



Basic Factual Information  
SPIRIT OF NORFOLK Fire and Subsequent Total Loss



*SPIRIT OF NORFOLK Fifth District Formal Investigation  
USCG Public Hearing*

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Basic Factual Information

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***Purpose of the Investigation***

Whether there is evidence that any failure of material (either physical or design) was involved or contributed to the casualty, so that proper recommendations for the prevention of the recurrence of similar casualties may be made;

Whether there is evidence that any act of misconduct, inattention to duty, negligence or willful violation of the law on the part of any licensed or certificated person contributed to the casualty, so that appropriate proceedings against the license or certificate of such person may be recommended and taken under 46 U.S.C. 6301; or

Whether there is evidence that any Coast Guard personnel or any representative or employee of any other Government agency or any other person caused or contributed to the casualty.

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The purpose of the investigation is to determine.....

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whether there is evidence that any Coast Guard personnel or any representative or employee of any other Government agency or any other person caused or contributed to the casualty.

**\*\* Wait 5 seconds before advancing \*\* (END)**



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**Vessel Particulars** (source: MISLE, 2022 Milner Survey)

**Name:** SPIRIT OF NORFOLK  
**Official Number:** 982994  
**Flag:** United States  
**Type/Service:** Small Passenger Vessel,  
 Certificated as Subchapter "K" and "T-L"  
**Maximum Passengers:** Up to 600 and Up to 61 Crew and Hospitality Staff  
**Owner/Operator:** Hornblower Cruises and Events LLC  
**Delivery Date:** 1992  
**Tonnage:** 1152 GT International Tonnage, 99 GT Regulatory  
**Length Overall:** 186 Feet  
**Registered Length:** 169 Feet  
**Beam:** 38 Feet  
**Depth:** 12 Feet  
**Hull Construction:** Welded Steel  
**Propeller:** Twin and Bow thruster  
**Propulsion:** Diesel Direct, Twin Engine  
**Fuel Tanks:** 9000 Gallons

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The vessel particulars for the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK are contained in this slide,

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*(END)*



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Significant Events Before June 7, 2022

USCG Certificate of Inspection (annual) conducted on May 10th, 2022, with no deficiencies noted, vessel fit for service and route.

While underway on a passenger excursion on May 15, 2022, the port main diesel engine over-heated due to internally corroded water pump failure. Crewmember initially believed steam was smoke and experiencing a fire, opened watertight door, expended 2 fire extinguisher on the engine. USCG was notified appropriately

May 15th to May 26th, engine ultimately had a top engine overhaul with replacement of various components, including the outboard port engine turbocharger. A recommendation was also made to replace the inboard port main engine turbocharger. While engine was being repaired the USCG clears vessel to operate with tug escort at various times while operating with passengers.

In summary, the vessel operated 18 times between 26 May and the day of the accident.

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(End)



**Persons Onboard SPIRIT OF NORFOLK  
Accident Voyage – June 7, 2022**

**Crew:**

Marine: 6      Wait Staff/Kitchen and Other: 11      Total: 17

**Passengers:**

Adults: 55      Children: 36      Total Passengers: 91

**Total Persons Aboard: 108**

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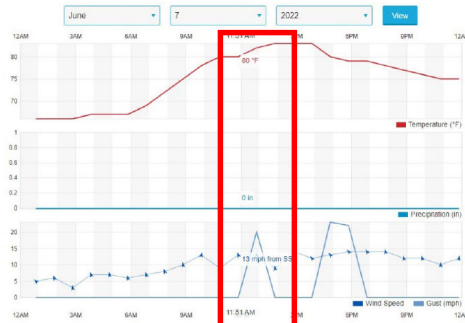
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- Weather on accident voyage



Weather Data  
June 7, 2022 Norfolk  
Harbor Area

Norfolk International Airport

Wind Gusts

10:51 AM	80 °F	62 °F	54 %	SSW	9 mph	0 mph	30.01 in	0.0 in	Fair
11:51 AM	80 °F	61 °F	52 %	SSE	13 mph	0 mph	30.01 in	0.0 in	Mostly Cloudy
12:51 PM	82 °F	60 °F	47 %	S	13 mph	20 mph	29.99 in	0.0 in	Partly Cloudy
1:51 PM	83 °F	60 °F	46 %	S	9 mph	0 mph	29.98 in	0.0 in	Partly Cloudy
2:51 PM	83 °F	62 °F	49 %	SSE	14 mph	0 mph	29.96 in	0.0 in	Fair

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The weather for the general vicinity of the accident on June 7<sup>th</sup> was partly cloudy, with light winds from the south with light gusts at times.



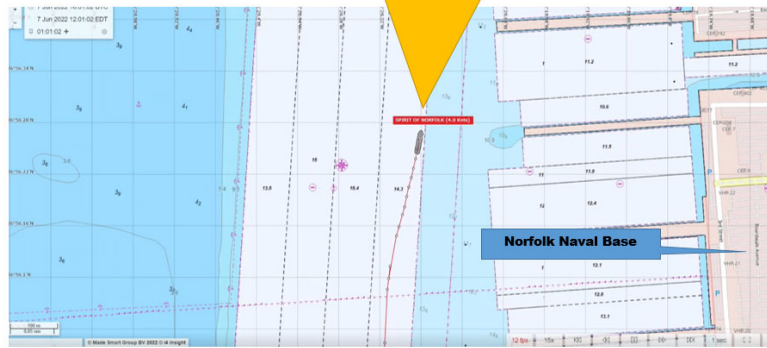
## Basic Factual Information SPIRIT OF NORFOLK Fire and Subsequent Total Loss



First indications of fire on the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK  
June 7, 2022

12:01 pm, June 7, 2022

When attempting to reengage the port main engine, the starboard engine was lost. Port engine and Starboard engine lost connection to the alarm panel and throttles became inoperable, vessel had lost propulsion control.



All times and movements derived from Automatic Identification Equipment

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At approximately 12:01 pm, Eastern Standard Time the engine control module in the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK alarmed, indicating loss of communications with the port main engine. The Captain began to investigate the cause of the loss of engine control. These activities resulted in the detection of a fire in the engine room by crew who had to open the engine room watertight door to determine if there was a fire. The vessel was not required, by regulation, to be fitted with a fire detection or fixed fire suppression system in the engine room.

(End)





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Initial Distress and Subsequent Radio Calls  
SPIRIT OF NORFOLK  
June 7, 2022



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This slide contains the recorded audio between the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK and the U S Coast Guard and later with subsequent vessels responding to the fire event. The Coast Guard sound files are short and have been stitched together to create this recording for the public.

(End)



**VICTORY ROVER**  
Passenger  
Evacuation



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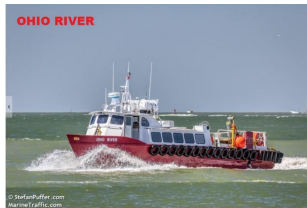
**9**

The excursion vessel VICTORY ROVER was in the general vicinity of the emergency and immediately proceeded to the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK. The SPIRIT OF NORFOLK had a large boarding area on the main deck on the port side and the VICTORY ROVER maneuvered alongside to position the vessel to take the crew and passengers of the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK aboard. During the evacuation of passengers two vessels positioned themselves to make sure the two vessels stayed close together for the safety of the transfer of personnel.

(End)



## Principal Vessels Assisting Firefighting and Response



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Throughout the response phase of the event numerous vessels responded to the fire and the follow-on firefighting activities. The vessels that immediately responded to the initial call and participated in the early firefighting response and evacuation activities mid-day on June 7, 2022, are displayed in this slide.

(End)

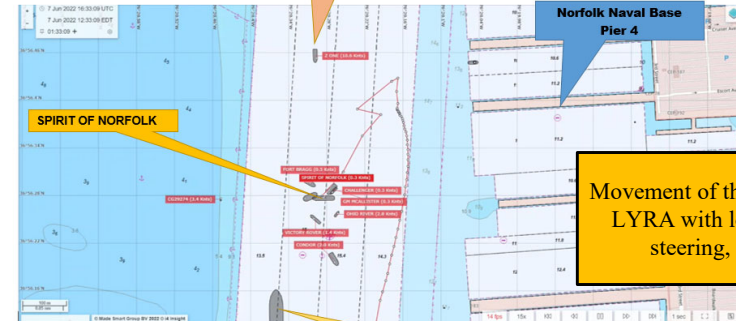


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12:33 pm, June 7, 2022

Z ONE arriving on scene.



Movement of the Bulk Ship SPAR LYRA with loss of power and steering, June 7, 2022



MV SPAR LYRA approaching the area. Engine stopped, 20-degree starboard rudder ordered to swing stern clear of vessel activities and to pass clear of response activities.

All times and movements derived from Automatic Identification Equipment

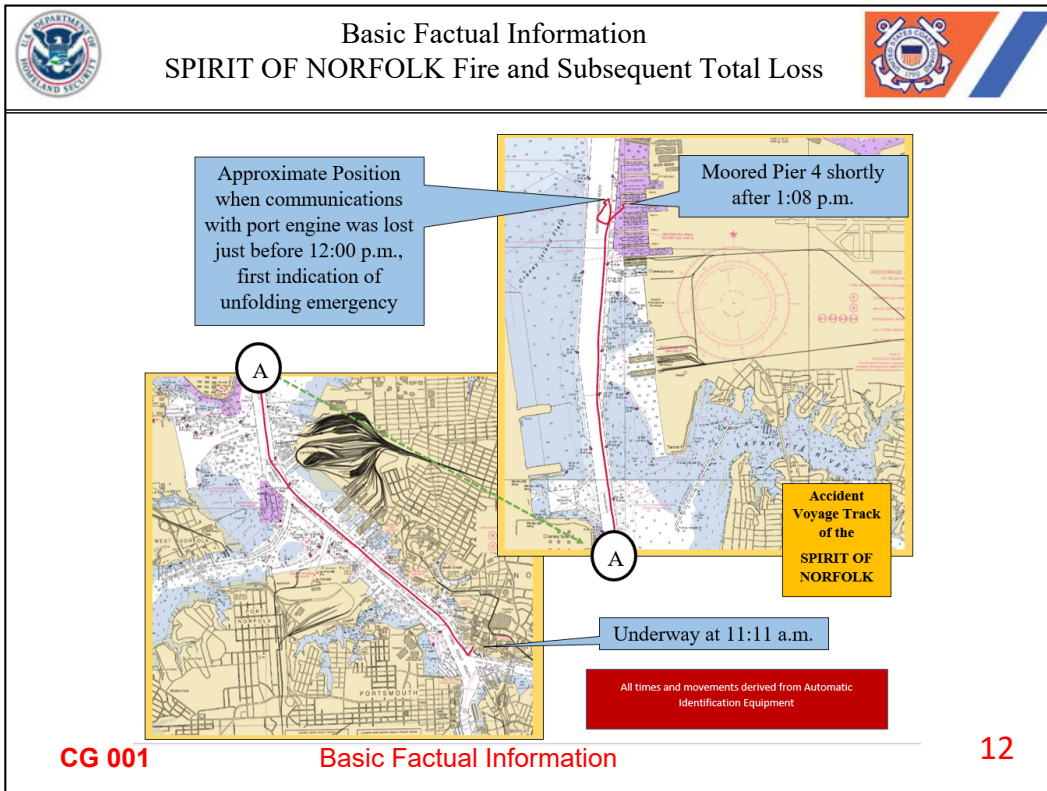
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About the time the fire event was unfolding the SPAR LYRA a loaded bulk carrier departed the International Terminal headed to sea. At 1233 the vessel was approaching the area of the response to the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK and when maneuvering the vessel lost electrical power, propulsion and steering. The vessel took immediate action to pass the response site and approximately 6 minutes later regained propulsion. Several of the tugs assisting with the response were dispatched to render assistance to the SPAR LYRA and two tugs actually made fast to control the ship's movements.

(End)



In this slide we see the voyage track of the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK on June 7, 2022. The vessel departs the Norfolk Virginia waterfront and proceeds north on the Elizabeth River towards the Norfolk Naval Base. The vessel then turns and begins the run back along the docks towards the planned destination at the Norfolk waterfront. Shortly after beginning the turn the Captain hears and alarm indicating a loss of communications to the port engine. Shortly after that the crew identifies a fire in the engine room and notifies the Coast Guard. Responding vessels evacuate the passengers and crew, fight the fire and maneuver the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK to Pier 4 at the Norfolk Naval Base.

(End)



## Fire Detection and Fire Suppression Systems

- Subchapter K inspected passenger vessels like the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK are required to have fire detection and fire suppression systems if built after March 10, 1996.
- Under existing regulation 46 CFR 114.110, 5(c) General applicability, based on date built, the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK was not required to have a fire detection or fire suppression system
  - Unless otherwise provided, an existing vessel that is not required to comply with a requirement in this subchapter may comply with the regulation that was applicable to the vessel on March 10, 1996.
- **Vessel Security System:** The SPIRIT OF NORFOLK did have a security system of cameras, smoke alarms and intrusion detection switches. At 2: 25:58 p.m. on June 7, 2022, the alarm monitoring company received and acknowledged a smoke alarm on the vessel.

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As an inspected passenger vessel capable of carrying more than 150 passengers the vessel was required to meet various safety regulations. The vessel was built before new regulations requiring fire detection and fire suppression systems would be required. Based on the delivery of the vessel in 1992 the SPIRIT OF NORFOLK was exempt with compliance with these new safety regulations which were effective on March 10, 1996. **Unless otherwise provided, an existing vessel that is not required to comply with a requirement in this subchapter may comply with the regulation that was applicable to the vessel on March 10, 1996.**

The vessel also had a security system which included closed circuit TV cameras, also smoke alarms and intrusion detection switches. The smoke alarms, intrusion switched and the actual performance of the alarm system were monitored ashore through cellular communications. At 2: 25:58 p.m. on June 7, 2022, the alarm monitoring company received and acknowledged a smoke alarm on the vessel. In addition, the vessel had four black and white closed circuit TV cameras in the engine room.

(End)



## Fire Damaged SPIRIT OF NORFOLK

Footage from USCG Fifth District Public Affairs



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In this slide, drone video footage created by the Coast Guard's Fifth District Public Affairs office, shows the overall extent of the fire damage to the exterior of the small passenger vessel SPIRIT OF NORFOLK.

(End)





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End

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This completes the opening presentation, thank you for your attention.

(End)