

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ANCHOR DRAGGING PORT OF *
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA *
ON JANUARY 25, 2021 *
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Transcript of the U.S. Coast Guard Recording of the
Interview of: SERGIY CHERNIKOV, Chief Mate, *Beijing*
For the Coast Guard Marine Casualty Investigation

Onboard *Beijing*, Outer Anchorages

Thursday,
November 18, 2021

APPEARANCES:

██████████, Investigator
Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach

CDR ██████████, Attorney
Coast Guard District 11

GLEN PIPER, Attorney
Peacock Piper Tong & Voss

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:17 a.m. PST)

1
2
3 MR. [REDACTED]: This is [REDACTED], Coast Guard, sector Los
4 Angeles/Long Beach, aboard the motor vessel *Beijing* at the Outer
5 Anchorage, sector Los Angeles/Long Beach, and we're with the Chief
6 Mate of the motor vessel *Beijing* and along with two other
7 individuals.

8 CDR [REDACTED]: Commander [REDACTED], US Coast Guard.

9 MR. PIPER: Glen Piper, Peacock Piper Tong & Voss.

10 MR. [REDACTED]: And today is Thursday, November 18th and the
11 time is 11:17.

INTERVIEW OF SERGIY CHERNIKOV

12
13 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

14 Q. So good morning, Chief.

15 A. Good morning, sir.

16 Q. Could you please state your name?

17 A. Yeah. My name is Chernikov, Sergiy, and I'm here as chief
18 officer.

19 Q. Okay. You're chief officer of the motor vessel *Beijing*?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And how long have you been chief officer?

22 A. Already 26, 27 years.

23 Q. All on the *Beijing* or --

24 A. No, no. Only *Beijing* just I was -- I joined the vessel in
25 September and here already nearly two months.

1 Q. Okay. So that was -- was that your first time on *Beijing*?

2 A. No, no. It was the second time.

3 Q. Okay. When was the last time?

4 A. The last time was here, *Beijing* -- I join *Beijing* 28th of
5 January.

6 Q. Can you say that one more time?

7 A. 28th of January. 2021. Just after --

8 Q. The incident?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Yeah. Okay, and what are your responsibilities as chief
11 mate?

12 A. So my responsibility just is maintenance of the deck
13 equipment. So just I have special with safety officer duties. I
14 have security officer duties and of course I have watch keeping on
15 the bridge duties.

16 Q. Okay, and so is part of the watch keeping the anchor watch?

17 A. Yes, sir, that's correct. The anchor watch is part of the
18 officer on watch duties.

19 Q. And how do you manage that?

20 A. Manage just once the vessel at anchor so I am frequently
21 checking position and in case just -- anyway. So every times, I'm
22 checking position and the one AB all times on the deck and
23 frequently every half an hour -- every hour, on my request, he
24 check the how is the lead in the chain and check how much shackles
25 in the water and he report to the bridge.

1 Q. Okay. So when you reported aboard on the 28th of January --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- you came aboard?

4 A. Yeah. I came on the board on 28th of January.

5 Q. And '21 -- 19 -- 2021?

6 A. 2021. With begin of this year.

7 Q. Yeah, and did you have a change out?

8 A. Yes. I have just verbally I was informed but so the vessel
9 just has problem with one windlass motor and one windlass motor
10 was out of order. So I was informed verbally.

11 Q. Yeah. How many windlass motors are there?

12 A. We have two windlass motor and the one was out of order,
13 which located on starboard side.

14 Q. Starboard side and windlass?

15 A. Yes.

16 CDR [REDACTED]: And when you say it was -- what was the nature
17 of the disrepair? Was it just not working at all?

18 MR. CHERNIKOV: Just I was informed what is out of order only
19 verbally.

20 CDR [REDACTED]: Out of order. Okay.

21 MR. CHERNIKOV: Yes.

22 CDR [REDACTED]: Thank you, sir.

23 MR. CHERNIKOV: And just what is just we swapped with motor
24 from port to starboard side, and starboard side is out of order.

25 CDR [REDACTED]: Got it.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

2 Q. So was it eventually repaired?

3 A. No. For worse time it was no repair.

4 Q. So it's still out of order?

5 A. No. It just -- can you repeat your question again?

6 Q. When was the starboard windlass repaired?

7 A. Yes. The starboard windlass was repaired when the vessel
8 arrive here in April.

9 Q. April of '21?

10 A. Yes, '21. April, before 8 April because go to Oakland.

11 Q. Is that something that you have to report to the
12 classification citing?

13 A. I don't have any information about this.

14 Q. Yeah. Okay. So when you came aboard on the 28th, you
15 relieved the other chief mate?

16 A. Yes. That's correct. I relieve this day one day together on
17 20 -- on 29 because January I took over for the chief mate
18 duties -- for motor vessel *Beijing*.

19 Q. And so did he recall the incident about the anchor dragging?

20 A. Just we spoke verbally but it's not mention in handover
21 report.

22 Q. Nothing in the reports?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. So what was mentioned verbally?

25 A. Verbally what this vessel start dragging and we have to

1 replace motor because just it was out of order and way keep the
2 vessel position use an engine and bow thruster and finally we did
3 was replacement.

4 Q. And did he say when that happened?

5 A. No. It was not mentioned. Just before I joined the vessel.
6 So I did not know exactly the date --

7 Q. And he did --

8 A. -- when this happened?

9 Q. He didn't tell you?

10 A. No. He did not tell me. What is exactly date I don't know
11 because I joined the vessel 28.

12 Q. Did you have any problems with the port windlass?

13 A. Can you repeat question?

14 Q. Did you have any problems with the port windlass? The only
15 one --

16 A. Port windlass for when I already was on vessel it was not any
17 problem. It was the port windlass on the 28th. Port windlass was
18 no problem.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. But starboard side windlass was motor was out of order.

21 BY CDR [REDACTED]:

22 Q. And do you know when the previous chief mate learned about
23 the starboard windlass becoming out of order? Do you know when
24 that --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- was, when it became --

2 A. I don't --

3 Q. -- out of order?

4 A. I don't have information about -- when -- starboard side
5 tanker (ph.), uh, anchor windlass motor come out of order.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I don't have information.

8 Q. Okay.

9 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

10 Q. So would that be something that should be put in PMS?

11 A. Yes. In PMS just we have with regular maintenance of the
12 deck equipment. So we have electronical version and PMS just what
13 job you have to do, so it separated by each department and what
14 job is belong to me. So I doing with job. With some job about
15 windlass anchor -- anchor windlass brake line and adjustments and
16 so forth. We (indiscernible).

17 Q. Is that in PMS?

18 A. Yes, sir. This job is in PMS.

19 Q. All right.

20 A. So we have a monthly job. We have a quarterly job. We have
21 a half year and we have annual year. So all of this job is
22 included in the PMS planned maintenance system what we have on the
23 vessel.

24 Q. Do you -- did you put it in the PMS or was it --

25 A. No. So with all jobs came from the office because our PMS

1 system is synchronized with the shore server and told with the job
2 coming from the shore side. So I did not -- we did not put any
3 job by ourself. By myself, I did not put any job.

4 Q. Did you also have a survey when you were onboard?

5 A. What kind of survey?

6 Q. Class survey?

7 A. No. In that time it was no class survey.

8 Q. Okay. So he must've -- there was a class survey apparently,
9 28 January. No?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Do you recall that?

12 A. 28 of January, so --

13 Q. Of course I may have -- that may be the *Danit*. If you don't
14 know --

15 A. So in what time? I -- don't have information about this --
16 survey --

17 Q. Okay. Okay.

18 A. -- class survey.

19 Q. All right. I may be mistaken. So did you have any problems
20 with anchoring on the 29th while you were here?

21 A. 29th?

22 Q. 29 January?

23 A. January --

24 Q. Any issues with the anchor?

25 A. No. With the anchors there was no any issues. No issues

1 with the anchor chain. So only is a problem with motor.

2 Q. Motor. Yeah, and that got fixed in April. Have you had an
3 anchor dragging issue your -- on your -- onboard? Have you had an
4 anchor dragging?

5 A. Now? No.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. So during my time here, I did not have issue with anchor
8 dragging. So for the time being on board.

9 Q. Yeah. So do you recall what the prior chief mate said about
10 the anchor dragging? What did he talk to you about, because the
11 windlass was no longer working?

12 A. For he did not tell me about this what is dragging anchor, so
13 I don't have information about this.

14 Q. Okay. Now in order for the anchor dragging to start, is
15 there a warning?

16 A. Yes, sir. We have on the ECDIS once we drop the anchor, we
17 have anchor alarm, which just set by officer on the watch and
18 depends how many shackles in the water plus length of the ship.
19 So normally when we drop anchor, so all times anchor watch is
20 activated.

21 So we have one shackle and is the vessel start dragging,
22 ECDIS will alert once the vessel already outside of the safety,
23 safety line.

24 Q. And does that alert get recorded?

25 A. Normally, yes, because all alerts come into electronical

1 logbook.

2 Q. And where would we find that alarm recording?

3 A. Was on ECDIS because on ECDIS you can find with all alarms
4 which are coming --

5 Q. Is it --

6 A. -- so recorded in the electronic logbook.

7 Q. So the alarm from January will be on the ECDIS now?

8 A. From January I'm not sure because what I know so with the
9 maximum wake up life is only three months what I see from my
10 experience with just from the factory.

11 Q. Does ECDIS have printouts, paper?

12 A. I don't know. No, no printout paper. Only report in
13 electronic logbook.

14 Q. Electronic logbook? Yeah.

15 BY CDR [REDACTED]:

16 Q. Since we're talking about kind of alarms, could you speak a
17 little bit more on the parameters of the alarms that are set?
18 Like, how do you determine the swing shackle and how those
19 parameters are set? Are those done by the master? Are those done
20 by the -- by you as a chief mate?

21 A. Normally with just by master order. So how much --
22 (indiscernible) circle has to be established by master order.

23 Q. Okay. So, for example, you guys obviously came into anchor
24 yesterday. So the master provided what the parameters for the
25 swing circle for your current anchorage location?

1 A. With circle, all times we have on ECDIS and nobody change the
2 safety readings. So they did not change safety readings.

3 Q. Okay. What is -- I guess what are the settings that are
4 currently in? What -- how does the ECDIS determine how big the
5 swing circle should be --

6 A. With --

7 Q. -- what problem with the line parameters are?

8 A. -- the circle is anchor (indiscernible), just normally we
9 have count how many shackles in the water -- plus the ship length.

10 Q. So kind of a formula you use?

11 A. Yes. So normally, for example, if every -- one shackle is
12 length 27.5 meters and depends how many shackles and plus the
13 ship's length. So we estimate with safety limit for the -- so --

14 Q. Okay. So once you determine how many shackles are in the
15 water, someone goes into ECDIS and kind of --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- puts those numbers in and then ECDIS --

18 A. Yeah. Just --

19 Q. -- creates the circle?

20 A. -- when we drop anchor so just you put position and after
21 with you adjust with the circle for safety limit.

22 Q. Okay, and if an alarm goes off, what happens? What is the
23 procedures in the event that ECDIS is operating and there -- and
24 an alarm goes off during someone's watch, a duty officer's watch?

25 What are the procedures that they follow?

- 1 A. In case of the dragging?
- 2 Q. If they get an alarm, yeah.
- 3 A. Gale -- so procedure for dragging of the anchor, so -- first
4 immediately inform the captain. So next inform the engine. So
5 calls the anchor party standby forward so in case we also have
6 cargo operations -- stop any cargo operation, inform it, yes. So
7 with procedure is mention is Vessel Management System --
8 -- which we have with on the board. But number one is call the
9 master.
- 10 Q. Sure. Okay, and as chief engineer -- or chief mate, which
11 watch do you typically stand on the bridge?
- 12 A. Normally 4:00 to 8:00 and what came 1600 until 20. 4:00 to
13 8:00, morning time, and afternoon is 1600 start and 2000. So 8
14 hours on the bridge --
- 15 Q. And during anchor watch or anchor -- while at anchor, do you
16 stay the same hours or different hours?
- 17 A. No. In case of emergencies, I have to make immediately with
18 any actions -- actions and --
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. -- (indiscernible) actions.
- 21 Q. So while at anchor, you still stand the 4:00 to 8:00 watch or
22 a different time slot?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. While the vessel at anchor, so I am the same watch, 4:00 to

1 8:00 --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- and 16 to 20.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 A. So it's no difference between the anchor watch or
6 navigational watch.

7 Q. Okay, and in the event of heavy weather, are there any
8 additional -- does your vessel safety system discuss any
9 additional precautions that are taken like --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- the a wind storm?

12 A. In case of heavy weather, so the main engine has to be
13 standby for immediately use in case anchor start dragging.

14 Q. Do you know what your -- the guidance provides? Do you know
15 how much the gust of winds has to be or the sea state? Like, how
16 do you determine what heavy weather is? I can ask it differently
17 if it's --

18 A. With -- understood. With maximum force for to estimate.
19 Maximum wind force to estimate bad weather or what.

20 Q. Yeah. So, like, when -- what would you consider, the master
21 consider, in terms of guidance on what heavy weather is? Is it
22 a --

23 A. So normally from experience, it's between six and seven
24 Beaufort for heavy weather.

25 Q. Okay, and have you -- you anchored -- this obviously isn't

1 your first time anchoring in the Los Angeles --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- Long Beach area, correct?

4 A. No. All times just not the first time.

5 Q. Okay. Any of those previous times that you have anchored in
6 this area, have you experienced a heavy weather event? Have you
7 -- has the Coast Guard notified you or VTS or someone notified you
8 of --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- heavy weather?

11 A. It was maybe in the April, we stay here at the anchor and
12 during the bad weather, VTS San Pedro (indiscernible), she call
13 every vessel and just to confirm that the second anchor is ready
14 to lets go and they mention standby. That was instructions from
15 for (indiscernible) and in what times the vessel was at anchor.

16 So the second anchor was ready to lets go and the engine was
17 standby all times.

18 Q. Okay. So it sounds like you had fixed port windlass at that
19 point or your starboard windlass by the time of that heavy weather
20 event --

21 A. Uh --

22 Q. -- on board?

23 A. In that time it was no motor, still was under repairing but
24 we can drop in emergency case. We can drop anchor.

25 Q. Understand.

- 1 A. Because just only gravity.
- 2 Q. Sure.
- 3 A. Open the brakes and (indiscernible) go by gravity. In case
4 if necessary to let's go second anchor for --
- 5 Q. Sure.
- 6 A. -- emergency.
- 7 CDR [REDACTED]: Did you have any more questions, [REDACTED]?
- 8 MR. [REDACTED]: Yes.
- 9 BY MR. [REDACTED]:
- 10 Q. Chief, can you go back to the 28th of January --
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. -- when you came onboard, and the master was on board?
- 13 A. Yes. That's correct. The master was on board.
- 14 Q. And so did you discuss the matter with him of what happened?
15 What --
- 16 A. I did not discuss with him because I did not discuss this
17 matter with him because he already inform all just concerning
18 parties what has happened.
- 19 Q. What? He had already informed who about --
- 20 A. No. He did not -- just you're asking about did we discuss
21 with captain. So I did not discuss with captain with the matter.
- 22 Q. You don't discussed the --
- 23 A. Yeah. What --
- 24 Q. -- anchor dragging?
- 25 A. -- anchor dragging, yes.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I did not discuss anchor dragging. But I discuss with the
3 captain to just the one mooring winch was out of order because
4 windlass has combined (ph.) motor for anchor windlass and for
5 mooring reach.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. So in this case, you due to starboard side motor was out of
8 order. We discuss with no possible to use one winch, mooring
9 winch.

10 Q. He knew that, right, because he --

11 A. Yes. He knows --

12 Q. -- was --

13 A. -- about this.

14 Q. Yeah. So you didn't discuss why that happened?

15 A. No. We did not discuss with --

16 Q. Okay. So at that time, the second mate that was on board?

17 A. Yes. You are right. The second mate was on the board in
18 that time.

19 Q. This the second mate then?

20 A. Yes, second mate.

21 Q. Have you served with the second mate before January? Do you
22 know him from before January?

23 A. No. Before January, I did not know him. Just I met him in
24 the January --

25 Q. Yeah.

- 1 A. -- and now already the second time.
- 2 Q. And how about the master, did you know the master before
3 January?
- 4 A. Master I did not know before January. It was first time with
5 him.
- 6 Q. First time with him. Okay. So how about the -- again, the
7 anchor dragging with the second mate. Did you discuss the anchor
8 dragging with the second mate?
- 9 A. No. I did not discuss with second mate.
- 10 Q. So in January, when you came on board, were you aware of the
11 pipeline --
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. -- next to the anchorage? Did -- any discussion about that?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Be careful that --
- 16 A. I --
- 17 Q. Yeah.
- 18 A. I don't have any information about this because I joined the
19 vessel when this happened and --
- 20 Q. Right. No, not -- I mean just the location --
- 21 A. Yes. No.
- 22 Q. -- the location of the pipeline?
- 23 A. I don't have information about this. I don't have any
24 discussion about with --
- 25 Q. Yeah. But I want to make -- because when you anchor, you

1 want to be aware of what's around you, right?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So if there's a pipeline --

4 A. But --

5 Q. -- nearby, you want to make sure you know?

6 A. Yeah. But in generally I was not here when this happened.

7 Q. No. I understand.

8 A. Yeah. Yeah.

9 Q. But did you become aware of the pipeline next to you when you
10 took over as chief mate? Right? Because you have to be careful
11 of that pipeline, right?

12 A. Yes. Pipeline but the vessel was alongside. Why I have to
13 ask about the pipeline? So I did not ask and I did not have any
14 idea about this.

15 Q. Were you aware of the pipeline at that time? Do you recall
16 you being aware of the pipeline?

17 A. Sorry. Can you repeat your question? It's not clear for me.

18 Q. As chief mate --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- at anchor in LA on the 28th of -- 29th of January --

21 A. No. I was not the anchor on 28th. I was not on the anchor
22 on 28th and I don't have information about the pipe.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I just it's vessel was alongside on 27 and I joined the
25 vessel once the vessel already came alongside.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. And then what time. It was not at anchor.

3 Q. It was not what?

4 MR. PIPER: Not at anchor.

5 MR. [REDACTED]: Not at -- oh.

6 MR. CHERNIKOV: It was not --

7 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay.

8 MR. CHERNIKOV: -- at anchor.

9 MR. PIPER: Correct.

10 MR. [REDACTED]: Oh, the vessel was not anchor?

11 MR. PIPER: Yeah. It was at the berth.

12 MR. [REDACTED]: I get it. Okay.

13 CDR [REDACTED]: Thank you for that clarification.

14 MR. [REDACTED]: Yeah. Thank you.

15 MR. PIPER: And you said they were alongside on the 27th --

16 MR. CHERNIKOV: Yes, sir.

17 MR. PIPER: -- when you first arrived.

18 MR. CHERNIKOV: Yeah. 27 and just arrive on 28th.

19 MR. [REDACTED]: Okay.

20 CDR [REDACTED]: Gotcha.

21 MR. CHERNIKOV: So just to hand over the from previous

22 shipmate.

23 CDR [REDACTED]: Was the 27th the day that the vessel initially

24 came alongside or were they alongside days prior?

25 MR. CHERNIKOV: She just arrive in time.

1 CDR [REDACTED]: Okay.

2 MR. CHERNIKOV: And --

3 CDR [REDACTED]: So maybe --

4 MR. CHERNIKOV: -- I join the vessel on 28th because just one
5 day I stay in the hotel and wait for the --

6 MR. [REDACTED]: I see.

7 MR. CHERNIKOV: -- CBP clearance.

8 CDR [REDACTED]: Thank you for that.

9 MR. [REDACTED]: Is there anything else that you can help --

10 MR. CHERNIKOV: No.

11 MR. [REDACTED]: -- figure out what happened with --

12 MR. CHERNIKOV: What I know is all I possibly --

13 MR. [REDACTED]: Yeah.

14 MR. CHERNIKOV: So all questions what you ask me just --

15 MR. [REDACTED]: Yeah.

16 MR. CHERNIKOV: -- I give answer.

17 BY CDR [REDACTED]:

18 Q. I just wanted to clarify. We talked a little bit about the
19 PMS system --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- and as chief mate, you mentioned some of your
22 responsibilities as you're kind of in charge of the deck and
23 machinery equipment, correct?

24 A. Yes, you're right.

25 Q. So in this particular instance when the starboard windlass

1 was out of order, did you or your -- the prior chief mate call?
2 It sounds like you called shore side and they put it in PMS that
3 it needed to be repaired and came up with a plan? Is that --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- kind of how that worked or --

6 A. Because I don't have information about this.

7 Q. Okay. You just -- you're just clear that you didn't
8 necessarily put it in the system?

9 A. Yeah. I did not put --

10 Q. Got it.

11 A. -- in the system and I don't have information about this.

12 Q. Okay, and just to reaffirm, you don't --

13 A. Because I am dealing with -- let's say with the line brake
14 but I not dealing with the motor.

15 Q. Okay. Okay.

16 A. Because I am checking only with common jobs like fitness of
17 the brake line and adjustment of (indiscernible) for the stopper
18 but I'm not dealing with the motor.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So that --

21 Q. Would that be more of --

22 A. -- is not my responsibility, motor.

23 Q. Okay. Whose responsibility? More of an engineer
24 responsibility?

25 A. Most probably engineer.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. But --

3 Q. Understand.

4 A. Let's say I'm only operator and I'm not really driver.

5 CDR ██████: Sure. Sure. Fair enough. Anything else, ██████?

6 MR. ██████: Nothing more at this time.

7 CDR ██████: Okay. Yeah. Thank you very much.

8 MR. CHERNIKOV: Thank you very much.

9 CDR ██████: Thank you, Chief.

10 MR. ██████: Okay. Thank you, Chief.

11 MR. CHERNIKOV: Okay. Thank you.

12 MR. ██████: All right.

13 MR. CHERNIKOV: Who is the next?

14 MR. ██████: The time is 11:43 and we're going to end the
15 interview. Thank you.

16 (Whereupon, at 11:43 a.m. PST, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

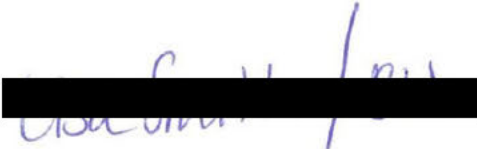
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ANCHOR DRAGGING PORT OF
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
ON JANUARY 25, 2021
Interview of Sergiy Chernikov

PLACE: Onboard *Beijing*, Outer Anchorages

DATE: November 18, 2021

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.



Lisa Smith
Transcriber