

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

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FIRE ONBOARD *SPIRIT OF NORFOLK* \*

NEAR NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, \*

Accident No.: DCA22FM022

VIRGINIA ON JUNE 8, 2022 \*

\*

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Interview of: BRYAN BRACEY, Deckhand  
*Spirit of Norfolk City Cruises*

United States Coast Guard  
Sector Virginia  
4000 Coast Guard Blvd.  
Portsmouth, VA 23703

Thursday,  
June 9, 2022

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL KARR, Investigator in Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

DAVID FLAHERTY  
National Transportation Safety Board

LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator  
United States Coast Guard

CWO [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
United States Coast Guard

ERIC DENLEY, Deputy General Counsel  
Hornblower Group

GREGORY BURTS, Esq.  
Phelps Dunbar  
Attorney for Ryan Nadeau

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:53 a.m. Eastern)

1  
2  
3 LT [REDACTED] All right, like I said, I'm Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
4 I am a marine casualty investigator with the Coast Guard. Sir, do  
5 we have your permission to record this interview?

6 MR. BRACEY: Yes.

7 LT [REDACTED] Okay. And what is your name?

8 MR. BRACEY: Bryan Bracey.

9 LT [REDACTED] Bryan Bracey, okay. And who are you with?

10 MR. BRACEY: What do you mean, the company?

11 LT [REDACTED] Yeah.

12 MR. BRACEY: City Cruises, Hornblower.

13 LT [REDACTED] Okay, all right. We're going to go around the  
14 room and do some introductions.

15 MR. KARR: I'm Mike Karr with the National Transportation  
16 Safety Board.

17 MR. FLAHERTY: I'm David Flaherty with the National  
18 Transportation Safety Board.

19 CWO [REDACTED] I'm Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED] investigating  
20 officer, Sector Virginia.

21 LT [REDACTED] On the phone? We're doing our introductions on  
22 the recording, can you hear us? You're on mute, I think.

23 MR. BURTS: Yeah, I can hear you now.

24 LT [REDACTED] Can you hear me? Okay.

25 MR. BURTS: Yeah, I can hear you now.

1 LT [REDACTED] We're doing introductions here.

2 MR. BURTS: Okay. Should I go and introduce myself?

3 LT [REDACTED] Yeah, please do.

4 MR. BURTS: Okay, Gregory Burts from Phelps Dunbar, appearing  
5 on behalf of Captain Ryan.

6 MR. DENLEY: And I'm Eric Denley, in-house counsel, City  
7 Cruises.

8 LT [REDACTED] All right.

9 MR. FLAHERTY: He needs to introduce himself.

10 LT [REDACTED] Yeah, can you introduce yourself again? I know  
11 you already did.

12 MR. BRACEY: My name is Bryan Bracey, I'm a senior deckhand  
13 on the Spirit of Norfolk, City Cruises.

14 LT [REDACTED] All right, thank you. All right, sir, so the way  
15 this is going to work and kind of the way -- the reason we're here  
16 is we're all investigators and we want to figure out what  
17 happened, that way we can identify ways to prevent something like  
18 that from happening again.

19 MR. BRACEY: Um-hum.

20 LT [REDACTED] You know, obviously, it could've been a lot worse,  
21 not a lot of passengers on board. So we all work in the maritime  
22 community, so we all have the best interests, including yourself,  
23 in creating a safe environment for everybody.

24 MR. BRACEY: Yes.

25 LT [REDACTED] So we're going to just ask you some questions.

1 Please give us your best recollection of the events of that day.  
2 We want to hear your specific -- your specific -- what's the word  
3 I'm looking here for?

4 MR. KARR: Observations, what you saw, what you heard.

5 MR. BRACEY: Okay.

6 INTERVIEW OF BRYAN BRACEY

7 BY LT [REDACTED]

8 Q. Yeah. So from the beginning of the day when you got on  
9 board, if you could just go on throughout the day, as to the  
10 incident and when you got off.

11 A. What time did I get to work that morning? It was an early  
12 morning, I got to work around 7:40 a.m., I would say. You get on  
13 board and we do our regular cleaning and restroom stocking and  
14 toilet paper, stuff like that. The cruise was at 11 o'clock, so  
15 we put our -- the gangway goes down about at 9:30. It's an hour  
16 and a half before. Yeah, about 9:30.

17 And we already had some of the elementary -- no, some of the  
18 preschoolers were already on the dock just, you know, beginning to  
19 get there in pieces. And we notified them that the restaurant was  
20 ready to board and we began to take on who we had standing on the  
21 docks already. So that puts us, oh, ten-ish, 10:15, somewhere in  
22 there.

23 Q. Sorry, that's when you -- so 10:15 people started coming  
24 off --

25 A. Yeah, we started, we started taking passengers on board, give

1 or take. And you figure by 11 o'clock, 11:00, 11:10, I've got --  
2 we've got all the passengers on board from both schools, and  
3 adults. Then we're backing out of the auto-berth. I couldn't  
4 tell you what time it was when we turned around, when the incident  
5 began. I got the call to -- there's food in the galley for the  
6 staff and this is when it's going to hit the fan.

7 So I'm downstairs with Glory, her and I were working together  
8 at that point in time and we're making up plates, you know,  
9 average, you know, lunch in the galley for staff, whatnot, and  
10 Ryan comes over the radio and he says, "I'm getting an alarm, a  
11 smoke alarm from the engine room, can somebody check it out?"

12 And I'm feet away from the engine room, so I go, I open the  
13 door and immediately there was smoke at the door and this is not  
14 dark smoke, this is not light smoke, but I guess a gray. I could  
15 see a flame at the starboard main and I know that's what I'm  
16 seeing, that's what I saw, I saw the flame, I closed the door  
17 immediately.

18 At this point I said, "Glory, drop what you're doing and get  
19 on my six, get next to me, grab a fire extinguisher, stand here,"  
20 and she moves into place, I get back on the radio with Ryan, I'm  
21 telling him there's a flame in the engine room and I put on --  
22 well, I've got my headphones on before I opened that door, sorry.  
23 I'm on the radio, Ryan, there's a flame in the engine room. I  
24 open the door a second time with Glory behind me and fire  
25 extinguishers ready to go and it's jet black smoke at this point

1 in time and I shut the door. And then I let Ryan know we can't  
2 get in there and now I'm just waiting for a response. And at this  
3 point in time I didn't realize that when I put my headphones on,  
4 it knocked my headset out of my ear. Do you understand what I'm  
5 saying? Because I've got one of those -- do you know what I mean?  
6 And it knocked it out.

7 So as I'm telling Ryan what I've got going on, I can't hear a  
8 response, then I looked down and my headset's dangling. So I put  
9 it in and I hear "turn the fire pumps on." At that point in time,  
10 to the right of the door is a fire station, a fire hose. Now I  
11 pull the fire hose out because I'm ready for the pump to turn on,  
12 just in case, so I stretched, I began to stretch the fire hose out  
13 so it doesn't kink up if we fill it full of water.

14 And then I'm listening and I hear "turn the fuel off." So I  
15 go upstairs to get the T tool to shut the fuel, to begin to turn  
16 the fuel off and Jeremiah had already had it in his hand and we  
17 shut the fuel off on the boat.

18 I go to the bow. I go to the bow, there's a tug on the bow  
19 and they're spraying water and they're trying to figure out  
20 whether we're going to connect a line so they can move us. Then  
21 the guy throws me a line off the tug and I put it on the bow  
22 cleat. And then I'm asking him, the guy on the bow of the tug,  
23 he's like are we going to evacuate the guests off the bow and at  
24 this point in time I don't know, but he's like I have a stool,  
25 like a stepstool. I'm like give it to me, we'll take it just in



1 case I have to go from -- to bring passengers off the bow onto the  
2 tug. And then at that point in time I hear "open the midship  
3 door, we're going to take them out the mid-ship." So I go to mid-  
4 ship, I now grab a PFD for myself, I put a PFD on and I give Bob a  
5 PFD and we -- the door is now -- the midship door is now open, the  
6 *Victory Rover* will be -- will be port side in any second.

7 I go back to the bow. Bob informs me that I should move the  
8 line, I had the line over the railing of the boat and Bob says  
9 move it below the railing, that way when the tension hits on, we  
10 don't bend the railing. So I pull it off the cleat, I pull the  
11 rope through and the captain on the tugboat was already backing  
12 up, but there wasn't any tension on the line. Still a lot of  
13 slack. I pull it through, under the railing, put it back on the  
14 cleat and I give the captain a thumbs up and even though I can't  
15 see him, they're tinted windows, I know he can see me. I give him  
16 a thumbs up, he gives me a toot, then I back off, I just go back  
17 towards the door. There's water everywhere being sprayed from  
18 these boats. At this point in time I'm soaked.

19 Bob says we should go back inside because Bob was worried  
20 that when they start pulling the tension, he didn't want the line  
21 to snap and, you know, the repercussions from it hitting, hitting  
22 one of us. All right, fine. So at this point in time, mid-ship,  
23 I'm not -- it's full of guests being transferred over. So I go up  
24 the stern, I go onto second deck and I can see that our guests and  
25 staff all have PFDs on, they're all in order, no chaos and they're

1 working their way down the stairs. So I go back out the stern and  
2 now there is a tug on our starboard side pulling up and I tell the  
3 guy to start hitting the vent, he's got a water -- he's got a fire  
4 hose in his hand, just start hitting the vent that's on that side  
5 of the boat, start filling it up. And they go to start, they  
6 handle that, I go up to the third deck to make sure there's nobody  
7 else up there.

8       So third deck is empty. I go back down to second deck and I  
9 began to look at guests' vests and make sure everybody's vest is  
10 secure and as tight as possible. I'm looking for injuries, if  
11 there's any of that, and I'm asking parents, are you okay, are you  
12 with a child, you know, I'm just trying to keep everybody in order  
13 and as calm as possible as we get them to de-board the ship.

14       I go back down to stern, onto first deck, and that's when I  
15 began assisting, the best I can, people off of the *Spirit* onto the  
16 *Rover* and that happened expeditiously and in order.

17       And now, at this point in time, it's just once I -- once we  
18 get all of the guests off, it's just the staff and we get the  
19 galley staff off the boat and then now it's literally just the  
20 marine crew and we're all looking at each other and I'm like I'm  
21 not leaving the boat until -- you know, at this point in time we  
22 don't know the severity of what's going on in the galley and I  
23 believe I'm the only one that actually laid eyes on what was in  
24 the engine room. So I was like, you know, I'm going to stay with  
25 the captain and do whatever I got to do, whatever I can, and then

1 he makes the call, you all get off the boat. And then that's when  
2 me, Bob, Glory, Jeremiah, and George, we make our way onto the  
3 *Victory Rover* and we all separate. We head back here, I get on  
4 the *Rover* and I'm looking, I literally go look -- I look for two  
5 kids specifically, there was one -- I had two kids cry that day,  
6 only two kids to be in tears.

7 The first kid was clearly upset on second deck, just from  
8 what's going on. He was with his parent, by the way, and the  
9 parent was calm and I just looked at him just to reassure him  
10 we're good, we're going to be all right, you understand what I'm  
11 saying?

12 So we get them off the boat and as I go back through, I get  
13 -- and there's another little girl crying on the *Rover* and it's  
14 the cutest thing ever, I swear, she was crying because we left the  
15 captain. Those were her exact words to me. I could see her face  
16 like now, she's in full-blown tears because I guess Ryan stuck his  
17 head out the window to make sure things were going and she must've  
18 seen him and she sees all of us, you know, in uniforms and she's  
19 like you left the captain and I'm like he's -- and it just so  
20 happened that we had more than enough crew on the boat that day,  
21 he had a new guy that he was working with and we had extra  
22 deckhands that day, so thank God. But I tell this little girl  
23 he's good, do you understand what I'm saying, he knows what he's  
24 doing, he's been doing this for a long time, we got it. She's  
25 like no, no, you left him. And she finally -- you know, she

1 calmed down as we got back to the shore and as we moved from the  
2 *Spirit* back to Town Point, I just kept going through the *Rover* and  
3 looking at faces and I even said it to the parents, I just want to  
4 see your face. Show me your face, let me see your kids, are you  
5 all right? I took one or two PFDs off of a few people who hadn't  
6 taken theirs off yet, and then we pulled up to Town Point and, you  
7 know, here we are now with my boat on fire.

8 Q. How long have you been with the *Spirit of Norfolk*?

9 A. Four months.

10 Q. And what's your experience in the maritime prior to that?

11 A. None.

12 Q. That's the engine room hatch?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Obviously the galley, right?

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. Could you mark where you were and where you think the fire  
17 was approximately inside the engine room?

18 A. Okay, I'll put a B for me.

19 Q. Sure.

20 A. For Bryan. So this is the hatch, I am at the hatch. This is  
21 the engine room.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. This is my generators here. I'll just put G for generator  
24 because there are two of them. Then the mains are here. And I  
25 could clearly see the flame over here on the main and I know it

1 was the main and not the generator because the flame would've been  
2 closer. This you would've been closer, the heat would've been  
3 closer, there was no heat at the door when I opened the door, do  
4 you understand what I'm saying?

5 Q. Right, yeah.

6 A. So it was at that main and I can clearly see across, there  
7 was no me looking this way because the door opens like this and I  
8 opened said door and the generator would've been that wall, that  
9 corner.

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. And the main would've been behind it and I see the flame as  
12 clear as day right now.

13 Q. So if you were to estimate how tall the flame was, what would  
14 you say?

15 A. All right. Now, you have to understand that -- I mean, I  
16 know you're experienced, that motor is --

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. -- tall, so I can't tell you if that flame came from the  
19 bottom, do you understand what I'm saying, or if it was mid-motor.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. But from what I see, I mean that flame, at least two, three  
22 feet, thin, not like a --

23 Q. Right.

24 A. -- like a whoosh, this was just --

25 Q. So you're looking at it and it's like this and that, it's

1 like thin?

2 A. It's thin.

3 Q. All right.

4 A. And she's probably -- yeah.

5 Q. Two feet above the engine?

6 A. No, no, this is not above.

7 Q. It was just two feet tall?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. But like I said, I can't tell you if that was burning from  
11 the bottom or if it's burning from mid-engine.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I can just tell you that, I mean, I stand 5'10" and at that  
14 door I can see over the generator and I can see the mains, plus  
15 they're huge, do you know what I mean? So I can picture how  
16 they're sitting and like I said, I mean, the flame I saw was, you  
17 know flames move, they're quick, fast and in a hurry.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. This was not a big ball or anything like that.

20 MR. FLAHERTY: At that moment when you saw it, it was still  
21 whitish gray smoke.

22 MR. BRACEY: Yeah, this was -- yes, like ship metal gray, I  
23 mean like what we --

24 LT [REDACTED] Okay.

25 MR. BRACEY: That was the first open, because I closed the

1 door immediately.

2 LT [REDACTED] Right.

3 MR. BRACEY: And then I called for Liz to get -- not for Liz,  
4 for Glory to get behind me.

5 BY LT [REDACTED]

6 Q. Right. Then the second time you opened --

7 A. She was dark.

8 Q. -- and could you still see the flame?

9 A. No, I didn't. To be honest with you, I didn't get the  
10 chance --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- because I opened the door and it was jet black smoke, I  
13 closed it because, you know, now, all right, this has got to stay  
14 inside of here.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. I shut the door. I didn't look long enough to tell you, but  
17 you couldn't see in there even if --

18 Q. You tried.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. I just want the record to reflect that you pointed out the  
21 port main engine?

22 A. Yeah.

23 LT [REDACTED] Okay, great.

24 BY MR. KARR:

25 Q. And getting back to that flame on the port main engine, this

1 is Mike Karr, NTSB, you were asked how tall the flame was and so  
2 how high was it above the engine? Let me ask you this question  
3 first.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. Did the flame go to the overhead? Did it reach the ceiling  
6 of the engine room?

7 A. I couldn't tell you that because there was no -- there was --  
8 it was smoked out.

9 Q. Well, at the first, whatever you saw the first time.

10 A. You couldn't see, you couldn't see the overhead back there.

11 LT [REDACTED] Because of the smoke?

12 MR. BRACEY: Yeah, because of the smoke.

13 BY MR. KARR:

14 Q. So there was smoke, you saw smoke, so you saw the flame and  
15 then you saw there was smoke along the --

16 A. This was not smoke on the ceiling. I mean, this was not fire  
17 on the ceiling.

18 Q. No fire on the ceiling, but there was smoke on the ceiling --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- in the back?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. What I mean --

24 Q. How about in the whole compartment? When you first opened  
25 the door and you saw smoke --



1 MR. FLAHERTY: Was there like layers, like close to the  
2 bottom it might be clearer than the top?

3 MR. BRACEY: Yes. Because the second time I opened the door  
4 -- and I'm not going to tell you that I looked at the floor when I  
5 opened the door, because I didn't, I didn't look down, I mean, but  
6 we all know smoke rises, so I can tell you that my head up was  
7 full of smoke and I stand 5'10".

8 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay, all right.

9 BY MR. KARR:

10 Q. How many times did you open the door?

11 A. Twice.

12 MR. KARR: Twice. Okay, thanks.

13 BY LT [REDACTED]

14 Q. How familiar are you with the port main engine and the  
15 starboard engine?

16 A. As far as like mechanics and stuff like that?

17 Q. Not mechanics, but if I ask you to identify where the flame  
18 was on the engine, can you give me an estimate?

19 A. No. No. Like specifically, no, I can just tell you what  
20 side I was looking at, do you know what I mean, because I know how  
21 they sit.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. So I can tell you where -- I can tell you that it wasn't on  
24 this side and it wasn't on that side, but I couldn't tell you if  
25 it was at the -- anything mechanically, you know, if it was coming

1 out of -- I don't know.

2 Q. Okay. Was it around the midsection of the engine --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- forward or aft? Okay.

5 A. I can't tell, I couldn't tell you.

6 CWO [REDACTED] Do you know what kind of engine -- what kind of  
7 engines are they, do you know?

8 MR. BRACEY: No, I don't.

9 MR. BURTS: Excuse me. Bryan, this is Greg Burts, I'm an  
10 attorney at Phelps Dunbar. Did you say that you saw the flame on  
11 the starboard main after first opening the hatch?

12 MR. BRACEY: No, port main.

13 MR. BURTS: Port main. Okay, great, that's what I was  
14 wondering. Okay, that's it, that's all I had.

15 BY MR. KARR:

16 Q. All right, Bryan, you said the first time you -- the second  
17 -- first or second time when you lost your headphones?

18 A. I lost my headphones the first time around, because before I  
19 opened that door the first time, I put headphones on because the  
20 motors, you know, they're loud.

21 Q. So these are the ear protectors?

22 A. Yeah, like -- not like headphones like you can hear things,  
23 you know, earmuffs that -- yeah, yeah, yeah, earmuffs. And I've  
24 got my earpiece in, so what happened was, when I put them on, it  
25 slid my earpiece out.

1 Q. Oh, so that's what I wanted to follow up on. What caused  
2 your earpiece to drop out?

3 A. Just me sliding the headphone on.

4 Q. All right.

5 LT [REDACTED] And just to be clear, the headphones are hearing  
6 protection?

7 MR. BRACEY: Yes, yes. They're not like music headphones. I  
8 don't know what else to call them, but like you said, hearing  
9 protection. These aren't anything -- like I said, no music or  
10 nothing like that, these are --

11 BY MR. KARR:

12 Q. But the earpiece, was that how you were listening to the  
13 bridge conversation?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Does it just fit into one ear? Describe that earpiece.

16 A. Yeah, it's a -- I mean, for lack of better words, it looks  
17 like a really big hearing aid because it's got a, you know,  
18 microphone and thin wire, it slides over the back of my ear and  
19 then sits in my ear.

20 Q. Kind of like what the Secret Service uses?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Yeah, okay, all right.

23 A. So when I put the earmuffs on, from when I slid them over my  
24 head, it just naturally knocked it out.

25 Q. All right. And that's what's I think someone refers to as SG

1 (ph.). You use Channel 1 for that?

2 A. Yes, yes.

3 CWO [REDACTED] I don't know if you know this, what color was  
4 the flame? Like was it --

5 MR. BRACEY: Like blue or green --

6 CWO [REDACTED] Yeah.

7 MR. BRACEY: -- or something like that? Regular, it was your  
8 regular orange flame.

9 CWO [REDACTED] Regular, not like (indiscernible)?

10 MR. BRACEY: No, nothing. I knew what you meant. No blue  
11 colors or --

12 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

13 MR. BRACEY: -- exotic-looking flame or anything like that,  
14 no.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: I know you looked at it for a very brief time,  
16 but in that brief moment, could you -- was the flame at all  
17 growing, expanding or anything like that?

18 MR. BRACEY: I didn't -- no, I didn't give my visual enough  
19 time.

20 LT [REDACTED] Greg, put yourself back on mute.

21 MR. BRACEY: Smokey, and closed the door. I mean, at first  
22 opening, it may have lasted five seconds.

23 LT [REDACTED] Hey, Greg, can you put yourself back on mute?

24 MR. BURTS: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought I was on mute, excuse  
25 me.

1 MR. FLAHERTY: You could see the situation?

2 MR. BRACEY: Yeah, and I closed the door and I reported back  
3 to the wheelhouse.

4 MR. FLAHERTY: I'm sorry, (indiscernible). I mean, I know it  
5 was a very brief look, but -- and you had the smoke on top. Could  
6 you determine at what level -- like was the whole engine room  
7 smokey?

8 MR. BRACEY: Can I stand up?

9 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah.

10 (Pause.)

11 MR. FLAHERTY: So the smoke was right about there?

12 MR. BRACEY: Yeah.

13 LT [REDACTED] The first time you opened it?

14 MR. BRACEY: The first time, because you got to remember, the  
15 call was smoke in the engine room. I got it, Ryan.

16 MR. FLAHERTY: Right.

17 MR. BRACEY: I opened the door and I see a flame, all right,  
18 so there's smoke in here. Yeah, it's still in here and I'm not  
19 looking down, I don't look --

20 MR. FLAHERTY: Right.

21 MR. BRACEY: -- because my vision is --

22 MR. FLAHERTY: All right, so you would -- but when you're  
23 looking in and the smoke was roughly about here on you --

24 MR. BRACEY: Um-hum.

25 MR. FLAHERTY: -- so did you see below that, at all, or was

1 it clear? Could you see the deck below you, inside the engine  
2 room?

3 MR. BRACEY: I'm going to say I don't know, because I  
4 didn't --

5 MR. FLAHERTY: That's fine, okay. Thank you.

6 LT [REDACTED] So with the smoke being around here, were you  
7 looking through the smoke to see the flame?

8 MR. BRACEY: That first shot, yeah, the first time and it was  
9 borderline extremely dark. I mean, I open it, I see smoke, quick  
10 flame, close the door. It happened that fast.

11 BY CWO [REDACTED]

12 Q. And the flame was on the, I guess, the inboard side of the  
13 engine, not toward the bulkhead but towards the middle of the  
14 engine room?

15 A. Say that one more time.

16 Q. So you got the generators, right, like you -- the  
17 generators --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- and mains, the flame was on this inside. Could you see if  
20 there was any outside shooting towards the bulkhead by the skin of  
21 the ship or inboard toward the other main?

22 A. To me, it looked on the outboard side.

23 Q. Closer toward the skin of the ship?

24 A. Yes.

25 MR. FLAHERTY: Between the port engine --

1 MR. BRACEY: And the hull.

2 BY CWO [REDACTED]

3 Q. So is there anything around that, stored around that main,  
4 like materials, any type of materials or anything that is stored  
5 around that main that maybe could've potentially caught on fire,  
6 that you're aware of?

7 A. Not that I'm aware of.

8 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

9 Q. And I know you had the headsets on, but before the fire  
10 happened and you're down in the galley and before the call was  
11 made by the captain, did you notice anything strange?

12 A. None.

13 Q. A smell, a sound, a vibration?

14 A. No, and it was -- it was a regular -- it was regular, a  
15 regular good cruise day and I was feet from the door, so I would  
16 know, I would smell, because the galley doesn't burn too many  
17 things when they cook, do you understand what I'm saying? So I  
18 would've smelled anything not normal to our regular day.

19 Q. But sound-wise, no like a slamming mechanical noise or a  
20 popping noise or anything?

21 A. No.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. No, whatsoever.

24 Q. And you probably -- you had the headsets on, but you could  
25 still hear the diesel engines operating, right? Or you could --

1 A. Are you asking me before I opened that door, because  
2 that's --

3 Q. Yeah, before you opened the door, could you hear the diesel  
4 engines operating?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. And then after you opened up the door or the hatch, I  
7 know you had the headsets on, but you could kind of still --  
8 sometimes you can still hear things. Did you have a -- or could  
9 you feel the engines running or anything like that?

10 A. I can't tell you, I can't -- I can't say.

11 Q. All right. No, that's fine.

12 LT [REDACTED] You can't say one way or the other whether the  
13 engines were running or not?

14 MR. BRACEY: Right, no.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

16 BY MR. KARR:

17 Q. When you looked in the engine room, could you see anything  
18 that would indicate that the power was on? Lights on? Because  
19 I'm wondering if the engine then lost power, so was there any  
20 evidence that the power was on?

21 A. No. No.

22 Q. Can you recall exactly what Ryan told you when he made the  
23 call and alerted you to the fire or what did he tell you about the  
24 problem in the engine room?

25 A. The call I got was "I'm getting a smoke alarm from the engine



1 room, can somebody check it out?"

2 Q. And he did use the term "smoke alarm"?

3 A. Yes.

4 MR. KARR: Okay, that was key. I have no more questions.

5 BY LT [REDACTED]

6 Q. Great. Just real quick, we read a report on this and it's  
7 important to kind of make sure we know where everyone was at the  
8 time. It seems like you made a lot of movements. Can I just have  
9 you -- can you tell me and clarify where you were at the time? So  
10 I know that you were with Glory most of the time, right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And then after you opened the door the first time --

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. -- you were there for another couple minutes, opened the door  
15 a second time and then just real brief, you went to the bow  
16 afterward?

17 A. Yeah, I was making the move to go shut the fuel off after  
18 that.

19 Q. Okay, so you went from --

20 A. And Jeremiah already had the tool to shut the fuel off.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So then I go to the bow.

23 Q. Okay, so he shut the fuel off, you didn't shut the fuel off?

24 A. No, no, Jeremiah was already --

25 Q. Okay, so you go from the door to the bow --

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. -- and then where do you go after that?

3 A. After the bow I go to mid-ship to get a PFD.

4 Q. Okay. And then where after that?

5 A. I go -- I go back to the bow.

6 Q. And that's when you fixed the line?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Okay, and where next?

9 A. From the bow I go to second deck, up the stern to second  
10 deck.

11 Q. And that's where you start helping passengers?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Did you ever make it up to the third deck?

14 A. I did, after, after second deck I go to third deck to make  
15 sure there's nobody up there.

16 Q. Okay. And then what happened after that?

17 A. I go back down to second deck once again to check on guests  
18 and passengers.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Then I go back down to first deck.

21 Q. And was that around when you departed the vessel?

22 A. We began to, yes.

23 Q. You said that, when you were describing what happened, you  
24 said that you were very proactive in terms of checking with all of  
25 the guests and making sure that they were okay, seeing if anybody

1 was injured. Did you see anybody that was injured or are you  
2 aware of anybody being injured?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Were you injured?

5 A. No.

6 LT [REDACTED] All right. Well, that concludes our interview.  
7 Do you have any questions for us before we end?

8 MR. KARR: Anything you'd like to tell us?

9 MR. BRACEY: No. I think I just told it to you all.

10 LT [REDACTED] Okay. Well, you've been very helpful and very  
11 cooperative and we really appreciate it. Thank you. Yeah, that's  
12 the end. Those are our cards, if you have anything that you think  
13 of that could help in the investigation, please give me a call.

14 MR. BRACEY: No problem.

15 (Whereupon, at 12:24 p.m. Eastern, the interview concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

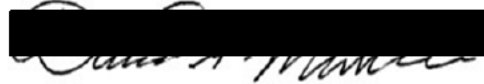
IN THE MATTER OF: FIRE ONBOARD *SPIRIT OF NORFOLK*  
NEAR NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, VIRGINIA  
ON JUNE 8, 2022  
Interview of Bryan Bracey

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM022

PLACE: Portsmouth, VA

DATE: June 9, 2022

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.



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David A. Martini  
Transcriber