

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

FIRE ONBOARD *SPIRIT OF NORFOLK* *
NEAR NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, *
VIRGINIA ON JUNE 8, 2022 *

Accident No.: DCA22FM022

* * * * *

Interview of: ROBERT ENLOE, Chief Mate
Spirit of Norfolk City Cruises

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

Wednesday,
June 8, 2022

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL KARR, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

DAVID FLAHERTY, Investigator
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

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:20 p.m. Eastern)

1
2
3 LT [REDACTED] Okay, all right. The time is now 13:20. It's
4 Wednesday, June 8th, and we've got Mr. Robert Enloe here.

5 MR. FLAHERTY: You're still going to have to identify the
6 voices, so if you could state your name --

7 LT [REDACTED] Yeah.

8 MR. FLAHERTY: -- again so the transcriber can figure it all
9 out.

10 LT [REDACTED] Yeah. Okay, so first here I've got -- I'm
11 Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast Guard investigator. We can go around
12 the room.

13 MR. KARR: And I'm Mike Karr with the National Transportation
14 Safety Board.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: I'm David Flaherty with the National
16 Transportation Safety Board.

17 MR. BROGAN: Patrick Brogan with the law firm of Davey &
18 Brogan.

19 MR. DENLEY: Eric Denley, Deputy General Counsel, Hornblower
20 Group.

21 CWO [REDACTED] Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I'm an
22 investigating officer, Sector Virginia.

23 MR. BURTS: Gregory Burts, Phelps Dunbar, on behalf of
24 Captain Ryan.

25 MR. ENLOE: State my name?

1 LT [REDACTED] Yes.

2 MR. ENLOE: Robert Enloe.

3 LT [REDACTED] Okay, all right. Thank you, sir. Do we have
4 permission to record this interview?

5 MR. ENLOE: Yes.

6 LT [REDACTED] Thank you, all right. Okay, again thanks for your
7 cooperation. Do you have any questions before we begin?

8 MR. ENLOE: No.

9 LT [REDACTED] Okay. So the way it will work is we'll kind of
10 start with some questions and we'll bounce around between all of
11 us, okay?

12 INTERVIEW OF JOHN SMITH

13 BY LT [REDACTED]

14 Q. Before we get into specific questions, I'd like to hear your
15 account of what happened that day, the incident starting from, you
16 know, beginning of the day, say when you boarded the vessel.

17 A. At the beginning of the day when we get ready for a cruise,
18 mainly my job is to see that the boat is ready to receive our
19 guests.

20 Q. And actually, I'm sorry, can I pause you for a second? Can
21 you give me, before we get into that, how long have you been with
22 the *Spirit of Norfolk*?

23 A. I've been with them 15 years in May.

24 Q. Fifteen years in May, okay. And what's your position on the
25 boat?

1 A. I'm chief mate.

2 Q. Okay. And are you a credentialed mariner?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. You hold a Coast Guard credential?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. What's your license entail?

7 A. Hundred ton.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And also I have an AB ticket.

10 Q. So is it a master hundred ton?

11 A. Yeah. Now, the hundred ton, I think they probably gave us
12 the extension, but allowed mine not to be renewed, so I'm not
13 currently operating as a hundred ton person. Other words, I let
14 my license renew or let it --

15 Q. Lapse.

16 A. -- lapse this last year.

17 Q. This last year, okay.

18 A. Yeah. So that's mainly why I'm a chief mate.

19 LT [REDACTED] Okay, sir. Do you have any foundational questions
20 before we go into --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I ask a simple question, just --

22 LT [REDACTED] Sure.

23 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

24 Q. Your AB ticket, does that lapse, too?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. I still got that.

3 Q. So your credential is good for the five years, right?

4 A. Yes, sir. That's a five-year period of time, yeah, each one.

5 Q. So your endorsement for the master hundred ton is what
6 lapsed?

7 A. Yes.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay, got you.

9 BY LT [REDACTED]

10 Q. Okay, back to my former question, if you could recount from
11 the beginning of the day --

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. -- to the incident.

14 A. We came in at approximately 7 o'clock in the morning to get
15 the boat ready. My job is to get everything started, check the
16 engines, generators, lights, ACs, et cetera, whatever we have to
17 run the boat during the day. Approximately 7:30 all of the
18 systems were on line, including our bow thruster.

19 After that, it's a matter of putting on water, we did put on
20 fuel that morning. Approximately 9:30, a fuel truck pulled up for
21 us to put fuel on. We did that. Ten, around 10 o'clock we got
22 the generator on line for the cruise. The engines had already
23 been turned off, the captain said turn those on. We got under way
24 at 10 after 11:00. At approximately 11:35, we had the first
25 engine check, which is we go down into the engine room, we have a

1 check board, we check all the engines, generators, ACs, pumps,
2 anything. Came back out. That wasn't me that checked, we had one
3 of our deckhands, senior deckhand Jeremiah Perry was the one and
4 he took one of our new mates-in-training down with him so he could
5 see how we do engine checks.

6 In the meantime, I was up with the captain and C.J. up in the
7 wheelhouse. My job also is to do paperwork, noting how many
8 passengers we have on board, making sure we call that in so they
9 know what we have during the cruise. I came down to ensure that
10 the deckhands were doing their job of keeping their areas secure,
11 bathrooms clean and all that. And it was approximately a little
12 before 12:00, I told two of the people to go down and have their
13 lunch. Five, ten minutes is what we give everyone.

14 About the same time the captain said he had got a smoke alarm
15 from the engine room. Bryan Bracey and Glory, I think her last
16 name is Nunez, Glory Nunez, were down in the galley, went to the
17 engine room to check. Well, as they got there, I came down the
18 steps behind them and when they opened up the door, that's when we
19 had all the smoke and gas, everything in the world you can think
20 of.

21 Based on experience, on my experience, anyway, there was no
22 way, we're not firefighters, we have no protective equipment, we
23 have no respirators, there was no way a fire of that type we could
24 fight. So I told them to go ahead and close the door to the
25 engine room, get everyone out, start preparing to get people out

1 and that's where we went from there. I called the captain. I
2 know at that point, by that time -- and we had already told him we
3 were turning, we were going to have to turn the boat around to go
4 back or whatever, I didn't know if he had turned the engines on or
5 off, but we were close to the Navy base, so I questioned do you
6 want us to shut down the fuel systems. He said yeah, so we shut
7 down our fuel.

8 By that time, they had started having everyone go up to the
9 third deck, up to our open deck. Next thing we had was the tugs
10 were washing the boat down, I was going back and forth with the
11 people trying to make sure everybody was keeping things calm,
12 secure, get them up. I wound up on the bow so that we could get a
13 line from the tug to start towing us.

14 The first line broke, it was just a regular line that we use
15 on the boat to hold it up against the pier, it wasn't strong
16 enough, so they came back, I pulled the old line in, they gave me
17 a big tow line from the tug which I hooked on so that they were
18 able to start towing us away. Went back in, assisted in giving
19 all the people PFDs that we needed and begin to transfer alongside
20 to the other boat.

21 Q. How did you get off the vessel?

22 A. I was the last person off, I checked with the captain to make
23 sure everything was okay with him, that he didn't want me to
24 remain, he said yeah, you're the last one, go ahead and get off.
25 We checked to make sure there were no people hanging around

1 anywhere in the bathrooms or whatever. Tried to make a count of
2 people getting off, but we had our people, the guests, all the
3 staff, and we made sure that at least everyone was off the boat
4 except the captain and the other captain that was with us.

5 Q. Okay. How long did the -- I believe the name of the vessel
6 you got on is the *Victory Rover*, how long did that vessel stay in
7 the area before you (indiscernible)?

8 A. Responder, how long did what?

9 Q. The vessel that you got on to after --

10 A. Oh, the *Rover*.

11 Q. The *Rover*.

12 A. *Rover*. How long did they stay after?

13 Q. How long were you all in the area before you departed?

14 A. Oh, gee. We were getting the people off, probably took us, I
15 would say maybe 20 minutes at the most. They came up alongside,
16 I'm assuming, because I was down below, I'm assuming that the
17 captain was talking to them on the radio, then brought them up
18 alongside, but we were given the word to open up the mid-ship
19 hatch so we could start transferring people over.

20 So we were bringing them down from the third deck all the way
21 down to the first deck over and getting them onto the *Rover* and
22 made sure the children had PFDs, that their adults, the family was
23 with them, so that it was a very safe method of getting people off
24 the boat.

25 Q. Were you able to see -- what were you able to see on the

1 vessel as far as the fire goes when you were --

2 A. I can see, on the port side, pieces of what looked like paper
3 or whatever it was flying out from the port side. I'm assuming,
4 and I can only assume because I don't know, but it was -- it
5 appeared to be coming out of the intake vent, where the intake
6 vent is. All I saw on the starboard side originally was a little
7 bit like white smoke coming out.

8 Q. Okay. Were you the first one at the vessel that morning?

9 A. Yes, I was, I opened the boat a little before 7:00 on that
10 morning.

11 Q. Can you explain, back with your engine checks, pre-under way
12 and you get everything opened, is there a check list that you're
13 using or how do you --

14 A. Yeah, there is an actual checklist that we go through. Some
15 of the mates do it backwards, I mean, I have my way of going in
16 and checking each engine, generator, everything, between all the
17 mates and a lot of the senior deckhands on the same procedure. So
18 each mate has their own way of doing it, winds up doing the same
19 thing, but you may check a generator before you check the mains.
20 But the gist of the whole thing and the reasoning is we want to
21 know that system works early in the morning so if there is a
22 problem, we can get someone out to take care of it.

23 Q. Okay. Did you detect anything that morning?

24 A. So that morning everything, like I've been doing it for 15
25 years, had no problem, everything started up right, we had no

1 issues with anything out of the abnormal, we checked the bilges to
2 make sure that during the night nothing's happened. That's part
3 of our philosophy on there is not to have the blinders on and just
4 see the instrument in front of you or the engine in front of you,
5 is to check under, over, around to make sure that everything's
6 normal.

7 Q. Okay. What do you do with that check sheet after you're
8 done? Do you send it to somebody or --

9 A. Well, the check sheet's usually on the board and it's
10 printed, it's plasticized. The check sheet we use for the engine
11 checks is one that we use every day and we take those and we save
12 those, we usually save them for at least a year, maybe longer.

13 Q. Okay. And those are done -- what's the -- how often --

14 A. We do checks, we do engine checks every 30 minutes.

15 Q. And you keep each of those for a year?

16 A. We keep the -- yeah, we keep each sheet at least a year.
17 Sometimes they wind up being there for two years before they get
18 thick enough that we take them, throw them away.

19 Q. Are those kept in the engine room somewhere?

20 A. Kept up in the wheelhouse.

21 Q. When was the last time you were -- before this last trip,
22 when was the last time you were (indiscernible)?

23 A. I did a cruise last Wednesday and Thursday and then I did the
24 one yesterday.

25 Q. Okay. Did you notice any kind of anomalies or anything like

1 that?

2 A. Not a thing. Everything started up just like it has been,
3 had not heard of anything from anyone, started up just like
4 they've all started for me, so I can only go by what happens when
5 you're running. We usually run them for 15 or 20 minutes in the
6 morning and then shut them down. We found that they work, that's
7 our main purpose is do they start, do they run, do we see
8 anything.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. At that point, then you shut it down and it -- about an hour
11 or so before the guests start coming aboard, that's when we go in
12 and turn on our generator, leave it on, what we do, what we call a
13 swap over, just swap from shore power to generator power.

14 Q. You made that swap that morning?

15 A. Huh?

16 Q. You made the swap that morning with no issues?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. All right. You stated that the captain, that they were
19 getting a fire alarm, is that right?

20 A. What we've heard and what we --

21 Q. Or a smoke alarm?

22 A. -- are hearing on this the captain said he had got a smoke
23 alarm up in the wheelhouse.

24 Q. Okay. Is that something that you can actually hear?

25 A. That, well, we all carry radios, so everyone is -- I'm

1 assuming everybody heard that, just like everybody else did. Now,
2 I don't know if the captain put it out to one certain person
3 because a lot of times he'll call and say hey, Joe, hey, Sam or
4 whatever and you kind of tune it out after that.

5 Q. Okay. When I hear smoke alarm, I think of, you know, one in
6 my house, that this one here, like the crew can hear it or the
7 passengers can hear it, is that --

8 A. We have temp alarms, we have a monitor where we can get temp
9 alarms, oil pressure alarms, things like this up in the
10 wheelhouse. So at that point when it goes off, the captain,
11 whoever's in the wheelhouse, is the only one that hears that.

12 Q. Okay. And so can you explain what happened after you
13 communicated via radio?

14 A. Well, that's when they said have someone go down and check
15 the engine room.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. That's the first indication is if it's an alarm coming from
18 there, let's find out what's going on. So we had -- I had already
19 sent two people down there to grab lunch. Those two people ran to
20 the door, I came down behind them, they had already opened up the
21 door and as soon as they did, of course, smoke just poured out.
22 The guy said should we get the hose out, I said no, I said that's
23 a fire we can't fight, you can't breathe at the doorway, do you
24 think you can breathe inside?

25 Q. Were you at the galley door when they opened it or --

1 A. I was at the -- I was at the engine room door, I was right
2 there with them at the engine room door itself. Other words, they
3 were in the galley, you have to go through the galley back to the
4 engine room and unlock the door and open it up and I said where
5 did you see the fire -- I didn't see it -- where did you see the
6 fire, he said I saw it over on the right side, which would be the
7 port quarters.

8 Q. So they were able to visibly see the flames?

9 A. Yeah. And it was -- and I know the difference between hot
10 coolant leaks and fires and I knew right away this was not a hot
11 steam or coolant, this was fire.

12 Q. Did you actually see the fire?

13 A. What's that?

14 Q. Did you actually see the flames?

15 A. No, I didn't. We opened up the door enough that the first
16 guy that was there could see it, but like I say, you had smoke,
17 everything blowing right out and we only opened the door maybe
18 that much. And my thought at that time was we can't fight it, our
19 position is to get the people started, get them upstairs. So
20 that's when we radioed the captain, we got a major fire here and
21 we can't fight it, we need to -- we need to start getting people
22 off.

23 Q. I'd like to ask a little bit about your -- the training that
24 you all do on board as far as, you know, real-world scenarios with
25 firefighting. Have you done a training scenario like this before?

1 A. We do training on our own and we do Coast Guard training
2 every year. Usually what they do is they'll come out, we do a
3 fire drill and it can be at various places on the boat. It's kind
4 of like when you put a smoke box somewhere and tell us hey, you
5 got a fire, we try to find it. We know the ways to get in and out
6 of the areas, if we have to. Fire drills, man overboard drills,
7 get our passengers off the boat or up to a new level, those are
8 all drills that we constantly look at through the year.

9 BY MR. KARR:

10 Q. I have some. So let's see. Oh, was there a muster on the
11 shore after everyone was evacuated so you account for all the
12 passengers and crew?

13 A. We got back and I spoke to this gentleman back here about it,
14 I gave him the particulars as far as how many people we boarded --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- what the total was with crew and passengers, and once we
17 got ashore, the *Rover* people were supposed to go off first, that
18 was the word that had been given, but a lot of our people were in
19 a hurry, they'd been on there for four or five hours already, so
20 it was kind of like mix and mingle getting them off.

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. I knew how many of our crew was on there, we made sure they
23 were there so that they didn't get away. I don't know that the
24 *Rover* crew did any type of muster or anything to check.

25 Q. Did Hornblower or the captain of the vessel, did he do a

1 muster of all the passengers and crew on the pier after everyone
2 had gotten off?

3 A. No, we don't -- like I say, all the people that were on the
4 boat, that were on the *Rover*, came off of our boat and were added
5 to the *Rover* crew --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- and we knew that everyone from our boat was off of our
8 boat on the *Rover* --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- and they all made it from there to the shore, but there
11 was no one -- I don't know that there was somebody there actually
12 counting or getting names of people on and off.

13 Q. Okay. To your knowledge, was there -- was there any storage
14 of boxes or any other materials in the engine room?

15 A. Well, we keep a lot of our storage down there, parts for the
16 engines and generators, things like that. The other things you
17 would see would be antifreeze.

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. We keep coolant for the gens and the mains. Probably a few
20 cans of WD-40, stuff like that. We don't keep extra fuel down
21 there.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. We do keep our oil, our lube oil down there.

24 Q. How much lube oil?

25 A. We had, at the time, I think it was three and a half five-

1 gallon cans of lube oil.

2 Q. So roughly about 15 to 20 gallons or something like that?

3 A. That's to keep -- keep it so if we have to do an engine oil
4 change, we can do it.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. Also, if we had to add oil to our engines and generators, we
7 have plenty of oil.

8 Q. Do you have any like spare air filters or --

9 A. We just had got two air -- the big metal air filters and
10 those are only for the generators.

11 Q. Were they in a box or were they outside of a box?

12 A. They were in boxes, yeah. We get them in regular cardboard
13 boxes right straight from the group and that's how we store them.

14 Q. If you don't mind, on the diagram there --

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. -- where the -- I don't know if you can see where the engine
17 room is located on there.

18 A. Well, let's see, it's the top, this looks like the main deck
19 here. Anyway, the engine room is all the way -- you know, you
20 would have your shaft alley --

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. -- rudder room and right in front of that would be your
23 engine room.

24 Q. The boxes and any of the other stuff that was stored in the
25 engine room, could you mark where -- from your memory, can you

1 mark where it would be located?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Let's see, if we're looking at this, the boxes would be over
5 on the port side, that's where we keep that, our air filters.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Up toward the door would be where we keep our oil and that
8 would really be the only two items that would be paper or oil on
9 the boat --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- so we keep them there.

12 Q. So prior to the fire or when you understood that there was a
13 fire, anything unusual? Anything in the slightest difference in
14 the way the engines were sounding or the way the boat was handling
15 or something?

16 A. No, not a bit. Maybe it's because we do it so much, but
17 everything was just normal like every day. If I'm working seven
18 days a week, they start the same way, run the same way, and I
19 would know if there was something wrong right away.

20 Q. What kind of diesels are they? The diesels, what type are
21 they?

22 A. What's what?

23 Q. What type of diesel are they?

24 A. These are the Scania diesel engines and they're Carter CAT
25 generators.

1 Q. How much horsepower?

2 A. Scania and Carter Caterpillar generators.

3 Q. Scania's the main engine and Caterpillar's for the gens?

4 A. Yes, for the gens.

5 MR. BURTS: I'm sorry, can you repeat what the main diesel
6 motors were, who the manufacturer of this was?

7 MR. ENLOE: Scania is the name of the engines.

8 MR. BURTS: Scania, okay. Thank you.

9 MR. ENLOE: Right.

10 MR. BURTS: And the CATs were the generators?

11 MR. ENLOE: Yeah, the CAT generators are from Caterpillar.

12 MR. BURTS: Okay, got it. Thank you.

13 BY MR. KARR:

14 Q. And when was the last time the fuel was changed on the
15 generator?

16 A. When it was -- fuel was pumped?

17 Q. I'm sorry, fuel filters.

18 A. Oh, fuel filters. We did the -- both generators
19 approximately -- and I can't tell you the date because we do every
20 -- we do filter changes, oil changes every 250 hours. So it's
21 been a good month, maybe six weeks or more since we did --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- the oil filter and -- filter changes on our generators.

24 Q. How about the main engines, when was the last time a fuel
25 filter --

1 A. Generators, we've done them. The engines, gee, they've been
2 -- yeah, it's been within the last two months that we've done
3 those.

4 Q. Any problems with leaks with any of the fuel oil filters?

5 A. We keep the fuel filters and everything over on the port
6 side.

7 Q. Um-hum.

8 A. Like I say, that's where most of our parts are --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- and we keep our oil filters, fuel filters, air filters,
11 everything's right over there and convenient, and part of my job
12 as chief mate is to make sure that we have parts to do normal and
13 regular maintenance, I have to do that, and part of it also is
14 training the people how to do those maintenance tasks. So I'm
15 usually the one that knows when to order them, make sure where
16 they're at when we need them.

17 Q. And for the lube oil filters, when was the last time you
18 changed the lube oil filters?

19 A. Well, the lube oil filters are on the generators and engines,
20 we change those every time we change oil.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. We do the whole thing, we change our primary/secondary fuel
23 filter, your oil filters, your air filters, everything gets
24 changed at the same time.

25 Q. Do the engines vibrate a lot?

1 A. No, engines will vibrate or can vibrate and sometimes it's
2 according to what speed you're going.

3 Q. Exactly.

4 A. But no, we don't see a lot of vibration. I think if we saw a
5 lot of excess vibration we would probably wind up having somebody
6 come out and take a look at them, but those engines, they're good
7 and there were no apparent vibration problems or anything.

8 BY MR. KARR:

9 Q. Mr. Enloe, when you -- you have a captain's license, have you
10 ever served as a captain on board the *Spirit* vessels?

11 A. Not as a full-time captain, no. I've always had a captain's
12 license with them, but back in 2010 they asked me to be chief mate
13 and that's what I've done.

14 Q. All right. Do you know, you know, from your observations or
15 knowledge how often the vessel was fueled?

16 A. Well, obviously it's when we get to a point where we feel we
17 need to have fuel, but --

18 Q. And how often would that be, do you know?

19 A. -- the captain -- yeah, the captain makes the decision, it's
20 usually, at least in our cruising season, it's usually at least
21 once a month, I would say.

22 Q. And when you -- when you were with the group of folks that
23 opened up the door into the engine room and looked in, can you
24 tell me what -- can you describe that door? I assume it's a
25 watertight door.

1 A. Right. Yes, sir.

2 Q. So what kind of closing devices does it have?

3 A. Well, it's a dog hatch, you know, we call them the knee-
4 knocker hatches and it's an actual -- I think it's an eight dogged
5 door so you have to actually turn it to open it and it dogs it
6 down when you latch it.

7 Q. So you have a wheel on it?

8 A. A wheel, yeah.

9 Q. And when you do that wheel, all the --

10 A. All of the spokes open.

11 Q. All right. Now, do you recall, can you -- did you actually
12 witness that door being closed?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And can you describe how he closed it? Was it hot, you know,
15 was it --

16 A. Well, we always open and close it is to open it all the way
17 one way, close it fully the other way. Other words, all the way
18 to the left open, all the way to the right to dog it down.

19 Q. Do you remember observing that the door was actually
20 closed --

21 A. Closed, yes. When I said let's dog it down and get out, we
22 made sure the door was closed.

23 Q. All right. Do you recall if the door was hot or if there was
24 any indication of fire right there when you --

25 A. No, in fact, when you got there, you know, usually they come

1 up with your hand up against the door if you want to check
2 something, but there was no real indication on the outside of the
3 door, but as soon as you opened up the door, we had plenty of
4 indication.

5 Q. And now I'd like -- I'd like to be able to -- I'd like to
6 know what exactly you did during certain points.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. So what role or what did you do to get -- when the passengers
9 went from the main deck up to the upper deck?

10 A. All right, we came upstairs --

11 Q. Well, I'm particularly interested in you, what you personally
12 did.

13 A. I came upstairs, made sure that the people were starting to
14 get movement. At one point in time I was out on the bow and we're
15 getting drowned from the boats, they were trying to bring a tug up
16 to try to get a -- try to get a line to us. As I come up from the
17 engine room, we already had a tug coming from the Navy base out to
18 the boat.

19 The captain, in fact, at one point, came down and ran to the
20 stern to see exactly what he could find out about the fire on the
21 port side and at that point, then he went back up to the
22 wheelhouse, I ran forward to the bow with one of the other guys,
23 Bryan Bracey, to make sure that we could get the tug connected to
24 us to start towing it because we were drifting toward the Navy
25 base, the Navy gets hostile when you get too close to it. So at

1 that point, I was there. Once we got the first line on, I came
2 back in and was assisting getting PFDs over so that we could get
3 them to the guests. When the line snapped on the bow, I ran back
4 out, I told Bryan not to come out because I was afraid we'd have
5 some stuff breaking loose and I didn't want to get anyone hurt, so
6 I had him go back inside.

7 I pulled the free line out, the line that broke, the tug gave
8 us a big huge tow line, which I put over our cleat so that they
9 were able to take strain and start moving us away and at that --
10 of course, I'm drowned, my radio's not working that good because
11 I'm wet, I go back inside and assist getting people dressed out in
12 PFDs so they can start -- get offloaded.

13 Q. All right. And then when the PFDs were put on the people,
14 were they on the upper deck?

15 A. They were on the upper deck coming down, they had sent
16 everyone up and they were moving them around up there so that they
17 could get them away from the smoke because the smoke kept
18 drifting, you know, different places and at the time when the
19 *Rover* boat pulled up, we knew we were going to get those people
20 off, so as they came down we were handing PFDs, making sure that
21 people got them on, and got them on to the boat.

22 Q. All right. And were you one of the people handing them PFDs?

23 A. I was handing PFDs to the people that were in the B (ph.)
24 area, handing -- putting them on the customers.

25 Q. All right.

1 A. The stairwell comes down and you've got about a probably six
2 by eight foot area, mid-ship we call it, and you can imagine we
3 were bringing the people down from upstairs, children and
4 families, and giving the PFDs to them, put them on, making sure
5 they're snapped, getting them over and helping to get them over
6 onto the Rover boat. So I was bringing stuff in to those folks,
7 to get the PFDs to put on them.

8 Q. And after the last passenger left, describe what you did.

9 A. Okay. I ran up to the wheelhouse to find out from the
10 captain if he needed me to do anything and if he wanted me to
11 stay, but at that point he said no. He said tell them you're the
12 last person on. We had already ran around trying to make sure
13 there was nobody scattered somewhere, making sure we didn't have
14 any loose items laying around, as far as passenger stuff. And as
15 I left the boat, I told the Rover people, I said I'm the last one
16 off, we've got two souls aboard, the captain and the captain he
17 was training, I said everyone else is off.

18 Q. Different type of question. As the other vessels were
19 putting water on your boat, do you recall actually seeing where
20 that water was going and what it was doing?

21 A. Yeah, if I was on the stern, it was on the stern; if I was on
22 the bow, it was on the bow. They were mainly, when they first
23 came over, they were mainly putting it on the stern quarters, the
24 primary, the port quarter, that's where they saw us first because
25 the boat was slowly turning so they had tugs putting water all

1 over the boat.

2 Q. Can you be specific as to all over the boat?

3 A. Well, they started out putting it on the port side, back in
4 the stern area where the smoke was coming out there. But you had
5 tugs on the starboard side and that's where your smoke was coming
6 out of the exhaust vents, and then you had a tug up forward,
7 spraying down the boat from up there, so we were getting it on all
8 sides.

9 Q. Well, the tug forward, what was -- what type of spray, was he
10 -- was it a direct stream hose or was it more of a spray?

11 A. They had a big, big -- I don't know if it was -- I assume it
12 was automatic, a big --

13 Q. Big (indiscernible)?

14 A. Big gun that they were spraying us --

15 Q. A big gun they were spraying?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And where was the gun shooting?

18 A. It was shooting up in the air, down on the boat and I was out
19 on the bow, I had to finally take cover because I was getting
20 drowned out there.

21 Q. I'm trying to figure out what he was targeting, you know, was
22 he targeting the after part of the boat, you know, shooting a
23 stream of water?

24 A. I think he was trying to get any of the boat he could.

25 Q. Well, was there some -- was there fire, a fire or --

1 A. There wasn't a fire in the bow, but I mean, the way the water
2 was coming on from all the different tugs, we were getting it all
3 over. One of the other tugs, one of our mate's, George's brother,
4 worked on -- I forget what the name of that tug is, but he saw him
5 up there with a hand-powered gun hitting the side of the boat,
6 hitting the port side of the boat.

7 Q. Forward or aft?

8 A. This was more mid to aft side --

9 Q. Mid to aft.

10 A. -- from them.

11 Q. And let me -- I want to really identify what that tug at the
12 bow was doing. Was it shooting a stream of water and where was it
13 directed?

14 A. Well, it was -- a lot of it was up in the air and it was
15 falling all over the boat.

16 Q. Falling all over the boat.

17 A. While I was on the bow, it was just like I was in a
18 waterfall. I mean, finally, at the time I think we had like --
19 there were at least -- it had to be at least four tugs out there.

20 Q. Spraying water?

21 A. I don't know if every one of them was spraying water, but
22 most of the tugs have -- they have equipment that they can spray
23 water. There was just a lot of water everywhere. I went to the
24 stern, the side, they were spraying that and there was water
25 coming all in the back. The bow, there was water up there. Once

1 they had the *Rover* pulled up, of course, you're not going to spray
2 right there.

3 Q. All right. In training and policies, has it ever -- has it
4 ever -- do you know of any policy or training with regard to
5 getting passengers off the boat during an emergency?

6 A. Well, we train on how we want to handle passengers on an
7 episode like this. Our ideal is to get them -- if it's a fire
8 anywhere down below, we're supposed to get the customers up to the
9 third deck, that's the main thing. Now, if it's a situation where
10 there's a possibility we think we're going to sink, we know the
11 spots we can take the boat to or we run it aground. The main
12 thing is get the passengers safely up to the third deck.

13 Q. When you talk about you know the spots where to take it to or
14 run it aground, is that training, have you had classroom training
15 for that or are there drills?

16 A. Well, no, we don't actually run the boat aground, but that's
17 -- if we can't get to a place safely, then taking it to a shallow
18 area, that way the boat can't sink anywhere.

19 Q. Yeah. Well, what I'm asking is that -- is that actually
20 written down somewhere or you've been trained on that?

21 A. In our training policy, the captain does have a policy book
22 of what to do and when to do it. I'm not going to specifically
23 say yes, that's --

24 Q. No, but that's what you understood?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And how do you think you understood that to be --

2 A. That's the way we've been training for 15 years that I've
3 been on there, that's been passed down to us. Obviously, you want
4 to try to do everything you can to protect your customers, to
5 protect your guests, and that's our way of doing it, getting them
6 up, away from any hazardous situations.

7 Q. All right. And you have restaurant staff that are not part
8 of the crew, so can you --

9 A. They're not part of the operation group, but they've been
10 trained on what to do to help get the guests out. If you've got
11 four or five people doing a cruise operations-wise, we can't be
12 everywhere with our short crew. If you've got a captain and three
13 deckhands, that gives you four people, so we have to rely on the
14 restaurant staff to be able to help us and by that, they also go
15 to the guests, start getting them moving, making sure that there
16 is a cleared -- moving them up, away from the --

17 Q. During this evolution, did you give any of the restaurant
18 staff any direction?

19 A. The restaurant staff was on it before I even got up there.
20 While we were downstairs and we put the word out that there was a
21 fire and I told the galley manager to get all of his people out,
22 by the time I got up, they were already moving people out.

23 Q. And did you observe them moving people out?

24 A. Yes, um-hum.

25 Q. And what did that look like?

1 A. Yeah, they had them just moving, calmly telling people hey,
2 folks, we just need you all to move up to the third deck.

3 Q. All right.

4 A. See, they had already been up and down to the third deck
5 already, so it wasn't like they didn't know where to go.

6 Q. Oh, true.

7 A. The guests had already been up there for an hour, up and
8 down.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. They did it real calmly and that's the way we train, is to --
11 you don't necessarily make your guests feel like there's a big
12 emergency, we don't want them to panic. It was very, very
13 orderly.

14 Q. And when you landed, where did the *Victory Rover* finally take
15 you all?

16 A. It let us off at the *Victory* landing, *Victory Rover* landing
17 spot right there at Waterside. The place where they usually dock.

18 Q. Did any city services, fire department, sheriff's department,
19 anybody meet you there?

20 A. Well, we saw an ambulance setting out there and there were --
21 there were a few police officers, fire department people were
22 there, that's what I observed from the boat.

23 Q. Can you describe any checkout procedure, you know, before --
24 did anyone check people off the -- you know --

25 A. I don't think there was --

1 Q. Before they let everybody go, did they account for names or
2 anything like that?

3 A. Yeah, I don't think there was anyone there with an actual
4 checklist saying okay, your name is, what is your name. They put
5 the word out, I was up in the wheelhouse for a while with the
6 captain of the *Rover*, they put the word out, we want to let all of
7 our people, *Rover* people, off first, but we had a lot of people
8 with kids and they wanted off, too. So even though we tried to
9 make sure that the *Rover* people got off first, a lot of the *Spirit*
10 people got off, too.

11 Q. Okay. Well, I'm interested in your personal story, so when
12 you walked off the *Rover*, describe what you did in the next 10 or
13 15 minutes until you --

14 A. Well, they --

15 Q. -- started on your way home.

16 A. -- came aboard and told us, they came aboard and told us hey,
17 you're going to have to meet with the people when you get off, we
18 got the Coast Guard, we got people that want to talk to you guys,
19 I said fine, no problem. So once everyone was off the boat, we
20 took all of our PFDs that were ours and stacked them on the dock,
21 then we met with some of the folks here. I gave them the numbers
22 of passengers and the passengers plus the crew and staff, which
23 came out to a hundred and eight people, and which meant that we
24 brought back, from the *Spirit*, a hundred and six because we left
25 two on board. No, like I say, I don't see anyone sitting there

1 with a pad and counting names or whatever. We do know that they
2 all got off the *Spirit*, we know that we got to the landing and
3 everyone got off the *Rover*. I think people probably were in a
4 hurry to disperse after that point, they'd been on there for --
5 they left at 11:00 and this was now 3:30, 4 o'clock, getting close
6 to it. Three o'clock.

7 Q. Going back to the comment you just said about everybody off
8 the *Spirit*, so what conversation did you have with the captain
9 where you guys said, you know, we're satisfied everybody's off?

10 A. Yeah. Well, we told him, we said everyone's off the boat
11 except us, other words, the operations group. I said we got all
12 the passengers off, the restaurant and galley staff were off. I
13 said what do you want, do you want us to do anything and he said
14 no, have the crew go ahead and leave. I ran up to talk to the
15 captain directly and said hey, do you need me to do anything else,
16 do you want me to stick with you, and I grabbed my bag and he said
17 no, you're the last one off. I ran back down and told the *Rover*,
18 I said all of our passengers are off, I'm the last person off,
19 everybody's off the boat except the captain and the relief
20 captain.

21 Q. Did you see any fire? Did you see any flames while you were
22 on the --

23 A. I saw flames on the -- on the outside of the boat.

24 Q. When you were on the *Rover*?

25 A. On the port side. Well, I saw, I saw a little bit from --

1 Q. I'm sorry, I put words in your mouth. So how did you see the
2 flames on the outside of the boat?

3 A. I saw the flames on the outside from the side of the boat,
4 from the port side you could see the flames coming out. I didn't
5 see any flames on the starboard side.

6 Q. And what were the flames coming out of?

7 A. I'm thinking they came out from the intake vent. That's how
8 we feed the air in and all I saw was smoke coming down and saw it
9 beside the exhaust vent. I did see it once we pulled away, you
10 could see the stuff coming out, as we pulled away on the Rover.

11 Q. And where was it coming out of there?

12 A. Yeah, the --

13 Q. When you saw -- when you saw it from the Rover, where did you
14 see flames?

15 A. Yeah, we were pulling out and you could see the flames coming
16 out on the side. Mostly smoke, because they were putting so much
17 water on it, that's going to kill a lot of flames coming out the
18 windows there, coming out --

19 Q. When you saw them putting -- when you saw them putting water
20 on it, how were they putting water on it then?

21 A. Mostly spraying directly on the area, you know, the stern
22 area. That's where they were trying to hit.

23 Q. Well, were they putting it on flames or were they cooling --
24 were they just shooting it against the side of the ship?

25 A. It was all over, all over the boat, but that's the only area

1 that we could see anything coming out of was on the very stern of
2 the boat on the port side. That's the only area where smoke was
3 coming out of.

4 Q. When you said it was all over, did you mean smoke, flames, or
5 water?

6 A. Well, water was going all over the boat and you still had a
7 lot of smoke coming out. I think the water was suppressing the
8 flames coming out of that -- the exhaust vent, or the intake vent.
9 But there again, we had so much water going on the boat, it's hard
10 to say, whatever was there was being hit by water because we had
11 enough water coming into the boat.

12 Q. Were your clothes soaked when you left the boat?

13 A. Oh, yeah, I was soaking wet.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I was up on the bow and we were getting hit by tons of water
16 and my radio just -- it was gone, I mean, there was nothing it
17 would do, it was like I was under water almost.

18 MR. KARR: All right. Thanks.

19 BY LT [REDACTED]

20 Q. With your knowledge of the engine room, where your crew
21 member described where the fire was, where do you think the fire
22 started?

23 A. I couldn't tell you. All I know is when we opened the door,
24 I didn't see it, I had all the smoke and everything coming out in
25 my face, like he did, and I said we can't -- you can't breathe in

1 this stuff, we can't fight it. I said where did you see it and he
2 said I saw it in the right-hand corner, which would be the port
3 side stern, that's where he saw the flames. Other words, that
4 would be -- if we were down here, he saw it back over here in this
5 port corner area.

6 Q. Could you mark that?

7 A. Yeah. Now, we have an exhaust vent right about in this area
8 here and this was -- and this area back in here is where he said
9 he saw the flames. So it's down on the port, it would've been on
10 the port side of the engine room, that's where he said he saw the
11 fire. So you have between his vantage point and where he said he
12 was looking, you have the port generator and you have the port
13 main.

14 Q. With the way that the vessel kind of engineering is
15 structured, who oversees maintenance on the boat, is that you
16 or --

17 A. Well, we have a lot of people doing maintenance. My job is
18 to help train them so we can do maintenance. I train people how
19 to do oil changes, all that. My job is to make sure that it's
20 done in a timely fashion and that it's done correctly.

21 Q. Okay. Is there a port engineer with the company that you
22 work with, as well? Anybody shoreside that does anything --

23 A. No. We're all self-contained, the only time we have anyone
24 come in is if we have to have some kind of repairs, you know.

25 Q. If you have repairs on the vessel?

1 A. Other than that, it's us. If we have to call Carter CAT or
2 Bay Diesel or a welding group or whoever, they're called in, they
3 come and do their job and then they're gone.

4 Q. Okay. Have you had any work on the vessel recently that one
5 of those entities --

6 A. They had -- they had a problem with water, the water tilt
7 (ph.), and it was a -- what do you call it? I can't think of
8 anything. The water, the water that filters the water through the
9 main, we had a hole in it and it punched off a hole in the skin,
10 letting all the coolant out. So they had to come in and repair
11 that and that was --

12 MR. FLAHERTY: You're talking about keel coolers.

13 MR. ENLOE: -- three weeks ago.

14 MR. FLAHERTY: Was that the keel coolers?

15 MR. ENLOE: What's that?

16 MR. FLAHERTY: The keel coolers where the --

17 MR. ENLOE: No, it wasn't a keel cooler, it was the -- it was
18 a part on the boat that controls running your water through the
19 system.

20 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah, it was the pump casing.

21 MR. ENLOE: Yeah, yeah. It was inside and it punched a hole,
22 I guess, I don't know how, but in the skin and let all the coolant
23 out. So you had a lot of hot coolant in the engine room.

24 BY LT [REDACTED]

25 Q. Which engine was that?

1 A. That was the port engine.

2 Q. The port engine, good. And after the work had been done or
3 during that process, did you oversee any of that or were you
4 involved in any of that?

5 A. Yeah, everything was put back and we've been operating,
6 operating fine ever since.

7 Q. Did the company or yourself do any kind of testing after --

8 A. Well, Bryan and the people that did the work took the boat
9 out and ran it really good to make sure everything was working
10 like it was supposed to and it did. You know, we always do sea
11 trials any time we have any kind of problem, whether it be a sea
12 trial at the pier or actually taking it out. And yeah, the engine
13 started good, ran good, and it's been running good ever since.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Did you say when, when was that repair
15 done?

16 BY LT [REDACTED]

17 Q. When was the repair on the vessel done, that you're speaking
18 of?

19 A. It's been two and a half, two and a half, three weeks. About
20 two and a half to three weeks.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. That's the only thing that's happened with the -- with the
23 boat since the yard, when we -- it spent several weeks in the
24 shipyard back in January and February.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So that's the only thing that we've had since then.

2 Q. It seems like you have quite a bit of responsibilities as far
3 as the engine room goes. Do you have any kind of training that
4 was provided to you by the company or what's your --

5 A. No, we don't -- I don't do any heavy maintenance on anything.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I do oil changes, you know, change the filters, things like
8 that. In terms of repairs, no, I'm not a mechanic. We do have
9 people that come in and do all our work. My job is to ensure the
10 work gets done, train the guys on how to do the bit of
11 maintenance, normal maintenance that we do, that's an ongoing
12 process, constant, year round.

13 Q. Is there any work that you've been involved with in the
14 machinery space or the engine room previously that you had
15 responsibility to oversee but you didn't feel comfortable with
16 your, kind of, skill or knowledge of (indiscernible)?

17 A. Well, there's nothing really that I have -- that I train
18 people on that I don't know everything about and that I will go
19 back and check, whether it be changing batteries or doing battery
20 checks, anything, the bow thruster, oil changes, we do all that.
21 It's my responsibility, maybe not to do it directly, but make sure
22 that it's done correctly and that's why their training is
23 constant. Jeremiah's been there over three years, I've started to
24 give him more responsibility to oversee these jobs. But in terms
25 of maintenance, ours is basic, oil changes, filter changes, things

1 like that.

2 BY MR. KARR:

3 Q. And I may not have heard this, do you know who closed the
4 fuel, the emergency fuel shutoff valves?

5 A. Yes, sir. Jeremiah Perry was up on the deck. I said before
6 we do it, let's call the captain and make sure he's not trying to
7 turn the boat around because once we shut the fuel down, that's
8 it. So I called Ryan and I said captain, do you want us to go
9 ahead and shut the fuel off now, and he said yes, go ahead and
10 shut the fuel down, he said turn it off.

11 Q. Did you actually see Jeremiah turn it off?

12 A. Yeah, we got the tri-handle out there and shut them down.

13 MR. FLAHERTY: So you saw him do the last real big tug? You
14 saw him come to a stop, right, when he was --

15 MR. ENLOE: Yeah, yeah. Well, we train on this, it's -- to
16 do our regular maintenance chores every month, we have things set
17 up and we have to go through that, we can't just say yeah, it's
18 done. So he's trained enough to know how to close them and how to
19 open them. Main thing is, is to make sure if you close them, that
20 you open them back up, if it's a normal leak. We've had people
21 forget sometimes to open them back up, not --

22 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah.

23 MR. ENLOE: -- much, but it does happen. Same thing as doing
24 the oil change, filter change out and you're turning your fuel off
25 at the engine and you forget to turn it back on, so that's -- we

1 go through all these scenarios.

2 BY MR. KARR:

3 Q. Did you train Jeremiah on how to --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- close the emergency fuel shutter?

6 A. Jeremiah's been there three years, I've done most of the
7 training with him.

8 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

9 Q. If you could describe like when you were checking for
10 passengers, did that also include going down to the galley?

11 A. Galley, well, I had been in the galley, that's where I came
12 out of the engine room.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. Richaun (ph.), the galley -- he's a cook, manager, whatever,
15 I said Richaun, are you the only one here, yeah, I said you need
16 to get out, make sure all your people are out and get them out,
17 get them upstairs.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So there was myself, Bryan Bracey, Glory, we were the three
20 people down there at the time and we all, we all came out.

21 Q. Do you feel that within the spaces outside of the engine
22 room, like in the galley and maybe in storage lockers, is there a
23 lot of material stored on the vessel?

24 A. Food, food cans are stored in the galley. They have big
25 shelving with the cans stashed up there.

1 Q. Cleaning materials?

2 A. Not a lot of anything else. They have things like maybe some
3 bleach, the cleaners they use for their sinks and making sure that
4 there are places for washing vegetables and things like that are
5 clean. So you have those, you know, those materials but there's
6 not a lot of boxes and trash around, no, we take that off after
7 every --

8 Q. Boxes of paper towels or anything like that?

9 A. Well, we keep all our paper towels in the pump room forward
10 below the first deck.

11 Q. Okay. And then when you were leaving, were you the last one
12 out of the galley?

13 A. I was the last one -- well, the three of us kind of went up
14 the same time, we were all there together.

15 Q. Did you notice any temperature increase?

16 A. No.

17 Q. All right.

18 A. No, everything seemed normal until you got to the door and
19 opened it.

20 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

21 BY CWO [REDACTED]

22 Q. I've got something, real quick. So when the fire -- you said
23 that the guy opened the door, he could see the fire on the port
24 side by the engine, is that the same side that the lube oil cans
25 and stuff were stored?

- 1 A. Is what stored?
- 2 Q. The lube oil drums.
- 3 A. It's about midway. The lube oil is stored right on the other
4 side of the port generator and then if you go back a little bit
5 aft to the support is where the main, the starboard --
- 6 Q. So you walk into the --
- 7 A. -- the port engine is.
- 8 Q. -- engine room, generator first, then main behind it?
- 9 A. Yeah, um-hum.
- 10 Q. So over here, lube oil.
- 11 A. You walk in the door, you got your generator, to the side of
12 it's the lube oil, you walk back and make a right, that's where
13 your port main is.
- 14 Q. Okay. Is that like a plant (ph.) locker on there, like for
15 hazardous material to be stored, like a designated space for
16 flammable materials?
- 17 A. No, I mean, we have a wall kit (ph.) there but it's not a
18 storage area in terms of locked or blocked or anything.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. That's why we don't keep fuel down there, for one thing, but
21 we do keep our lube oil there and our coolant, our antifreeze.
- 22 Q. There's not another spot, like a (indiscernible) for like
23 paint, like a paint locker type thing?
- 24 A. No, we keep paint, we keep the paint off --
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- of the boat, yeah. We have a paint locker over in our
2 ticket booth and we also have some storage area up on the stern on
3 the starboard side behind the stern curtain.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. But we try to keep all paints off the boat unless we're
6 painting.

7 Q. Yeah, thanks. And then he was talking about engine
8 vibration. Is there like a -- I don't know, you might not know, I
9 should ask the captain, probably, shaft speeds, is there like a
10 critical shaft speed for this boat where you go like a certain RPM
11 that it shakes really badly, that you're aware of?

12 A. No, I talked to Jimmy Krishner (ph.) here last week and he
13 said his cruise was good, he said there's one point he thought he
14 could feel it but he said he went up or down a little bit and he
15 didn't see it.

16 Q. Do you remember that spot?

17 A. And I think boats are that way, I mean --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- you know, shafts, the way they're set up, they're all
20 going to be different, so I can't tell you if there's any one
21 speed that --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- shows up. I've been down in the engine room during the
24 cruises and the engines are fine.

25 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

1 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

2 Q. Just one follow-up. The steering gear, how do you get to the
3 steering gear on the ship?

4 A. How do you what?

5 Q. How do you go get into the space where the steering gear is?

6 A. Oh, it's right there as you -- that you come inside the
7 engine room door to the right, we have our steering tank with our
8 steering pumps. So of course --

9 Q. All that's in the engine room?

10 A. It's in the engine room.

11 Q. And that has hydraulic lines that go to the rudder?

12 A. Right, yeah. They come out, go down, and go back to the
13 rudder room.

14 Q. And are those pipes, hydraulic pipes, or are they hydraulic
15 hoses?

16 A. Hydraulic hoses. Yeah, we -- at least twice a year we're
17 down checking rudder cylinders, rudder post, greasing. Here a
18 year or so ago we changed the -- some of the fittings. If you
19 find something wrong, our policy is if you see something and you
20 think it's not right, fix it. Doesn't do any good to ignore it.

21 Q. And also, on the fuel tanks, there are -- there are fuel
22 tanks in the engine room, right?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And did they have a sight glass?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What was the material of the site glass?

2 A. Well, it's metal with a -- I don't know what the actual clear
3 part is made of, I'm assuming high-tempered glass.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. That's all I know as far as the makeup of it.

6 Q. Can you do me a favor? If you could, just from memory, just
7 kind of draw where the hydraulic hoses are for the steering from
8 where they start to where they go back aft.

9 A. The hydraulic -- hydraulic area is back on the port side,
10 it's got a big tank, the pumps are above. The lines go down and
11 then go all the way back, usually around the sides, until they
12 pull back to the stern of the boat to the rudder room.

13 Q. And do you have one rudder or two?

14 A. Two rudders.

15 Q. Okay. But they're both off the same rim?

16 A. We have two cylinders, two posts, two cylinders --

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. -- on each -- one on each side.

19 Q. And they're locked together?

20 A. Locked together, um-hum.

21 Q. And do you know the last time the hydraulic hoses were
22 inspected, replaced?

23 A. Well, we go down, like I said, twice a year and grease them,
24 inspect them. We just came out of the yard in February, I can't
25 say for sure what the -- if the yard did anything, I just know

1 that we inspect them and --

2 Q. Okay, but you don't --

3 A. -- every month we go down and inspect the rudder room to see
4 if we see anything wrong.

5 Q. But for the hydraulic hoses, that would be the engine room.
6 Do you know the last time they were replaced? Or if there's --

7 A. Well, we --

8 Q. -- any replacement cycle?

9 A. -- have hydraulic, you got hydraulic lines, and then I think
10 they go into metal lines that go back and then you -- then it
11 forms into hydraulic lines again.

12 Q. Okay, so there's a metal pipe --

13 A. So it's a combination.

14 Q. Okay, right. But the hydraulic hoses that are -- because you
15 have, I think it's what, 24 or 36 inches for a hydraulic --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thirty-six.

17 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

18 Q. Thirty-six. I still remember. So for the hydraulic hose
19 that went from the pumps to the line --

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. -- do you know when the last time they were ever replaced?

22 A. Couldn't tell you when they were actually replaced, no.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I mean, we inspect them for leaks and to see if there's any
25 deterioration, but --

1 Q. Do you know what the pressure is on the hydraulic system?

2 A. Not really what the pressure is, no.

3 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay, thank you.

4 BY LT [REDACTED]

5 Q. Just before the passengers started to move up to the third
6 deck, what was going on on the vessel? As far as passenger
7 movements, where were people located and what were you guys
8 planning to do?

9 A. The passengers, some of them had been on the third deck, some
10 of them had been on the first deck. DJ had the music going, so
11 whoever had been dancing. Now, once the announcement was made
12 about checking the engine room and it was determined that there
13 was a problem, our restaurant manager, Candy (ph.), got her staff
14 together and started getting the people up. Our deckhands started
15 assisting, pushing them upstairs, so you have people trying to
16 come down because they don't know and you have people trying to
17 get up because they've been told to go up there, so we had to kind
18 of get both groups going in the same direction.

19 Q. So passengers have open movement within the three decks?

20 A. Yes. Yeah, they were up and down steps. Out of 91
21 passengers, we probably had 40 kids, at least. And if you know
22 kids, they want to go up and down, up and down.

23 Q. Was the vessel going to serve any food at that time, any food
24 being prepared on (indiscernible)?

25 A. They had already eaten. What happens, once they get aboard

1 the boat in the morning, they start feeding, especially the kids.
2 They start the lunch proceedings. They had already taken all of
3 the food down to the galley by probably quarter to 12:00 because
4 they just made the announcement that the food was available for
5 the crew. That's why I told Bryan Bracey and Glory, the two down
6 in, they got to go down to the galley to eat, they were just
7 getting ready to do another engine check at the same time. They
8 were waiting for Bryan and Glory to come back up and they were
9 going to go down and do an engine check and eat.

10 Q. So they were going to do the engine check first and then eat?

11 A. Well, what was going to happen, once Bryan came up, then the
12 other two were going to go down, do the engine check and then get
13 something to eat when they came back out of the engine room.

14 BY MR. KARR:

15 Q. How did you guys end up at the Navy piers?

16 A. We always turn around usually right there at Pier 14, that's
17 where we make our turnaround, and any time you have wind, current,
18 whatever, as big as that boat is and as slow as we're going, if
19 you're not careful, you're going to be sliding over toward the
20 Navy base. We stay well within the channel, but we stay close to
21 the green when we're out, that way the people get a good view of
22 all the ships. We get too close, patrol boats are going to let us
23 know they don't like it. So once we get up close, we're --
24 normally, we would be doing a narration, that's the normal, the
25 captain does a narration. If I'm the mate, I'm driving the boat.

1 Today was not normal because we didn't do a narration and we had a
2 relief captain with us. That allowed me to be down checking
3 bathrooms and directing the crew. But we always turn around as
4 close to Pier 14 as we can.

5 Q. I wondered if you were on the bridge or somehow had a more
6 direct role in deciding to go to the Navy yard.

7 A. No.

8 Q. All right, thanks.

9 A. No, that's strictly the captain. They determine at what
10 point he wants to make it and we do an hour out and an hour back,
11 so usually at -- in this case, it would have been 12 o'clock, we
12 would be preparing for our turnaround right there at the end of
13 the base.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have nothing further.

15 MR. KARR: I have no further questions.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm fine, thanks.

17 LT [REDACTED] Anything from the phone, Mr. --

18 (No response.)

19 LT [REDACTED] Okay, I think that concludes our interview. Do
20 you have anything that you would like to ask us?

21 MR. ENLOE: No. I appreciate the fact that everybody was out
22 there and was interested in what they could do to help the boat.
23 After 15 years, I've got a lot of good memories on it and this is
24 kind of like my home away from home, so to speak, so I was
25 appreciative of the fact that people were really on top of their

1 game to try to determine what they could do to help.

2 LT [REDACTED] Yeah, we appreciate your cooperation, thank you.

3 MR. ENLOE: All right.

4 MR. KARR: Thanks, Mr. Enloe.

5 MR. BURTS: Oh, hey, guys. Excuse me, one last thing before
6 we leave and I just -- it's hard for me, because I'm sitting here
7 not face to face with you guys, but your name, the gentleman who
8 was just given the interview, that's Robert Enloe, the chief mate?

9 MR. ENLOE: Yes.

10 MR. BURTS: Okay, thank you, sir. I just wanted to confirm I
11 had your name right.

12 MR. ENLOE: Okay.

13 LT [REDACTED] Actually, can I get your phone number and your
14 address, please?

15 MR. ENLOE: Yes, ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] and the address is [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

17 LT [REDACTED] You said [REDACTED]?

18 MR. ENLOE: [REDACTED] [REDACTED], right.

19 LT [REDACTED] And your telephone number again?

20 MR. ENLOE: Yeah, phone number is ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED].

21 MR. KARR: All right, it is now 14:32.

22 (Whereupon, at 2:32 p.m. Eastern, the interview concluded.)
23
24
25

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 Robert Enloe

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM022

PLACE: Portsmouth, VA

DATE: June 8, 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.

~~_____~~

Karen D. Martini
Transcriber