

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: HEVER VILLACIN, Oiler, *Beijing*
For the Coast Guard Marine Casualty Investigation

Onboard *Beijing*, Outer Anchorages

Thursday,
November 18, 2021

APPEARANCES:

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED], Investigator
Coast Guard Investigations National Center of Expertise

LIEUTENANT [REDACTED], Investigator
Coast Guard Sector LA/LB

CHRISTOPHER TRIBOLET, Attorney
Peacock Piper Tong & Voss

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:06 p.m. PST)

1
2
3 LT [REDACTED]: Good afternoon. The time is 12:06. My name is
4 Lieutenant [REDACTED] with the United States Coast Guard. We're
5 onboard the motor vessel *Beijing* at the Outer Anchorages in the
6 port of Los Angeles, and today we're going to be interviewing the
7 oiler onboard the vessel and then we're just going all go around
8 and introduce ourselves.

9 MR. TRIBOLET: Hi. This is Chris Tribolet from Peacock
10 Piper.

11 MR. VILLACIN: I'm Hever Villacin, position oiler onboard
12 *Beijing*.

13 LDCR [REDACTED]: LDCR [REDACTED]. I am with the -- I'm at the
14 Investigations National Center of Expertise.

15 LT [REDACTED]: All right, and, again, thank you for your time. If
16 you need to use the restroom or take a break at any time, just let
17 me know and we --

18 MR. VILLACIN: Okay.

19 LT [REDACTED]: -- can stop the recording.

INTERVIEW OF HEVER VILLACIN

20
21 BY LT [REDACTED]:

22 Q. So how long have you been onboard the vessel for?

23 A. Going 13 months.

24 Q. Ten months or --

25 A. Thirteen.

1 Q. Thirteen months?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Consec -- like, continuously?

4 A. Continuous.

5 Q. Wow. Is that normal?

6 A. Last port here, maybe reliever got positive. That's why I
7 don't have relief, but I stay onboard now, until now.

8 Q. Your replacement --

9 A. Yeah, positive.

10 Q. Oh, for COVID?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. When are you scheduled to get
13 off?

14 A. This port.

15 Q. This port? Oh, okay. Okay. Yeah, that's a very long
16 contract. So 13 months. When did you come onboard then?

17 A. October '20 -- 2020.

18 Q. And how many times have you worked on the *Beijing*?

19 A. First time.

20 Q. First. Okay. How long have you been an oiler for?

21 A. Since 2013.

22 Q. And then how long have you worked on ships for?

23 A. 2011 start.

24 Q. Could you just explain your responsibilities onboard the
25 vessel?

1 A. I'm I told before, I maintain everything -- in the engine
2 room -- the (indiscernible) and any of (indiscernible) the
3 engineers.

4 Q. Do you stand a watch?

5 A. Excuse me?

6 Q. Do you stand an engine room watch?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And which watch do you stand?

9 A. 12:00 to 4:00.

10 Q. 12:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon?

11 A. Yeah. Yeah, and also in the evening -- morning.

12 Q. And what about when the vessel's at anchor, do you stand on
13 watch?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay, and what are your responsibilities while you're on
16 watch?

17 A. We make fire patrol and I also do engine PMS (indiscernible)
18 at port, check the oil level and everything.

19 Q. And then who do you make a report to if you've identified
20 something?

21 A. Duty engineer.

22 Q. Chief engineer?

23 A. Duty engineer.

24 Q. The third engineer?

25 A. Uh, if --

1 Q. Oh, I'm sorry. The duty engineer?

2 A. Yeah, duty engineer.

3 Q. Okay. Understood. Okay. So what we're looking at is the
4 potential involvement of the *Beijing* for an incident back in
5 January of this year, on January 25. Were you onboard --

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. Okay, and do you recall any events from January 25th?

8 A. On my watch, at that time, the second mate told me that he
9 needs to prepare the engine because the ships is dragging.

10 Q. So you said the second mate?

11 A. Yeah. He's (indiscernible).

12 Q. Okay. So is the second mate, was he on the bridge?

13 A. Yes. He's on the bridge.

14 Q. Okay, and then he contacted you?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Do you know about what time? Was that the beginning of your
17 watch or towards the end?

18 A. Towards the end, almost end of my watch.

19 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

20 Q. Okay, and that's 12:00 to 4:00, right? So --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- it's the end of your watch? You know what approximate
23 time maybe that was?

24 A. I don't (indiscernible).

25 Q. And how did the second mate contact you?

1 A. By he called me in the engine room.

2 Q. Okay. You said he notified you that the anchor was dragging?

3 A. Yes. He called me to prepare.

4 Q. Because the anchor was dragging?

5 A. Yeah, the vessel was dragging.

6 BY LT [REDACTED]:

7 Q. Could you just articulate, like, what exactly he said or that
8 you remember he said?

9 A. Please prepare the engine as soon as possible because we are
10 dragging.

11 Q. Okay. Okay, and then what did you do then?

12 A. So when we spoke on the telephone, I did not call duty
13 engineer but I already saw that the elevator is coming down so I
14 expect that engineers already know.

15 Q. Uh-huh.

16 A. So when the elevator open, it was chief engineer that time.
17 So he told me to prepare the engine.

18 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

19 Q. He was already coming down or he was there?

20 A. He was already coming down.

21 Q. He was already coming down?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay. Thank you.

24 BY LT [REDACTED]:

25 Q. Okay, and then what did you from there?

1 A. I open the -- I asked him if we needed to turn -- engage the
2 engine and turn. So he told me no, just open the air and close
3 the indicator top of this top.

4 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

5 Q. What was that again?

6 A. Open the air and start to prepare the distributor, this
7 valve.

8 Q. Okay. Open the air start?

9 A. And we close the indicator cap.

10 BY LT [REDACTED]:

11 Q. Okay. So basically you prepared the main engine?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. Okay, and then what happened?

14 A. Then they start the engine after that.

15 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

16 Q. Okay. Do you know what time the engine was probably started?

17 A. No.

18 Q. No? Approximate?

19 A. Approximately prepare not more than 10 minutes, then they
20 start.

21 BY LT [REDACTED]:

22 Q. All right. This is LT [REDACTED] again. Okay. So after they
23 started the main engine, what happened after that?

24 A. My reliever was already there at the time.

25 Q. Your what?

- 1 A. My reliever from --
- 2 Q. Oh, your relief?
- 3 A. -- 4:00 to 8:00 --
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. -- was already there. So I made turnover for him and after
- 6 that, I go up in my room.
- 7 Q. Okay. When you do a relief turnover, do you make any notes
- 8 that you hand off or --
- 9 A. No. Only --
- 10 Q. -- any books?
- 11 A. -- verbal.
- 12 Q. Verbal? Okay. Do you record any logs at all during your
- 13 watch or for --
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. No?
- 16 A. Duty, I think.
- 17 Q. Did you have any issues with starting the main before you --
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. -- left watch? Okay. Have you -- so you said that the
- 20 second mate reported that you were dragging. What does that mean?
- 21 A. I don't know, sir. I don't know the time was -- he only
- 22 called me that this was to prepare the engine.
- 23 Q. Okay. So it was something urgent?
- 24 A. Yeah.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Urgent.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Understood. Was the -- do you know what the -- if he -- what
5 the weather's like or was -- how was your watch up until that
6 point? Was there anything out of the ordinary?

7 A. No. It's not -- the ship is not moving a little, but there
8 is strong wind outside.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Strong winds outside but it felt okay inside?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And then no other issues with your watch?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. Okay. Have you had that happen before? Like, you had
16 to start the main engine because it may have been dragging? Have
17 you had that happen before on the *Beijing*?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Okay. Okay. Go ahead.

20 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

21 Q. So on your oiler round, you had the 12:00 to 4:00 and as part
22 of your oiler round, you're taking temperatures, right, checking
23 levels --

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. -- making sure things are on the ready that are supposed to

1 be on the ready?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And a lot of that probably takes place in the engine room,
4 right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is there certain other spaces that it takes place, as well,
7 on the vessel, forward, aft, rudder room, foc'sle. Are there
8 other spaces that you're responsible for?

9 A. No, sir. Only engine room.

10 Q. You're exclusive to the engine room?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. Okay, and then do you take readings on the generators
13 that are running at the time at -- when you're at anchor?

14 A. No, sir. The -- no.

15 Q. You don't take any engine room -- any generator readings?

16 A. No, sir.

17 Q. Okay. Does anybody take any generator readings?

18 A. 8:00 to 12:00.

19 Q. 8:00 to 12:00 takes them?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Do you know who stood the 8:00 to 12:00 watch?

22 A. He already -- at that time, engine running. He already go
23 home.

24 Q. He's not on the vessel anymore?

25 A. He's not on the vessel.

1 Q. Do you ever look at the bow thruster on those rounds? Is
2 that --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- a component that's in the main engine room or is it too
5 far forward?

6 A. It's too far forward.

7 Q. And then from was there anything passed to you from the 8:00
8 to 12:00 watch of things to look for at anchorage?

9 A. No, no, sir.

10 Q. Nothing?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Is there any night orders --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- from the chief engineer for that watch?

15 A. No general order on the make some watch everything engine
16 room.

17 Q. Okay. When you're on watch, do you have -- the chief
18 engineer, I'm sure, details out either jobs to complete but does
19 the master, as well?

20 A. No, sir.

21 Q. Okay, and the chief engineer didn't have any other special
22 tasks for you at -- when you're at anchorage on --

23 A. No.

24 Q. -- this event?

25 A. Only night watch.

1 Q. Only for the night watch?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Do you know what was handed to --

4 A. Only for -- only make a proper watch.

5 Q. Oh, just to conduct a proper night watch?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Was there any discussion of the heavy weather with the crew
8 before you took your watch or the day before? Was there any
9 discussion if the weather was going to get bad or high winds or
10 was there any discussions?

11 A. I don't remember discussion.

12 Q. Okay, and was there any discussion after this event, after
13 this anchor dragging, that's maybe referred to as anchor dragging
14 by the second, was there any discussions of what maybe could've
15 caused the anchor drag or anything that may --

16 A. No.

17 Q. -- have been contributed to it?

18 A. No.

19 Q. No discussions --

20 A. No, no discussions.

21 Q. -- of the cause?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Was this the first time you were involved in an anchor
24 dragging?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. It was? And this may be my last question. Was it pretty
2 clear to the engineering department that you guys were dragging
3 anchor?

4 A. No. I don't know (indiscernible).

5 Q. Was it known to the chief engineer or whoever was on watch at
6 the time that you were dragging anchor?

7 MR. TRIBOLET: Objection to that question if you're asking
8 him what other people knew.

9 LDCR [REDACTED]: Should I rephrase that?

10 MR. TRIBOLET: Yeah.

11 BY LDCR [REDACTED]:

12 Q. Was there any discussion between the engineering watch before
13 you got off to whether you were dragging anchor?

14 A. No, sir.

15 Q. No?

16 A. No.

17 LDCR [REDACTED]: I think that's all I've got.

18 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. Is there anything that you would like us to
19 know just regarding our investigation?

20 MR. VILLACIN: No, sir. I already tell what I know.

21 LT [REDACTED]: Okay.

22 LDCR [REDACTED]: All right. Great. Thank you. Appreciate it.
23 Thank you.

24 LT [REDACTED]: Time is 12:23. LT [REDACTED], I'm going to stop the
25 recording.

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(Whereupon, at 12:33 p.m. PST, the interview was concluded.)

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 Hever Villacin

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 / RW
[Redacted Signature]

Lisa Smith
Transcriber