on the  
3 collision vessel, what other tools or processes did you use  
4 to establish risk of collision?

5 [REDACTED]: Mostly just visuals and, and the 73,  
6 sir.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Visuals how? Naked eye or something  
8 else?

9 [REDACTED]: Uh the Conn had NVGs, and we were all  
10 using binos. Uh, we looked through the big eyes a couple  
11 of times.

12 LCDR [REDACTED]: Did you ever use the big eyes to lay  
13 eyes on?

14 [REDACTED]: No sir. I, I just used binoculars.  
15 But, uh the JOOD looked in the big eyes and the Conn did.

16 LCDR [REDACTED]: Did you shoot a line of bearing to  
17 them?

18 [REDACTED]: Uh, I did, via the -- not using my  
19 actual alidade but I did uh as we got closer but not when  
20 we were further out.

21 LCDR [REDACTED]: So, if not using the alidade how did  
22 you shoot a line of bearing to them?

23 [REDACTED]: No, I mean I, I did use the alidade  
24 later on like as we got uh like once we got past those,

1 those vessels. But when we were 12 miles out, no I didn't  
2 shoot a line of bearing to them.

3 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you use the alidade to establish  
4 risk of collision?

5 [REDACTED]: No sir.

6 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How, uh, what did um -- aside  
7 from seaman's eye how do you establish risk of collision  
8 visually?

9 [REDACTED]: I'm not sure, sir.

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. H-how, if I were to tell you to  
11 go over to the alidade and, and tell me what the risk uh  
12 I'm sorry -- uh

13 [REDACTED]: Oh bearing rate, sir?

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Bearing rate. How would you do it?

15 [REDACTED]: So, you line it up on the -- let it  
16 wait, like wait for a minute or so and see where they  
17 drifted. When the Conn did that he said they had a slight  
18 right-bearing drift.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Was that your only input on  
20 measured visual bearing rate, was from the Conning Officer?

21 [REDACTED]: Uh, no sir. The JOOD did it as well.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you ever personally establish it?

23 [REDACTED]: No sir.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So you were relying on, on the  
25 radar and then the uh reporting from the Conn and the JOOD.



1 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: All right, so I'm going to brief this  
3 back to you and you tell me, tell me if this is right or  
4 not. So you were steaming, you gained radar contact on the  
5 collision vessel at 12 miles, you gained visual order  
6 around 9 or 10, so you had SA, uh you had visual, you had a  
7 port running light, you knew you were the give-way vessel,  
8 you established that you thought the CPA was the stern of  
9 Fitz at 1500 yards, uh which you decided was sufficient,  
10 you considered maneuvering to avoid, slowing, coming right  
11 or some combination, you chose not to. You were in the  
12 process of putting a report to the Commanding Officer  
13 together. You ran out of time. You maneuvered in  
14 extremis, came left, that was a decision on your part  
15 because you thought it would minimize the impact, right?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And then the collision occurred?

18 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. I also tried to come up in  
19 speed, but --

20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Right. Right. Ordered full, ordered  
21 flank, hard left.

22 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

24 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: I'm trying to workout the timeline  
25 here and uh we've gotten plenty of information, so I just

1 need to fill in a few of the last details here. The  
2 drawing that you've put on here that was approximately  
3 12:30?

4 [REDACTED]: Uh, so I called the Captain a little  
5 bit before this. Um, I called him at 12:30. By the time  
6 this happened it was closer to 12:45. By the time the last  
7 ship in that group of our line of four crossed our bough it  
8 was closer to like 1:05, maybe 1:10, uh I remember checking  
9 my watch at 1:15 and uh I just -- I know the collision  
10 happened before 1:30. I don't know exactly when between  
11 1:15 and 1:30 but --

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Mm-hmm. All right, so at  
13 approximately 12:45 you saw the Crystal on radar?

14 [REDACTED]: Uh, yes sir.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And, again, the radar range was 12  
16 nautical miles.

17 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Uh, so by 1:05, 1:10 that group of  
19 vessels had crossed your bough?

20 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So that last vessel on the right  
22 you went to their stern?

23 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Were there any other vessels to  
2 your starboard that were preparing to transit in that same  
3 line that those previous four vessels had gone?

4 [REDACTED]: Just those two sir. The other vessels  
5 to starboard were outbound.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay so two aft, that group of  
7 four, this would be now on your port side?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And then to your starboard -- or  
10 ahead of you --

11 [REDACTED]: Those two. So, those two are our  
12 starboard quarter and the Crystal and the other one were on  
13 our starboard bough at about maybe 20, 25 degrees off the  
14 bough.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And two?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. There was uh the Crystal --  
17 so from my perspective there was the Crystal and then there  
18 was another one behind the --uh we could see that the  
19 Crystal was going faster than this one because they were  
20 drawing forward of them. Uh, I don't know the separation.  
21 It might've been about 2 miles between the two of them.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And the Crystal was the faster of  
23 the two?

24 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

1           LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: All right you've mentioned that  
2 1500-yard CPA that you would pass ahead. At one time did  
3 that, was that calculation made?

4           [REDACTED]: Uh, I'm not entirely sure, sir. It  
5 was, it was after the last of that line of four -- because  
6 we didn't, we didn't get a solid track on the Crystal until  
7 about like I said 4 to 5 miles and it would've, it would've  
8 been just after this last, the last group or vessel in that  
9 line crossed us.

10          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And when you say solid track you mean  
11 auto-track right?

12          [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

13          CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You had radar video?

14          [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

15          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So let's, so let's say the  
16 earliest you may have known would've been 1:05.

17          [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

18          LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: All right. And so that 1500-yard  
19 calculation was that coming off of the, the radar ARPA fix  
20 on it or was that visual?

21          [REDACTED]: Uh, the actual distance came off of  
22 the radar. The stern came from both radar and visual. And  
23 then we lost the Crystal in our clutter at about 3 miles,  
24 maybe 2 miles.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Is that an issue with the 73  
2 radar?

3 [REDACTED]: Um, we have, we just have a clutter  
4 zone um of about 2 miles. It, it gets hard to track  
5 anything in there.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you know if the 67 has a  
7 similar clutter zone?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. It's smaller but it's still  
9 about a mile, maybe a mile and a half.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Uh, was the 67 used during your  
11 watch?

12 [REDACTED]: No sir. Not by the Bridge.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Did you see the Crystal make any  
14 turns?

15 [REDACTED]: No sir.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, so you had them on the radar,  
17 got the CPA, it looked like you were going to pass ahead,  
18 and then they got lost in the clutter at some point?

19 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

20 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Uh, who was maintaining uh visual  
21 on the Crystal?

22 [REDACTED]: The JOOD, sir. Like, I said, I, I  
23 moved on to working on the ship behind them, so I left the  
24 other vessels to the JOOD and the Conn.



1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Which, again, you said that other  
2 one uh may have been 2 miles apart from the Crystal?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you recall when the Crystal may  
5 have entered into that scatter zone or the clutter I should  
6 say?

7 [REDACTED]: No sir, I - I don't know. My best  
8 guess would be around 1:10, maybe, maybe 1:10 -- between 1:10  
9 and 1:15.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So you might've had 5 to 10  
11 minutes to [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And you, you didn't make any  
14 course changes?

15 [REDACTED]: No sir. We'd been on 190 for about 40  
16 minutes by that point.

17 LCDR [REDACTED]: Did you feel pressure to maintain 20  
18 knots?

19 [REDACTED]: It was in the night orders, but I  
20 could've slowed down if I needed to. Our PIM speed was 16  
21 knots. We were just trying to get ahead of PIM.

22 LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you feel that 20 knots was a safe  
23 speed giving the shipping traffic you were dealing with?

24 [REDACTED]: For me, no. I personally don't like  
25 going 20 knots. I'm a prior amphib sailor. We don't do 20

1 knots, but the traffic. Like I said the traffic was only  
2 moderate, so I didn't really say anything because it  
3 wasn't, it wasn't that bad. If it had been heavier I  
4 would've not done 20 knots.

5 LCDR [REDACTED]: And leading up uh to the collision at  
6 any point in time did uh the Crystal make any sound  
7 signals?

8 [REDACTED]: No sir. We had the doors open and we  
9 were all three of us were constantly going in and out of  
10 the pilot house.

11 LCDR [REDACTED]: How about any flashing lights?

12 [REDACTED]: No sir. Not that we saw.

13 LCDR [REDACTED]: Any radio calls bridge-to-bridge?

14 [REDACTED]: No sir.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So this -- who, who watches the  
16 radar?

17 [REDACTED]: Uh, it was mostly me and the JOOD.  
18 Like is said, we kind of alternated between who was inside  
19 manning MS and radar and who was outside on the bridge  
20 wing.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Are there any restrictions on  
22 personnel to say don't look at the radar?

23 [REDACTED]: Just the Conn and it's not a hard  
24 restriction, it's just something that I do with my Bridge  
25 team.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, so what is the Conn's  
2 responsibilities? Any time there's, there's a light he's  
3 supposed to report that?

4 [REDACTED]: Mainly I have them uh just taking uh  
5 bearing rates, uh trying to you know get a target angle if  
6 they can. Like, I said this was a very new Conn, so he  
7 couldn't do much more than that. So the JOOD and I would  
8 direct him like hey get a bearing rate on the vessel 10  
9 degrees off our bough and he would basically -- but most of  
10 the time he would be looking forward unless we told him to  
11 make an NVG sweep, in which case he would go around the  
12 bridge wing.

13 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Was there any effort because I  
14 know you said that the JOOD and yourself are kind of  
15 switching in and out. Was, was there ever any, any  
16 management to ensure that if somebody left the wing that  
17 somebody else went in?

18 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. I was actively making sure  
19 that one of us was on the Bridge or in the pilot house next  
20 to the bridge-to-bridge at all times. So whenever the JOOD  
21 went out or I saw the JOOD starting to go out to the Bridge  
22 we got him to come back in.

23 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And when I say wings do  
24 you, is there always somebody on both wings?

25 [REDACTED]: No sir.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Um, so the Conn and the JOOD could  
2 be on one wing while you're inside the pilot house?

3 [REDACTED]: Uh, they can, but usually I have the  
4 Conn stay center line unless they're doing an NVG route.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you recall when the last NVG  
6 round was?

7 [REDACTED]: Uh, it was just shortly before that.

8 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: I'm sorry, before when?

9 [REDACTED]: Before the collision sir, sorry. I  
10 don't know the exact time but I usually have them do it  
11 every 10 to 15 minutes.

12 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So you established visual on the  
13 collision vessel with naked eye right?

14 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

15 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Unaided?

16 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So when, when you got the Conn to,  
19 to give an order to change Helm where was the Conn at at  
20 that time?

21 [REDACTED]: Sir?

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Uh, did you give, you gave an  
23 order to change course, like you were going to tell them to  
24 go starboard and then you said wait, wait try port.

1 [REDACTED]: Oh yes sir. Yes sir, he was on the  
2 port bridge wing uh looking at the vessels that we had off  
3 to port just to make sure that -- like I said we had some  
4 other, other vessels off to port, other than the ones that  
5 had just passed us.

6 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And do you recall where the JOOD  
7 was at that time?

8 [REDACTED]: Starboard bridge wing, sir. And I was  
9 at the radar.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And when did you realize that uh  
11 the Crystal was not in the position you thought she was?

12 [REDACTED]: The JOOD came in and uh brought it to  
13 my attention because I was looking down getting ready to  
14 start preparing a report.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. And your actions to that  
16 again were?

17 [REDACTED]: Uh, so my initial response was hard  
18 right rudder and then I stopped the Conn and then I took  
19 the Conn from him.

20 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. I'm going to stop you right  
21 there. I want to take a, a quick step back. So the JOOD  
22 came in and said?

23 [REDACTED]: Uh, I don't remember exactly what she  
24 said. She just basically said uh OOD the like they're  
25 coming right at us.



1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: All right. She made you aware of  
2 the situation?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Your reaction to that was look up,  
5 look at the radar?

6 [REDACTED]: I looked up, looked at the Crystal, uh  
7 saw what, what her targeting was and then was just trying  
8 to determine whether or not I had time to turn to  
9 starboard.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. So, when I say target  
11 angle, is, is, are you just doing that calculation in your  
12 head? I see a vessel there?

13 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. So, we could see her  
14 superstructure at that point. Uh, the target angle like  
15 where we bared from her was we were about 345, maybe 350,  
16 uh. And then obviously as we got closer our target angle  
17 approached more 280, 270, and she was right off our beam.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay so, and again no, no time for  
19 a Mobeard, no time for --

20 [REDACTED]: Not at that point sir.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: -- no time for radar because it  
22 would've been within that, that clutter. It's, it's a  
23 visual, maybe not even time to go to the, the alidade? It  
24 was we need to make a move.

25 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

1 MR. [REDACTED]: So, just a quick question. What  
2 was your assessment of the JOOD's abilities?

3 [REDACTED]: She had been on Seventh Fleet her  
4 entire career. Um, she always had you know a good, like we  
5 always had good conversations whenever we were trying to  
6 discuss stuff. Um, I'd really only stood, stood watch with  
7 her for about a week uh prior to pulling in underway and  
8 this was our first watch together on this underway. Um, so  
9 she seemed, she seemed competent.

10 MR. [REDACTED]: What about the Conn?

11 [REDACTED]: Like I said, the Conn was brand new.  
12 He'd only been on the bridge for about a week, maybe two.  
13 And he hadn't been on board for, for very long either.

14 MR. [REDACTED]: You allowed four vessels to pass  
15 during your watch and you were tracking the Crystal and you  
16 were aware of the vessel at 12 nautical miles out.

17 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

18 MR. [REDACTED]: And you said the radar dropped  
19 track on her, so you couldn't uh hook her so she'd be  
20 available in VMS and on your ARPA?

21 [REDACTED]: Correct.

22 MR. [REDACTED]: And so your understanding of it  
23 was that you would pass within 1500 yards and, and forward  
24 of the vessel -- it wasn't going to stern. So, if you were  
25 aware of that and I, I'm not 100% sure on the timelines but

1 you -- from what our discussion is you had somewhere in the  
2 neighborhood of 10 to 15 minutes. So, why didn't you or  
3 the JOOD or Aft Conn call the CO?

4 [REDACTED]: We didn't get the 1500 yards until uh,  
5 until they were about 4 miles out, so about 10 or so  
6 minutes later.

7 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay. So, still, 4 miles out --  
8 that's a lot of distance. At what point why did you not  
9 call the CO?

10 [REDACTED]: Because I was trying to get a whole  
11 plan together before I called him because we had two other  
12 vessels that were meeting, reporting criteria that were  
13 also you know moving pretty rapidly.

14 MR. [REDACTED]: Where were those vessels at?

15 [REDACTED]: The one behind the Crystal and then uh  
16 we had those, those two that we had kind of overtaken, just  
17 taking the whole situation as a whole. I was --

18 MR. [REDACTED]: So, it's two, two at the bottom.  
19 You said it was running somewhere around 14 knots and I  
20 think at one point in time you said 12. You're running 20,  
21 so you can take those two out of the picture. So, if you  
22 have these two up here, knowing that the first vessel is  
23 your primary issue because you actually have a CPA on it.  
24 You have two other people there with you tasking, you go

1 call the CO and you work on the report. By the time gets  
2 there could you have possibly had an answer for him?

3 [REDACTED]: Maybe.

4 MR. [REDACTED]: So.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: The more basic question is did you  
6 ever consider just calling the Captain and asking him to  
7 come to the pilot house to help you with the problem?

8 [REDACTED]: No sir.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And that's a question for the CO.  
10 Was he demanding of a contact report? Was it don't call me  
11 unless you have a contact report or was he more open to  
12 call me if you have anything?

13 [REDACTED]: Honestly, sir this is my, this is only  
14 my third or fourth time taking the deck with him as  
15 Captain.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Mm-hmm.

17 [REDACTED]: We were still trying to feel that out.  
18 Like I said, I was, I would've had to have called him  
19 anyway because he wanted to be notified if were more than  
20 1000 yards off track. And our projected plan was going to  
21 take us off that anyway.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: But the CO had been the XO for 18  
23 months right?

24 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.



1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And you had operated at sea with him  
2 as the XO?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And throughout the course of your tour  
5 right? So, how approachable was he as XO? Was he, was he  
6 an XO and then became a CO that was open to you know  
7 anybody calling him, making reports, asking for help or was  
8 he a stickler that left the impression that you know don't  
9 call me unless you've got all the answers and all your T's  
10 are crossed and I's dotted? Or was he there's a  
11 spectrum there right? There's the perfectionist that  
12 trains people to wait until they got 100% solution and then  
13 there's the you know revolving door guy or gal who's like  
14 just call me and we'll figure it out. So, you know where  
15 was, where was that CO on that spectrum? Based on your  
16 overall experience with him, both as your XO and now your  
17 new CO?

18 [REDACTED]: Uh, he preferred that you had a plan  
19 but it didn't have to be a complete plan.

20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

21 [REDACTED]: You just had to have an idea of what  
22 you're doing. Uh, he did say a couple of times that he  
23 only wanted the OOD to be the one that called him. He  
24 didn't want the JOOD or the Conn calling him, and so that's



1 why I waited. I got, I got (inaudible - 01:12:18) to do  
2 the problem.

3 MR. [REDACTED]: The JOOD is a qualified OOD?

4 [REDACTED]: Uh, not on this ship, no.

5 MR. [REDACTED]: Not on this ship, so she didn't  
6 re-qualify when she came on board?

7 [REDACTED]: No sir.

8 LCDR [REDACTED]: How much time before the collision  
9 took place did you become aware that collision was eminent?

10 [REDACTED]: Maybe a minute and a half, maybe two.

11 LCDR [REDACTED]: Was collision sounded?

12 [REDACTED]: No sir.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: [REDACTED]. Did you sound the  
14 collision alarm?

15 [REDACTED]: No sir.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: It's okay. Would you like a break?

17 [REDACTED]: No. I'm fine. I guess that I just  
18 got so wrapped up in trying to do anything that I had to  
19 like just drop the ball on everything else that I needed to  
20 do as an OOD.

21 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So let's talk about that. So do you  
22 think that was an individual failure on your part or do you  
23 think there are -- cause we're frankly also interested in  
24 human factors and environmental and cultural factors that  
25 may have set the conditions for you to get scope-locked.

1 So uh, was there anything else going on other than your  
2 performance which did not happen in a vacuum that you think  
3 contributed to what happened? Cause these guys jobs are to  
4 figure out and the help other ships not ever let it happen.

5 [REDACTED]: Like I said Boatswain Mate had to end  
6 up taking the Helm, so he wasn't over by the, by the IMC  
7 where he normally is. Uh, like I said the Conn was so new  
8 he didn't know what do to do at all. And, I, I, I don't  
9 know why the Helm didn't, didn't hear what I said or didn't  
10 understand what I said but like I just, I don't, I don't  
11 know.

12 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Did you have a lot of  
13 communication ahead of time of the number of newer  
14 personnel who would be on your watch?

15 [REDACTED]: I noticed it when I saw the watch  
16 boat, but I didn't talk to the SWO about it.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: When, when did you get awareness of  
18 the watch bill? When were you able to review it?

19 [REDACTED]: The, the night before.

20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So was it published the night  
21 before?

22 [REDACTED]: Uh, yes sir.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. I know that really isn't an  
24 issue, so. All right, but as far as your concern the

1 underway watch bill was approved and published the day  
2 before the underway?  
3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.  
4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.  
5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Did you have concerns?  
6 [REDACTED]: Yes.  
7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: What were they?  
8 [REDACTED]: Just that I had a brand-new Conn, new  
9 Helmsman, and not the strongest Surface. That was really  
10 the only concerns that I had.  
11 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you discuss that with anybody?  
12 [REDACTED]: Our TRAINO but not with, not with the  
13 SWO, no.  
14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Is your TRAINO your roommate?  
15 [REDACTED]: Just a friend.  
16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Who is your roommate?  
17 [REDACTED]: Uh, our ADPO.  
18 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.  
19 [REDACTED]: The other Ensign.  
20 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: All right. Is there uh, is there any  
21 particular reason you didn't voice your concerns? Again,  
22 this is about, this is about culture right? So, is there  
23 uh, can you put your finger uh on a reason or reasons why  
24 you for whatever reason you didn't voice your concerns  
25 about the, the experience and quality of your watch team?

1 [REDACTED]: We had a lot of new people, so that,  
2 that was actually, we didn't have much depth in the way of  
3 Senior Watch Standers. Like there was only you know five  
4 or six qualified OODs. Most of the other Ensigns had only  
5 been underway for, for that deployment, so maybe three  
6 months.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: That's because of the timing of the  
8 SRA and?

9 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

11 [REDACTED]: So either, either way I was going to  
12 get a relatively inexperienced Conn.

13 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: In the time leading up to the underway  
14 did the Captain or the HO or the Senior Watch Officer ever  
15 talk to the wardroom or the Qualified Bridge Watch Standers  
16 about the change over in personnel, the drop in experience  
17 and proficiency that would've resulted?

18 [REDACTED]: No sir.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: That it was a particular focus area of  
20 his or for you during the underway?

21 [REDACTED]: No sir.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 [REDACTED]: I mean they talked about general  
24 training and just trying to get people qualified, but.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you feel that there's a strong  
2 environment onboard the vessel to raise concerns?

3 [REDACTED]: I mean I, I, I've brought up stuff  
4 before so I-I don't think that they completely you know  
5 unwelcome it, but I mean some -- a lot of times nothing,  
6 nothing changes.

7 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Any examples?

8 [REDACTED]: Uh, not particularly no. Uh, most of  
9 the time that's just to do with the watch bill and a lot of  
10 the times the, the reason is we just, we don't have the  
11 people to do it otherwise. Uh, there was one time where  
12 they did change it, but like I-I had been, we'd just got  
13 done with a sub-prosecution where I was, I was ASW and I'd  
14 been awake for like two days and they tried to put me on  
15 the bridge, and I, I told them no like I wasn't going to  
16 stand it. And they did change it then, but I like we just,  
17 like I said we just didn't have the depth of OODs to have  
18 much flexibility.

19 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you feel if you had a concern  
20 you could bring up that issue to anybody on the ship  
21 whether it be CO, XO, Commanding Master Chief, there's no  
22 barriers?

23 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How does the Senior Watch Officer fit  
25 into all this? How responsive is he? It's a CSO, right?



1 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So how respondent? The job of the  
3 Senior Watch Officer is to not only build watch builds but  
4 also lead ordered training, be the advocate for the, within  
5 wardroom for uh watch standing qualifications, experience,  
6 and rotation and you know fair share bridge watch standing,  
7 etc., um taking watch bill inputs, allowing other senior  
8 leaders uh and the Chief (inaudible - 01:21:00) wardroom to  
9 review watch bills before they're published so that people  
10 get a chance to QA them. Is that, was all that happening?  
11 Cause, uh, the sense we've gotten over the course of the  
12 different interviews is that the watch bill process was a  
13 bit of a black box and it was between the uh, the Senior  
14 Watch Officer and the Commanding Officer and in a lot of  
15 cases watch bills were out late or incomplete. Uh, so  
16 that, that's the impression we've got. You know tell us  
17 whether that's right or wrong and then tell us what, what  
18 your perspective on that is.

19 [REDACTED]: Uh watch bills routinely come out the  
20 day before. I know that. Um, there's been a few times  
21 where people have shown up to an Nav Brief and found out  
22 that they were on the sea and anchor watch bill then. Uh,  
23 the only time people really have inputs is when the watch  
24 bill pertains to something that they're running. So, like  
25 I can, I write the 2-AS watch bill and can make inputs for

1 like who I want my OODs to be if we're doing something  
2 specific but for regular condition 3, uh, it's, especially  
3 for like the khaki side of the watch bill there, there's  
4 not much input on that.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Do you feel if you, if you were to go  
6 to the Senior Watch Officer and express concerns about  
7 watch bill assignment that your concerns would be taken  
8 seriously? Be acted on? At a minimum brief to the  
9 Commanding Officer for consideration or is there a firewall  
10 there?

11 [REDACTED]: I feel like he would listen, but I  
12 don't know what he would do with it beyond that. I don't,  
13 don't know if it would go anywhere beyond him.

14 LCDR [REDACTED]: In the cases where people would find  
15 out that they're on the sea and anchor watch bill the  
16 morning of, would you say that that's an individually  
17 problem or because you're saying that it's posted the day  
18 before? Um, would you say that's on the individuals or  
19 it's on the process and notifications?

20 [REDACTED]: I'd say it was on the notification. I  
21 mean it would be posted the day before, but we'd, we'd be  
22 underway, so there is no reason that people should be  
23 finding out the morning of.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Just one more tactical question for ya  
25 from me. So, was AIS, was it on?

1 [REDACTED]: Uh, yes.

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Were you receiving?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes. So, I like, if, if we undimmed  
4 it, it was giving us MMSIs, courses, and specs.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you know whether you were  
6 transmitting?

7 [REDACTED]: We weren't transmitting, no.

8 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: You were not? Do you know what the  
9 Captain's standing orders says about actively transmitting  
10 an AIS under what conditions uh you're allowed to do that?

11 [REDACTED]: We, we just typically don't transmit.  
12 I don't know what -- I don't think there's any specifically  
13 in the standing orders about it.

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So the CO and XO laid below  
15 after Boat Ops and then you started transit. Um, in your  
16 experience is it normal for the CO and XO to not be on the  
17 bridge during a fairly complex transit with a lot of  
18 contact management?

19 [REDACTED]: If it was anywhere outside of home  
20 port I would say they would be up there, but going in and  
21 out of Sagami Wan, no they're typically not up there.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Why do you think that is?

23 [REDACTED]: Familiarity with the area? I don't  
24 know.

25 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

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1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Um, I just had a quick question on  
2 something that came up a couple of times regarding the  
3 traffic separation schemes through here and you, you kind  
4 of pointed out that there is a separation scheme going  
5 through here correct?

6 [REDACTED]: Uh, not officially, no.

7 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Okay. There's a voluntary traffic  
8 separation scheme? Um, can you maybe mark out or point out  
9 where those would be?

10 [REDACTED]: I mean it, it's used, it's mostly  
11 through here and you just have inbound on one side,  
12 outbound on the other. But as to it's exactly location I  
13 don't.

14 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And what, what sort of training  
15 has been provided to you or the other OODs regarding its  
16 existence and where traffic is, where it's expected to be?

17 [REDACTED]: None. Just personal experience.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So you can see on, on the radar  
19 that there's a bunch of ships going this way and there's  
20 more ships coming this way and they sort themselves out?

21 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Have you had a lot of experience  
23 on that AIS laptop in the, in the CIC?



1 [REDACTED]: Uh, no, just um the training that I've  
2 been getting standing Surface UI. I've played around with  
3 it a couple of times but.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Have you heard or any issues with  
5 it, uh, I think somebody might've called it pop-up where  
6 maybe a contact just suddenly appears that you know hadn't  
7 been on there before?

8 [REDACTED]: Not that I know of.

9 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Have you, between the different  
10 radar systems have you had or heard or any issues or seen  
11 of any issues where maybe on the 67 there's one -- you're  
12 looking at one screen and then you can look at the next  
13 screen right next to it, same radar, maybe not getting the  
14 same picture?

15 [REDACTED]: Yes. That's happened before.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And would you say the same between  
17 the 73 and the 67 that communicating down do you see this  
18 and no we don't see it?

19 Do you think the CIC was seeing the same contacts you  
20 were?

21 [REDACTED]: I, I don't know.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: And again the contacts between  
23 them was primarily for course changes. They never called  
24 up and said we see something, do you see it?

25 [REDACTED]: No sir.



1 MR. [REDACTED]: You said earlier that you didn't  
2 hear any sound signals, lights, or bridge-to-bridge contact  
3 with the Crystal?

4 [REDACTED]: Correct.

5 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay. So, when you got the 1500-  
6 yard CPA did you attempt to you know hail them on the  
7 bridge, uh sound signal, or you know flashing light back to  
8 the Crystal?

9 [REDACTED]: No sir. I didn't think it was  
10 necessary; 1500-yard CPA is pretty standard for this area.

11 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Um, for these four vessels when  
12 you passed by them and they were aft of you, do you recall,  
13 did your aft lookout make any contact and say we've got  
14 these vessels off here to the side?

15 [REDACTED]: No sir.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Would they normally do that or it  
17 --

18 [REDACTED]: We usually get reports from them, yes,  
19 but they were -- I think they were in the process of  
20 turning over.

21 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: At 1:05, 1:10?

22 [REDACTED]: Yes sir. They rotate pretty  
23 regularly.

24 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Are you talking about the, the vessels  
25 you had previously overtaken?

1 [REDACTED]: Uh, I think they're talking about the  
2 ones that crossed our bough.

3 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Right. So, so those four passed  
4 by you. They're now aft of you. When, when you got far  
5 enough away as Aft Lookout they should've said I see four  
6 vessels on my aft?

7 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

8 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: But you, you don't recall that?

9 [REDACTED]: No sir.

10 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Is it possible and this is just  
11 speculation here -- that any other vessels you know you're  
12 watching these four here, you're watching those two there,  
13 you've got two more up top and a whole bunch off to your  
14 portside. Do you think with how busy you were and your  
15 JOOD and your Conn that any other vessels could've slipped  
16 in?

17 [REDACTED]: It's possible.

18 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Was that something crossing your  
19 mind? Am I getting all these?

20 [REDACTED]: That's why I kept having the Conn do  
21 NVG sweeps because pop-up fishing contacts are pretty  
22 common, especially as we were going through here because  
23 typically around islands and around the peninsula you get a  
24 lot of fishing contacts and we could see some lights over  
25 the horizon that hadn't come over yet.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Do you think you had all the tools  
2 you needed to stand your watch?

3 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Are there any tools you wish you'd  
5 had? Any abilities.

6 [REDACTED]: I think the 73 being upgraded would've  
7 been nice, but other than that, no.

8 MR. [REDACTED]: So, prior to the four vessels and  
9 say prior to your overtaking situation here did you have  
10 any other close calls with a vessel got within one  
11 nautical mile, 2 nautical miles with any other vessels?

12 [REDACTED]: No, the only vessels that came within  
13 the 6,000-yard reporting criteria were those four.  
14 Everything else was uh, uh, I was able to stay within the  
15 1,000-yard track and stay -- and keep outside of 6,000  
16 yards.

17 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay, so it sounds like, based on what  
18 you just said it sounds like you were using that plus or  
19 minus 1000-yard cross track that the Captain had given you  
20 in the standing orders as maneuver space to maneuver  
21 independently to manage CPAs?

22 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And you were doing that without the  
24 knowledge of the Commanding Officer or, or was than an  
25 explicit authorization?

1 [REDACTED]: He only said stay within 1,000 yards  
2 of track.

3 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And you, you interpreted that to mean  
4 you were free to maneuver within, as long as you were plus  
5 or minus 1,000 yards of PIM?

6 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: To manage CPAs?

8 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Based on the captain's standing  
10 orders is that, was that, is that something that would  
11 normally be allowed?

12 [REDACTED]: There, there is nothing that said it  
13 wasn't, and he's typically pretty like lenient with -- as  
14 long as you stay within constraints you can do whatever.

15 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So how many uh -- let's, let's  
16 assume that you did not have the 1,000-yard cross-track uh  
17 latitude and that you were required to maintain PIM track.  
18 How many times do you think you would've had to call the  
19 Captain for a CPA report that night if you didn't have that  
20 latitude.

21 [REDACTED]: At least five.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 [REDACTED]: Um, right around where we ended up  
24 finishing boat ops, uh I ended up having to come pretty far  
25 off track just to avoid traffic. He was still up there at

1 the time, so I just told him. Uh, but we ended up getting  
2 4, 4 or 5 miles off of track just to avoid traffic and then  
3 I came back, and we were able to stay within 1,000 yards  
4 the rest of the night.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So is it fair to say that, that  
6 latitude that you were afforded was an implicit  
7 understanding or an explicit understanding between you as  
8 the OOD and the Commanding Officer.

9 [REDACTED]: I thought it was implicit.

10 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

11 MR. [REDACTED]: Were you onboard on the inbound  
12 track in the Sasebo for the change of command?

13 [REDACTED]: Yes, I was the OOD.

14 MR. [REDACTED]: You were the OOD? Uh, were you  
15 aware of a close call then where the CO had to step in? I  
16 think a fishing vessel got too close.

17 [REDACTED]: We had -- there was a fishing vessel  
18 in the middle of the cut into the entrance, but it was  
19 anchored, and I talked to the captain about it and he said  
20 it's anchored, we're -- the pilot already is moving us away  
21 from it. I think we passed it at like 200 yards.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So this would've been the before.  
23 Sometime during the evening watch the ship had to back down  
24 full to avoid a collision.



1 [REDACTED]: Oh that. No, I was not on watch for  
2 that. I was aware of it, but I was not on watch for that.  
3 I thought you were talking about like the actual sea and  
4 anchor.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: When were made aware of that near  
6 miss?

7 [REDACTED]: It was after we had pulled into  
8 Sasebo.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Does Fitz have a habit of uh  
10 debriefing close calls like that as a matter of, of uh, uh  
11 a training, training process? Say, hey, hey we had a close  
12 one last night, let's all get together and talk about it.

13 [REDACTED]: We talked about it unofficially  
14 amongst ourselves but we didn't have an official wardroom  
15 training, no.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

17 LCDR [REDACTED]: Do you recall who the OOD was when  
18 that occurred?

19 [REDACTED]: Uh, I think it was DCA, Uh Lieutenant  
20 [REDACTED] [phonetic].

21 MR. [REDACTED]: Was there any negative impact to  
22 um DCA because of the uh close call? I mean, chewing out,  
23 anything?

24 [REDACTED]: Not publicly, no.

1 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: At, at what range to land uh do  
2 you need to contact the CO?

3 [REDACTED]: Uh, 6 nautical miles.

4 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Was that one of your concerns?

5 [REDACTED]: Uh, not concerned about calling him,  
6 just concerned about getting close to land in general.

7 MR. [REDACTED]: Talk to me about your Rules of  
8 the Road training.

9 [REDACTED]: Uh, we try to hold a Rules of the Road  
10 test every other week. Uh, and they were pretty good about  
11 actually making it happen. Uh, Nav would hold extra  
12 training with all the OODs and the CICWOs uh where we would  
13 go over like flash cards and just basically talk over, over  
14 scenarios and stuff.

15 MR. [REDACTED]: All right.

16 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay I just got a few more questions  
17 for ya. So how is your professional relationship with the  
18 Senior Watch Officer?

19 [REDACTED]: I don't deal with him that much to be  
20 honest. Um, my main interaction with him is watch bills  
21 for 2-AS but between you know my responsibilities as ASW  
22 and his as CSO, we don't interact too terribly much.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. How's your professional  
24 relationship with the XO?

1 [REDACTED]: Uh, it's fine. I've gone and talked  
2 to him a couple of times about professional things but  
3 again unless it's you know specifically for ASW things we  
4 don't have much, much interaction either.

5 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: And how is your professional  
6 relationship with the CO who had been your XO for I don't  
7 know a year roughly, plus or minus and now he's the CO.  
8 How's your professional relationship with the Captain?

9 [REDACTED]: It's fine. You know, I felt, I felt I  
10 could go and talk to him if I needed to, about, about  
11 things. Like, he never gave me the impression that I  
12 couldn't come and talk to him. Um, I never had a problem  
13 with reporting like either Bridge stuff or ASW

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: How about Nav?

15 [REDACTED]: Uh, Nav and I are pretty close. We  
16 worked together a lot for, for PMI reasons. Like I worked  
17 together with him on the track a lot. Uh, and we, we've  
18 never had any problems.

19 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. So we've been talking about an  
20 hour and 15 minute about this, this event and your  
21 involvement in it and your impressions and your feedback.  
22 So, let's tie it all together here at the end. So, when I  
23 ask you from your perspective as the Officer of the Deck  
24 how did Fitz and motor vessel Crystal come to occupy the  
25 same body of water? How did it happen?

1 [REDACTED]: Everyone was just so tired because  
2 we'd been underway for a long time and it was a long day,  
3 like most of us had been up for over 20 hours at that point  
4 and there was a lot going on, and we had a pretty -- other  
5 than me and the JOOD and our Boatswain Mate and I think our  
6 QM, our QM1 was our QMOW but like all of our, our Helms and  
7 our Lookouts and our Conn was pretty junior and, and we, we  
8 just lost. I don't know if we just lost SA or what, but  
9 like I thought we were doing a pretty good job of balancing  
10 visuals and radar and I guess we just got distracted by  
11 something whether it be another vessel or something the  
12 Helm was doing.

13 I know I lot site of the Crystal after radar said it  
14 was good. Like, I personally stopped looking at it, like  
15 I'd glance over at it occasionally but I was more concerned  
16 about the vessel behind them. And, I just, I didn't notice  
17 that they weren't doing what we were doing -- what we  
18 thought they were until it was too late.

19 MR. [REDACTED]: So, during this whole thing what  
20 exactly was Helm doing?

21 [REDACTED]: Uh, so for the most part they were  
22 receiving training. Uh, because I think they were still  
23 UI. Like, I said up until this point they didn't have any  
24 trouble with you know repeat backs or understand what we  
25 were saying, so I didn't feel the need to stop the



1 training. Uh, I don't know if she just got flustered or if  
2 she didn't hear me because I think by that point uh people  
3 were starting to shout. But, for the rest of the watch she  
4 was doing fine.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: One question. Again, since you  
6 said you, you checked on radar, you got the CPA and moved  
7 on. What, in your experience on watch, is the  
8 recalculations for CPA? Is it a one and done or every five  
9 minutes you check again? How, how's CPA tracked and  
10 calculated?

11 [REDACTED]: Uh, I usually look at it every, every  
12 few minutes but like I said I, I took down that information  
13 and brought up the ship behind them so it was probably  
14 closer to five minutes before I would've checked again.  
15 But, by that point they were, they were already in our  
16 clutter and we weren't getting stable updates anymore.

17 MR. [REDACTED]: We're probably about into 26  
18 interviews right now. And, we're getting a picture of  
19 what's going on, on Fitz. My following question is you  
20 said you and the XO have a decent relationship, you and the  
21 CSO had a decent relationship, you felt could go and talk  
22 to the CO. Um, folks were saying that you wouldn't eating  
23 in the wardroom anymore. What was going on there?

24 [REDACTED]: I-I didn't really get along with the  
25 other JO's.



1 MR. [REDACTED]: Anyone in particular?

2 [REDACTED]: No.

3 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So, I'll ask, I'm the Navy guy in the  
4 room. What's that about?

5 [REDACTED]: I guess that I was a prior amphib guy,  
6 just differences in culture, like maybe DD -- I-I don't  
7 know if I was just having trouble adapting to the way DDG  
8 wardrooms work but I, I'm used to on Ashland it was the  
9 type of wardroom where you could sit there and scream at  
10 each other for hours and it was just to get stuff done.  
11 Like we really didn't care. It wasn't personal. We'd  
12 scream at each other for hours and then we'd go out and  
13 drink afterwards -- like it was, it was a very close  
14 wardroom. We cared more about getting stuff done. So when  
15 I brought that here like, you know they, they just kept  
16 telling me I was too aggressive uh that I needed to I guess  
17 tone myself down and then like I just got tired of the  
18 passive aggressiveness of everyone else, so I just, I cut  
19 myself out of it so that I could you know be not quite as  
20 angry in front of like my guys. I didn't want to bring my  
21 wardroom drama down to the deck mates.

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: So who's the they in the wardroom and  
23 who, who uh you know how far done or far up the food chain  
24 was this perceived pressure coming from?

1 [REDACTED]: It was mostly interactions from with  
2 the JO's that the department heads decided to get involved  
3 in. It was me trying to get stuff done on my end and  
4 feeling like I wasn't getting support from my other, other  
5 you knew fellow licensed and, and junior grades. And then  
6 the interaction made it up to the department head and they  
7 would come back and tell me that I needed to back off.

8 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Did you ever uh, did you ever get any,  
9 any interest in this from the CO or the XO pulling you in  
10 and asking you what was going on? Do you think they were  
11 aware of it? Okay.

12 MR. [REDACTED]: I'm sorry. I looked down. Was  
13 that a yes?

14 [REDACTED]: No.

15 MR. [REDACTED]: No.

16 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Did the chiefs get involved?

17 [REDACTED]: A couple of times, but it was more  
18 they -- it was more them just trying to you know mentor.  
19 It wasn't them getting involved to tell me to stop. It was  
20 just hey you might want to think about going about it this  
21 way, like this isn't an amphib you gotta, you gotta change  
22 your tactics.

23 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Was the Senior Watch Officer aware of  
24 this?

25 [REDACTED]: Uh, I don't know.

1 MR. [REDACTED]: So, of these passive-aggressive  
2 JO's. Was any of those on your watch the night of this  
3 incident?

4 [REDACTED]: No.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Were any of them in Combat?

6 [REDACTED]: No.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Last question, we ask this  
8 question of everybody. Um, so uh, you and your shipmates  
9 went through a hell of an ordeal. You had a front-row seat  
10 to it as we've just been talking about it for a while and  
11 I'm sure in the aftermath of saving the ship, the damage  
12 control response, and uh bringing Fitz back in the port,  
13 the loss of 7 ship mates, some injured, um that you  
14 personally witnessed or heard about individual acts of  
15 heroism, individual acts of bravery, actions above and  
16 beyond the call. Um, and we'd like to know if there's any  
17 names you know on the tip of your tongue that you think are  
18 deserving of special mention or recognition sometime down  
19 in the future? Who might those folks be?

20 [REDACTED]: Senior [REDACTED] and FCC [REDACTED]. They  
21 saved a lot of people. They saved four of my guys  
22 specifically. I had four guys trapped in Sonar Control,  
23 and they went and got them out. STG1 [REDACTED] is the one  
24 who decided to close the hatch.

25 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: What's the last name again?

1 [REDACTED]: [REDACTED].

2 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: This was the --

3 [REDACTED]: The hatch of berthing 2.

4 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: I guess it would be the passing  
5 scuttle on the port side through the vertical hatch, going  
6 into the berthing department?

7 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

8 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

9 [REDACTED]: DCC [REDACTED]. Those are the only ones I  
10 can, I can think of off the top of my head.

11 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay.

12 [REDACTED]: I was, I was on the bridge for until  
13 the tugs came, so I, I don't know what everyone else did.

14 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: Okay. Thank you.

15 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So we certainly appreciate the  
16 information and time you've given us here today. Uh, we  
17 went to open the floor to see if there's any questions you  
18 may have for us or if there's anything that's on your mind  
19 that didn't come up through our questions that you want to  
20 ensure that we're aware of.

21 [REDACTED]: No.

22 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: So, if you do come up with any  
23 additional questions or thoughts please feel free to reach  
24 out to us. We'd be glad to have that information and  
25 likewise as the investigation is ongoing, uh we ask that

1 you not discuss this interview with other personnel just to  
2 ensure that uh the information stays separate from, from  
3 other personnel.

4 [REDACTED]: Yes sir.

5 LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]: Thank you so much for your time  
6 today.

7 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]: I'll walk ya out.

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