

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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IN RE: :
 :
THE ALLISION INVOLVING THE : NTSB Accident No.
AFRAMAX RIVER ON THE HOUSTON : DCA16FM055
SHIP CHANNEL ON SEPTEMBER 6, :
2016 :
 :
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INTERVIEW OF: CHARLES ARDUENGO

Friday,
September 9, 2016

BEFORE

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ USCG
BRUCE DAVIES, USCG
LUKE WISNIEWSKI, NTSB
MIKE USHER, Port Pilot Commission for Harris
Co. Ports
RUSSELL GIBSON, G&H Towing Company

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

10:45 a.m.

██████████ All right. Well, good morning everyone. The time is approximately 10:45. It is September 9th and we are at the Pilot's Association conducting a post-casualty interview of Captain --

CAPT. ARDUENGO: Charles Arduengo.

██████████ And he was the OINCW of the *Jess Newton*.

CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

██████████ -- at the time of the pre and post-casualty of the *Aframax River*.

My name is ██████████ I am the investigator, the duty investigator for these -- the incident. And we'll go around the table, introduce ourselves.

MR. DAVIES: Bruce Davies, Chief of Investigations for the Coast Guard in Houston.

MR. USHER: Mike Usher, Pilot Board Investigation Recommendation Committee of the Board of Pilot Commissioners for Harris County Ports.

MR. HATZEL: Cameron Hatzel, counsel on behalf of the two pilots.

MR. WISNIEWSKI: Morning. Luke Wisniewski, National Transportation Safety Board.

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1 MR. DURHAM: Andy Durham with Eastham Watson
2 for the vessel *Aframax River*.

3 MR. HUFFMAN: Jay Huffman of Blank Rome on
4 behalf of G&H Towing Company.

5 MR. GIBSON: Russell Gibson, senior port
6 captain, G&H Towing Company.

7 [REDACTED] All right. Thank you. And,
8 captain, just to let you know, the purpose of doing
9 this is to find out the causal factor of this incident
10 in hopes of preventing it from happening again.

11 So we'll start. If you don't mind giving us
12 a little background information on your maritime
13 training and experience.

14 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Nine years in the Navy,
15 seven years with the Military Sealift Command and then
16 eight years here.

17 [REDACTED] Here at G&H Towing?

18 CAPT. ARDUENGO: G&H Towing, yes.

19 [REDACTED] All right. And all years been
20 as a master?

21 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No, a mate.

22 [REDACTED] A mate?

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I hold a master's license,
24 but I've been employed as a mate.

25 [REDACTED] And in those eight years with

1 G&H Towing how many trips would you say you've -- how
2 many jobs would you say you've been -- approximate
3 number? Range.

4 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I got 2000-some-odd sea
5 days here. I don't know, you do about five a day.

6 [REDACTED] And different class vessels?
7 Size? Horsepower?

8 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Single screws, twin screws
9 and (inaudible) drafts, yes.

10 [REDACTED] All right. And, captain, how
11 do you get your jobs assigned to you? Who assigns you
12 the --

13 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Through dispatch.

14 [REDACTED] Dispatch? And on September
15 5th when was the first time that you were made aware
16 that you were going to be assisting the *Aframax River*?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: When I came up to relieve
18 the watch.

19 [REDACTED] Do you have approximate time
20 for that?

21 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was 2345.

22 [REDACTED] 2345?

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

24 [REDACTED] All right. And where was the
25 vessel at the time, the *Jess Newton*?

1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: We were -- they had a line
2 up already on the port quarter.

3 [REDACTED] Okay. So there was a line on
4 the port quarter of the *Aframax River*?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes. Yes, sir.

6 [REDACTED] All right. And when you
7 relieved the watch was there any information passed
8 down to you from the officer of the watch at the time?
9 Any part of that information?

10 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Nothing towards the
11 sailing. Basically the same -- same stuff as usual
12 around the sailing. It was going out to sea. Just the
13 usual information. There was nothing unusual about the
14 relief of the watch.

15 [REDACTED] And when was the first time
16 you communicated with the pilot?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: When he gave me an away
18 bell.

19 [REDACTED] Away bell?

20 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

21 [REDACTED] And how is this communication
22 relayed to you?

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Through the VHF radio.

24 [REDACTED] VHF radio? Any issues with
25 the communication?

1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No.

2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And what were your actions
3 after you got the away bell, captain?

4 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I went away. I complied
5 with what he requested.

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Do you recall an approximate
7 time you got that away bell?

8 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was right there at
9 midnight.

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] All right. And can you just
11 go over a little bit of -- well, before that, after the
12 away bell was there -- were there any other commands
13 given to you?

14 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Well, they told me to stop
15 for a minute. Usually they'll pull it out a little
16 bit. I believe he gave the *Gasparilla* an order and
17 then we went back to going slow away.

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And now prior to this away
19 bell and prior to this (inaudible) with the pilot was
20 there any communication to what the plan was --

21 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No.

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] -- getting the ship --

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No, there was no
24 communication of plan. It's the standard -- what we do
25 all the time. So I've probably done the job dozens --

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1 dozens (inaudible due to someone coughing.)

2 [REDACTED] Captain, who else was with you
3 aboard the *Jess Newton*?

4 CAPT. ARDUENGO: In the wheelhouse was John
5 Rockwell (phonetic).

6 [REDACTED] What were his duties?

7 CAPT. ARDUENGO: He was the MTO. He's a
8 training mate, so he was just hanging out while we did
9 that, finished up that job.

10 [REDACTED] Anybody else?

11 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Not at that time.

12 [REDACTED] So, all right. Captain, you
13 get the away bell. Then you said you got a brief stop
14 command --

15 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

16 [REDACTED] -- from the pilot?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

18 [REDACTED] Approximate time for that?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was right there at
20 midnight. We just pulled on for just, you know, 10, 15
21 seconds. And then we stopped for another 10, 15
22 seconds. Then went back into a slow bell.

23 [REDACTED] Okay. And can you just go
24 over a little bit of what happened (inaudible)?

25 (Simultaneous speaking.)

1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: So we got the slow bell.
2 He started coming away from the dock, actually backing
3 up and coming away from the dock. I noticed he started
4 pretty quickly, started going pretty quick. So I
5 reached over and I dialed him into the electronic chart
6 that we have there so I could see his information. And
7 he was doing 2.6 knots. And I think that's probably
8 before the bow even got to the -- to the channel, to
9 the middle of the channel, or even close to the
10 channel.

11 One of the other pilots -- as I was noticing
12 that there was a problem, one of the other pilots
13 informed the pilot that was handing out the orders that
14 there was an issue with those pilings. So he had
15 acknowledged that, so I didn't have to tell him again.

16 [REDACTED] An issue with the pilings?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: The pilings that he was
18 eventually ran into.

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20 CAPT. ARDUENGO: He kept going. He
21 acknowledged that -- that warning. He kept going. I
22 gave him another warning, said you're still headed
23 towards those pilings. I think at this point he gave
24 me a -- a three-quarters away, and I sounded the
25 general alarm to get the captain up to the wheelhouse.

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1 So when we got down about 50 feet, I gave
2 him another warning, said you're closing within about
3 50 feet of it. He acknowledged. He kept going, except
4 now he's doing 3.7 knots, according to my -- according
5 to my ECTIS (phonetic), and then he hit it.

6 [REDACTED] At any time were you informed
7 that the vessel might -- there was a mechanical issue
8 with the vessel, or there could be a possible
9 mechanical issue with the vessel?

10 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I was never told there
11 might have been a mechanical issue with the vessel.

12 [REDACTED] And how did he acknowledge
13 that -- the piling warning that you gave him? Was just
14 a got it (inaudible)?

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 CAPT. ARDUENGO: The first one to the -- to
17 the pilot I think he said something to the -- to the
18 extent that, yes, I'm trying or something like that,
19 but he was calm. The second warning was like I know,
20 basically. And the third warning he says okay. He was
21 all calm. He -- he acknowledged each one very calm.

22 [REDACTED] And could you just go -- well,
23 do you want to get into the post-casualty actions, or
24 you want to --

25 MR. DAVIES: You know what, before we do

1 that -- this is Bruce Davies from Coast Guard
2 Investigations. What type of license do you hold? I
3 know you said you were operating as a mate, but you --
4 and we don't need to see it. You could just
5 (inaudible) --

6 (Simultaneous speaking.)

7 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Well, I'll read -- I'll
8 read it off here.

9 MR. DAVIES: We could look it up on the
10 computers, too.

11 (Laughter.)

12 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Let's see, we got master
13 1,600 inland, master 100 ton oceans, master of Great
14 Lakes inland waters, third mate unlimited oceans.

15 MR. DAVIES: Okay. That was master's Great
16 Lakes and inland? Is that what that says?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

18 MR. DAVIES: Okay. All right. We can --
19 yes, just let me ask you a couple quick questions. You
20 said the -- according to your ECTIS or your electronic
21 chart --

22 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

23 MR. DAVIES: -- that you were doing about
24 2.6 knots before the bow cleared. Now this isn't
25 exact. Just approximate.

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1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It's not exact. It's --

2 MR. DAVIES: Yes, so that's good, but did
3 that seem like to you and your experience that they
4 were going fast?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes. That's when I --
6 that's when I reached over and dialed it in. I said
7 this -- this guy's going a little quick. Let me take a
8 look at it. And I was correct in thinking so.

9 MR. DAVIES: Did you ever ask the pilots or
10 the master on the ship like you seem to be going a
11 little quick?

12 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No, I didn't say anything
13 about that.

14 MR. DAVIES: And you said you were -- you
15 got a three-quarters away, you sounded the general
16 alarm. That was your ship that sounded the general
17 alarm or was that --

18 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I sounded the general alarm
19 to get the master to the wheelhouse.

20 MR. DAVIES: And why did you do that?

21 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I knew there was a problem
22 and he wasn't --

23 MR. DAVIES: Okay.

24 CAPT. ARDUENGO: -- I could see that this is
25 not going to work out good.

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1 MR. DAVIES: All right. We can go on.

2 We'll ask some more questions --

3 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Okay.

4 MR. DAVIES: -- if [REDACTED] wants to go on, but
5 I just wanted to get the -- your license information
6 first.

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] That's good. If (inaudible)
8 Mr. --

9 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Luke Wisniewski, NTSB.
10 Just have one quick one before we get into the post-
11 fire and everything. The piling that you're referring
12 to, was there any markings or any type of -- that you
13 could tell, any type of fendering or anything on there?

14 CAPT. ARDUENGO: There is one rubber, thin
15 rubber fender around it. There's a black piling with a
16 big white sign that says not to be used to turn on, or
17 something to that extent. And that is it.

18 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Do you know if it was lit?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It is not lit.

20 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Okay. Thank you. That's
21 all I have.

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Mr. Usher?

23 MR. USHER: Yes, thank you. Mike Usher,
24 PBIRC. Good morning, captain. Thank you for being
25 here.

1 Whenever the vessel made contact with the
2 piling, were you still made fast?

3 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I was still made fast.

4 MR. USHER: Thank you. That's all I have.

5 [REDACTED] Mr. Durham?

6 MR. DURHAM: Nothing at this time. Thank
7 you.

8 [REDACTED] All right. So we'll get a
9 little bit more into the post-casualty actions.

10 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Okay.

11 [REDACTED] So you said 50 feet was the
12 last warning you gave the --

13 CAPT. ARDUENGO: That was the last one I
14 gave him.

15 [REDACTED] All right. And then soon
16 thereafter you sounded the general alarm?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Somewhere in there between
18 the -- the second warning that he got and the 50-feet
19 warning. Yes, somewhere in there.

20 [REDACTED] All right. Well, can you just
21 take us through what you saw, what you witnessed after
22 that prior to and when the vessel impacted the
23 (inaudible)?

24 (Simultaneous speaking.)

25 CAPT. ARDUENGO: When I told him it was 50

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1 feet, he told me to come full away, which I complied
2 with. They gave the -- the *Gasparilla* a full ahead, I
3 believe. I believe it was full ahead. He was trying
4 to -- he was trying to turn the ship. He's still
5 backing up. I didn't look at the (inaudible) to see
6 what speed he was going anymore, so I don't -- I don't
7 know what speed it was that he hit that, but I was
8 still out on my line. My line was still taut and the
9 piling went between me and the ship. And he had
10 requested that I come ahead on him and I told him I
11 could not do that.

12 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Now did you take notice if the
13 prop -- did any time the prop washed? Did --

14 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Did not have any prop wash
15 coming ahead at all. Because that's what I -- I was
16 actually watching that all the way. Come on. Come on.
17 Come on. And it --

18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And soon after the impact, or
19 after it impacted the -- what did you see? What did
20 you witness? Well, did you actually witness the vessel
21 hitting the (inaudible)?

22 (Simultaneous speaking.)

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Oh, yes. Yes. I mean, I
24 witnessed it hitting the piling in front of me. I -- I
25 don't know -- I don't know where actually that hole --

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1 I think it was the other piling that actually put the
2 hole. I'm not sure. I'm paying attention to what was
3 in front of me. Captain came up to the wheelhouse just
4 in time to witness the fireball go up. So --

5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] You say there was immediate
6 fire?

7 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes. Yes, it was pretty
8 quick.

9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And what were the actions of
10 your crew after the fire?

11 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Captain came up. My
12 deckhand ran downstairs, shut all the doors, made sure
13 everything was dogged down, turned off the air-
14 conditioners to the boat. And then I walked the vessel
15 forward on the ship paying out line so I could get away
16 from the fire.

17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Does the *Jess Newton* have fire
18 fighting capabilities?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It has a fire pump and it
20 has a monitor, but I wasn't going to send a guy out. I
21 don't know what that -- I don't know what that is
22 burning down there, so I did not start the fire pump at
23 that time.

24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] And at some point did that
25 line part?

1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes. Yes, the captain
2 requested that I just pay the line all the way out and
3 let it go, so we started paying it out and eventually
4 it melted and we were able to retrieve what was left on
5 it. But we were backing out to -- to let it go.

6 [REDACTED] All right. Mr. Davies?

7 MR. DAVIES: Yes, your line that you used,
8 now I take it it was synthetic that it melted, but do
9 you know what the breaking strength was on that line?

10 CAPT. ARDUENGO: May I refer to the port
11 captain on that?

12 MR. DAVIES: Sure.

13 MR. GIBSON: So the ATMPE (phonetic) Saturn
14 12 with 906,000 pounds of breaking strength.

15 MR. DAVIES: And how about the bollard
16 pulley, your tug, do you know what that is?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was 52 tons.

18 MR. DAVIES: Fifty-two tons?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

20 MR. DAVIES: The next question I'm going to
21 ask you you don't have to know the answer to it. His
22 ship is backing out. It's 800 feet. I don't know what
23 the displacement of the ship is, but could your tug
24 possible stop a ship that size moving 2.6 knots? And
25 if so, what would the stopping distance be?

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1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No, I do not know that
2 answer.

3 MR. DAVIES: Have you ever run into anything
4 like this before?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No, sir.

6 MR. DAVIES: All right. Now when you said
7 you were paying out the line, do you have a winch
8 that's controllable from inside the pilot house?

9 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, sir.

10 MR. DAVIES: And that's what -- everybody on
11 the ship or on your tug were inside the pilot house at
12 this time?

13 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, sir.

14 MR. DAVIES: And you said when you were
15 pulling the ship away from the dock; I'm talking about
16 the tanker, and this is back in the beginning, the
17 captain told you to hold up for a minute. You remember
18 why he told you to hold up?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I think it's usually just
20 how they do it. They -- you give a little momentum to
21 the stern coming out. Like the bow tug kind of pushes
22 in, which brings the stern out a little bit more, and
23 then it goes.

24 MR. DAVIES: And do you know why or if the
25 ship was using -- did they have bow thruster where they

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1 use any bow thrusters or stern thrusters, or was
2 everything on the tug to pull them away from the pier?

3 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I do not know.

4 MR. DAVIES: And at this time --

5 PARTICIPANT: Bruce, just real quick --

6 MR. DAVIES: Sure.

7 [REDACTED] -- so that the record's clear,
8 he's taking commands from the pilot, not the captain.

9 MR. DAVIES: That's okay. I meant the ship
10 generally.

11 PARTICIPANT: Okay.

12 MR. DAVIES: For this particular thing we
13 don't care how he got the commands, but, yes, all
14 right, from the pilot.

15 But when you were pulling it away, did you
16 notice, well, let's say the prop moving at that time?
17 When you were just pulling it away from the dock? When
18 you said that he gave you pull away?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: He was going astern, so
20 there was prop wash.

21 MR. DAVIES: Okay. So he was going astern
22 as you were pulling him out?

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I'm pulling this away.

24 MR. DAVIES: Yes.

25 CAPT. ARDUENGO: The ship is going this way.

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1 MR. DAVIES: Okay. I don't have any other
2 questions.

3 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Luke Wisniewski, NTSB. As
4 far as the line once it caught fire and parted how much
5 did you recover, approximately?

6 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was burned probably
7 right at the chock, so it -- I recovered most of it.
8 It was probably the eye plus about five feet, I think,
9 of the actual -- the eye plus about five feet of line,
10 so that would give you from the bit to the chock. And
11 that's probably about where it burned, right there at
12 the chock.

13 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Okay. Any damage sustained
14 to the *Jess Newton*?

15 CAPT. ARDUENGO: None.

16 MR. WISNIEWSKI: And everyone on board was
17 fine?

18 CAPT. ARDUENGO: We're all fine.

19 MR. WISNIEWSKI: That's all I have. Thank
20 you.

21 [REDACTED] My next question was going to
22 be the damage, but did you feel any of the heat? I
23 mean, this is --

24 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

25 [REDACTED] It looks like a pretty intense

1 fire. You could feel it in the --

2 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, we got some of that.

3 Yes. We could feel it in the wheelhouse, yes.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] How long do you think you were
5 up along the boat there? I know it probably seemed
6 like forever, but any realistic time frame?

7 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I couldn't even speculate
8 an accurate time. We -- yes, it caught on fire and we
9 pretty much -- let's go this way.

10 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Did you have any conversations
11 with anybody on the ship during the time of the fire?

12 CAPT. ARDUENGO: The -- did I have a
13 conversation --

14 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yes, with the *Aframax River*.
15 Did you -- *Jess Newton*

16 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I informed him that he was
17 on fire. And then he asked me later on if I had my
18 line up, which I said, yes, the line's still up. I
19 think I told him I don't think anybody could get to it
20 even if you could let it go. It was -- it was all
21 black. You'd probably -- you'd kill somebody getting
22 them over there. So --

23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] How long was the fire engaged
24 before one of the tugs or your tug energized their fire
25 fighting system, if you can recall?

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1 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was immediate for the
2 *Gasparilla*, I believe.

3 [REDACTED] Okay. And how long if you can
4 recall did that take to have any effect on the fire?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I don't think they were
6 fighting the fire at that -- at that time.

7 [REDACTED] What was the *Gasparilla* doing
8 then?

9 CAPT. ARDUENGO: They were protecting
10 themselves and using their cannon to -- to keep the --
11 the flames off of them.

12 [REDACTED] All right. Did you notice any
13 fire fighting procedures going on on the ship, on the
14 *River*?

15 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I couldn't see anything on
16 that ship.

17 [REDACTED] Well, could you describe the
18 scene? Let's get into the flames, the smoke. Can you
19 describe that?

20 CAPT. ARDUENGO: It was a class (inaudible)
21 fire. Thick, black smoke. You couldn't see nothing on
22 the ship. I couldn't see nothing to my right. It was
23 all fire and smoke. Everything to my left was just
24 ship and -- and that was it. I had to look behind me
25 to -- to see where I was.

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1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Okay. I'll pass to Mike.

2 MR. USHER: I have no questions. Thank you.

3 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Thank you.

4 PARTICIPANT: I have no questions.

5 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Just one. Luke Wisniewski,
6 NTSB. Just one follow-up with the -- so if you
7 couldn't see, you could only look out the aft end of
8 the vessel --

9 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

10 MR. WISNIEWSKI: -- to see your location,
11 how else -- what else were you using to navigate your
12 vessel? Were you relying on GPS or --

13 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I had the -- I had the
14 ECTIS up right there.

15 MR. WISNIEWSKI: ECTIS?

16 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

17 MR. WISNIEWSKI: Okay. That's all I have.

18 PARTICIPANT: Did you subsequently use your
19 fire monitor to fight the fire?

20 CAPT. ARDUENGO: When we paid out our line
21 to get away from the fire, a -- a O-ring broke down in
22 the engine room. When I did request that the chief go
23 start the fire pump, he told me no because he had
24 hydraulic fluid all over the engine room. So we didn't
25 start the fire pump.

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1 PARTICIPANT: And just so it's clear, the O-
2 ring broke connected to what equipment?

3 CAPT. ARDUENGO: The winch.

4 PARTICIPANT: That was pulling in the line?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: (No audible response.)

6 MR. USHER: I'm sorry, I do have a follow-up
7 question. Thank you. Mike Usher, PBIRC.

8 Captain, were you aware that this was a two-
9 pilot job?

10 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes.

11 MR. USHER: And you received all your
12 commands from the conning pilot alone?

13 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, sir.

14 MR. USHER: That's the only one you
15 communicated with?

16 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, sir.

17 MR. USHER: And then for the sake of the
18 record that was Captain Michael McGee (phonetic)?

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes, I believe so.

20 MR. USHER: Okay. When he had requested
21 that you come ahead, was that prior to allision, or
22 post-allision?

23 CAPT. ARDUENGO: That was just before the
24 allision. I mean, we're -- we're coming in and there's
25 -- that piling was right there. And he asked me to

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1 come ahead. I said I can't.

2 MR. USHER: Okay. Thank you. That's all I
3 have.

4 PARTICIPANT: Well, listen, there was pretty
5 intense fire out there and we're here just to get your
6 take on it. Is there anything you want to add to us?
7 I mean, anything peculiar happen? You want to describe
8 the fire better? Smoke? Any procedures that were
9 happening on the ship? Anything you can think of that
10 will kind of help us? Anything at all?

11 CAPT. ARDUENGO: I think y'all have
12 everything. I don't think there's anything more I can
13 add to it.

14 [REDACTED] All right. Well, just to
15 close it out, have you been trained to deal with a
16 situation like this at G&H Towing?

17 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Trained to deal with a -- a
18 fire?

19 [REDACTED] On a ship that you are
20 assisting?

21 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Yes. Yes, we have --
22 there's policies in place for this. And we -- there's
23 fire drill. I believe there's a drill once a -- once a
24 year for this particular thing. There's a fire drill
25 every month, but for this particular there's -- having

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1 -- how to deal with the on-scene commander and that
2 kind of thing about once a -- once or twice a year.

3 [REDACTED] Did you feel pretty confident
4 in dealing with the situation?

5 CAPT. ARDUENGO: Oh, yes. It was -- it was
6 not -- I mean, it was -- it was fire, but it wasn't
7 totally nerve-wracking. I think we held it together
8 pretty good.

9 [REDACTED] All right. And just to
10 finalize, in your opinion was there anything you could
11 have done to mitigate or minimize this incident? Maybe
12 not prevent it, but something that you could have done,
13 something that maybe the pilots could have done,
14 something that anyone could have done to --

15 CAPT. ARDUENGO: No. No. Not a thing I can
16 think of.

17 [REDACTED] All right, sir. Thank you
18 very much. That concludes the interview.

19 CAPT. ARDUENGO: All right. All right.

20 [REDACTED] It is approximately 11:10.

21 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
22 off the record at 11:10 a.m.)

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Allision Involving the Aframax River
on the Houston Ship Channel, Sept. 6, 2016
Accident No. DCA16FM055
Interview of Charles Arduengo

DATE: 09-09-16

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 27 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.



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