

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Research and Engineering

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BRIDGE AUDIO RECORDING - AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Specialist's Factual Report

January 23, 2024

WARNING

The reader of this report is cautioned that the transcript of a bridge audio recording is not a precise science but is the best product possible from a National Transportation Safety Board investigative effort. The transcript or parts thereof, if taken out of context, could be misleading. The transcript should be viewed as an accident investigation tool to be used in conjunction with other evidence gathered during the investigation. Conclusions or interpretations should not be made using the transcript as the sole source of information.

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Angola, Louisiana
Date: January 9, 2023
Time: 0152 central standard time (CST)
Vessel 1: Carol McManus, IMO: 8836651
Vessel 2: Big D, MMSI: 367523350

B. BRIDGE AUDIO RECORDING - AUDIO TRANSCRIPT SPECIALIST

Specialist Matthew Yandrick
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C. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

A recorded bridge audio group was not convened. The NTSB Vehicle Recorder Division received the following electronic files containing recordings of the bridge audio from the Carol McManus and the Big D:

Electronic File #1: 2 - Operations - Radio Communications (Audio) - Carol McManus.avi

Electronic File #2: 2 - Operations - Radio Communications (Audio) - Big D.mp4

1.1 Recording Description

The file from the Carol McManus contained an approximate non-continuous 1 minute and 25 second audio recording. The file contained two transmissions that started from 01:33:36 CST on January 9, 2023 to 01:34:28 CST on January 9, 2023, and 01:57:27 CST on January 9, 2023 to 01:58:00 CST on January 9, 2023. The audio file included video displaying the local time of the 01:33:36 transmission and 01:57:27 transmission.¹

The file from the Big D contained an approximate 1 hour recording. The recording was from approximately 01:00:16.1 CST on January 9, 2023, to 02:01:12.8 CST on January 9, 2023. Timing from the Big D was aligned to the first Carol McManus bridge audio transmission by offsetting the start time by 01:00:16.1.

¹ The video contained two images of the local time when each transmission began. The first image showed the 01:33:36 local time when the first transmission began. The second image showed the 01:57:27 local time when the second transmission began. Neither time showed a running clock.

1.2 Audio Recording Description

Each channel's audio quality is indicated in table 2. Table 2 lists the two audio tracks from the microphones on and around the bridge that were recorded; each channel's audio quality is indicated in the table. All recordings were made in mono.²

Table 2. Audio Quality and Channel Description.

Source Microphone	Channel Number	Quality ³	Duration
Unknown Bridge Mounted Unit - Carol McManus ⁴	1	Good	0:01:25.0 ⁵
Unknown Bridge Mounted Unit - Big D	2	Good	1:00:56.7

D. AUDIO AND DATA SUMMARY

Voices in English appear in English.

The audio summary began at 01:00:16.1 CST.

All times are given in local time (CST). Appendix B contains an approximate 1-hour transcript of the events recorded on the recorded bridge audio.

Submitted by:

Matthew Yandrick
Electrical Engineer - Recorder Specialist

² Monaural audio - a single channel of audio perceived from a single position or speaker.

³ Audio Quality Rating Scale provided in attachment 1.

⁴ Location of each bridge mounted microphone were not ascertained for this investigation.

⁵ Format given is HH:MM:SS.0, where HH is equal to the number of elapsed hours, MM is equal to the number of elapsed minutes, and SS.0 is equal to the number of seconds to 1 decimal place.

APPENDIX A. AUDIO QUALITY RATING SCALE

The levels of recording quality are characterized by the following traits of the audio information:

Excellent Quality Virtually all of the crew conversations could be accurately and easily understood. The transcript that was developed may indicate only one or two words that were not intelligible. Any loss in the transcript is usually attributed to simultaneous bridge conversations or radio transmissions that obscure each other.

Good Quality Most of the crew conversations could be accurately and easily understood. The transcript that was developed may indicate several words or phrases that were not intelligible. Any loss in the transcript can be attributed to minor technical deficiencies or momentary dropouts in the recording system or to a large number of bridge conversations or radio transmissions that obscure each other.

Fair Quality The majority of the crew conversations were intelligible. The transcript that was developed may indicate passages where conversations were unintelligible or fragmented. This type of recording is usually caused by bridge noise that obscures portions of the voice signals or by a minor electrical or mechanical failure of the recording system that distorts or obscures the audio information.

Poor Quality Extraordinary means had to be used to make some of the crew conversations intelligible. The transcript that was developed may indicate fragmented phrases and conversations and may indicate extensive passages where conversations were missing or unintelligible. This type of recording is usually caused by a combination of a high bridge noise level with a low voice signal (poor signal-to-noise ratio) or by a mechanical or electrical failure of the recording system that severely distorts or obscures the audio information.

Unusable Crew conversations may be discerned, but neither ordinary nor extraordinary means made it possible to develop a meaningful transcript of the conversations. This type of recording is usually caused by an almost total mechanical or electrical failure of the recording system or extremely high bridge noise.

APPENDIX B. AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Transcript of bridge audio from the Carol McManus and the Big D that were involved in a collision at 0152 CST on January 9, 2023 in Angola, Louisiana.

LEGEND

Big D	Big D sound source
Bruce Hahn	Bruce Hahn sound source
Carol McManus	Carol McManus sound source
Jenny	Jenny sound source
RDO	VHF radio sound source
?	Voice unidentified
*	Unintelligible word
#	Expletive
@	Non-pertinent word
()	Questionable insertion
[]	Editorial insertion

Note 1: Times are expressed in CST.

Note 2: Words shown with excess vowels, letters, or drawn out syllables are a phonetic representation of the words as spoken.

TIME and
Source

Communication

01:00:16.1	[start of recording]
01:00:16.1	[start of transcript]
01:03:56.5 ?-RDO	*.
01:04:00.4 ?-RDO	roger that *.
01:07:44.0 ?-RDO	[sounds of static]
01:12:40.9 Big D-RDO	appreciate there Bruce Hahn whenever you say you * man. appreciate it return the favor next chance I get.
01:12:48.0 Bruce Hahn-RDO	yes sir have a safe * down. I think that Harold Dodd will be the next one behind me.
01:12:53.8 Big D-RDO	who's next behind me? heard nobody back there all night.
01:12:57.9 Bruce Hahn-RDO	that's what I like to hear.
01:15:09.0 Bruce Hahn-RDO	Bruce Hahn getting back underway bottom *. Bruce Hahn.
01:15:19.7 Big D-RDO	Big D southbound and Black Hawk *. Big D.
01:15:26.5 Big D-RDO	go Bruce Hahn there's your next one I guess.
01:15:29.8 Bruce Hahn-RDO	roger roger.
01:22:03.6 ?-RDO	[short conversation between two people]
01:22:15.0 ?-RDO	alright man that **.
01:33:01.2 ?-RDO	***
01:33:07.6 ?-RDO	(get her) around the corner there * reach out and back **
01:33:19.2 ?-RDO	okay that's what I was wondering if I * or *.
01:33:31.3 ?-RDO	okay **.

TIME and
Source

Communication

01:33:36.6 ?-RDO	well I appreciate it.
01:33:37.7 ?-RDO	***
01:33:39.7 Big D-RDO	Big D to the Carol McManus.
01:33:43.9 ?-RDO	[sound similar to click]
01:33:44.8 Carol McManus-RDO	hey Carol.
01:33:46.6 Big D-RDO	hey bud yeah it's showin' me... meetin' you right there about uh... ah hell uh just a little bit above Fort Adams (there man). uh... I got nineteen loads (there man) you want to hold tight on that point? uh right there where we meet and see me on the two or widen out and... uh go for the bend way?
01:34:06.6 Carol McManus-RDO	don't make a bit of difference to me. whatever you you want the best.
01:34:10.7 Big D-RDO	uh whatchu' got tow?
01:34:12.2 Carol McManus-RDO	forty two at uh what do I got... twelve loads in the middle.
01:34:16.5 Big D-RDO	okay you want to go ahead and just play that one then? I'll hold tight on the point... uh when you get up there.
01:34:21.7 Carol McManus-RDO	yeah that'd be fine.
01:34:23.0 Big D-RDO	okay bud. see you in a little bit thank you now.
01:34:23.0 ?-RDO	[sound of metal click] *
01:34:25.0 Carol McManus-RDO	(no problem).
01:34:25.0 ?-RDO	wow. [sound of metal clunk]
01:35:40.2 Jenny-RDO	any (page on) southbound coming down Hog's Point? (hey) Jenny.
01:48:47.5 Jenny-RDO	Jenny (page on) *.
01:48:58.0 Jenny-RDO	(How many you got?) should be hard keep coming for the two. I don't know if it's still tight down there or not but it should be.

TIME and
Source

Communication

01:49:08.7 ?-RDO	four loads.
01:49:09.8 Jenny-RDO	yeah just keep coming for the two. see yeah on two one O (when I see in you) Jenny.
01:50:53.2 ?-RDO	**.
01:51:26.4 Big D-RDO	Big D to the Carol McManus.
01:51:28.3 Carol McManus-RDO	Carol.
01:51:29.3 Big D-RDO	uh you uh man uh (you're)... still cutting in on me here.
01:51:34.1 Carol McManus-RDO	(uh) you said two whistle right?
01:51:36.1 Big D-RDO	no I said I'd take the point... you said you'd widen out for the one.
01:51:40.1 Carol McManus-RDO	oh # man. can you pull her down?
01:51:42.6 Big D-RDO	uh no. I can hook her up and try to dig in. pull out.
01:51:49.6 Carol McManus-RDO	(yep uh... try and peel) her out there I'm going to stop this damn thing.
01:51:59.0 Carol McManus-RDO	watching you yours was still dropping there on the *.
01:52:35.5 Big D-RDO	got a tow going up here at uh Black Hawk above uh Fort Adams.
01:52:56.5 Big D-RDO	Big D.
01:53:00.7 Jenny-RDO	***.
01:53:02.6 ?-RDO	*.
01:53:07.6 ?-RDO	*.
01:53:09.3 Jenny-RDO	alright Big D you still going to be on the two?

TIME and
Source

Communication

01:53:15.8 Jenny-RDO	see you down there shortly on the two. *.
01:57:14.0 ?-RDO	* north bound here (just below ground bend) * north bound.
01:57:58.6 ?-RDO	Big Joe Big D y'all got her down there? I need stop up here somewhere.
01:58:04.7 Big D-RDO	[sound high pitch ringing] no we exploded man we got barges all over the place buddy.
01:58:07.9 ?-RDO	alright.
01:58:16.2 Big D-RDO	now I'm all out on port.
01:58:19.8 ?-RDO	comeback.
01:58:36.5 ?-RDO	(I'm) going to pull her back here captain **.
02:01:12.8	[end of transcript]
02:01:12.8	[end of recording]