

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FIRE ON THE *PRESIDENT EISENHOWER*
SOUTHWEST OF SANTA BARBARA
HARBOR, ON APRIL 28, 2021

Accident No.: DCA21FM026

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Interview of: CAPTAIN JONATHAN KOMLOSY
(APL President Eisenhower)

Los Angeles, California

Friday,
April 30, 2021

APPEARANCES:

BART BARNUM, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

ENSIGN [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

CHIEF FOREIGN OFFICER [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

JOE WALSH, Attorney
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(On behalf of the vessel owners)

ANTOINE LETOURNEL
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I N T E R V I E W

(14:39 p.m.)

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2
3 LT. [REDACTED] Good afternoon. This is Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
4 with the United States Coast Guard. Today is April 30, 2021. The
5 time is 14:39.

6 We are on board the motor vessel President Eisenhower at
7 berth LA 46 investigating the engine room fire that occurred on
8 board the vessel on the morning of April 28, 2021. In the room
9 with myself are the following individuals.

10 LT. [REDACTED] Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] [REDACTED] IO.

11 MR. BARNUM: Bart Barnum, NTSB, Office of Marine Safety.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Ensign [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Inspections.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Chief Foreign Officer [REDACTED] [REDACTED] U.S. Coast
14 Guard, Sector Los Angeles, Long Beach.

15 MR. LETOURNEL: Antoine Letournel, APL Maritime.

16 MR. WALSH: Joe Walsh, Collier Walsh Nakazawa, counsel to
17 real party's interest, APL Maritime.

18 CAPTAIN KOMLOSY: And John Komlosy, captain of
19 (indiscernible) vessel President Eisenhower.

20 LT. [REDACTED] And Captain, do you consent to us recording this
21 interview?

22 CAPTAIN KOMLOSY: Yes.

23 LT. [REDACTED] Thank you.

24 INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN KOMLOSY

25 BY LT. [REDACTED]

1 Q. So thank you, Captain, I appreciate you being here. If you
2 could go ahead and we'll just start with if you could kind of give
3 us kind of your background, experience in the maritime industry?

4 A. I graduated from (indiscernible) maritime in 1991 and
5 participated in the first Gulf water and MPS (ph.) program moving
6 military equipment. And did that for a few years and then
7 proceeded to get into the commercial industry coming out to the
8 west coast. I live on the -- I'm from the east coast from Striad
9 (ph.), Maine, Castle Bay. And then for lobstering, and fishing
10 and so forth.

11 But anyway, I proceeded to work off the west coast, third bay
12 for -- on the APL Thailand and a few APL breakout ships here in
13 Santa Fe and Long Beach and then proceeded to get a permanent
14 second-base job on the APL Korea in about '99 -- '98, '99. And
15 then worked my way up through Chief Bay for five years on the APL
16 Thailand and then got the call to go relieve the master on the APL
17 Thailand in 2010 and then I was promoted to relief -- or permanent
18 master on the APL Turquoise and then the APL Coral and then
19 President Ei -- President Adams, C10, scrapped two vessels,
20 reflagged two. And I've done emergency call-outs for other
21 captains for health reasons and so forth. And then I was on --
22 permanent on the APL China and then followed up to be permanent on
23 the President Eisenhower with Captain Bill Westrom.

24 Q. Thank you. A nice long career. All right. Okay. So if we
25 could go ahead and what we'll do is just -- if you could give us

1 your account of what happened with the fire.

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. And go -- how you just responded and how you -- how you went
4 on.

5 A. So we parted San Pedro and this is 12 hot zone, so we were
6 proceeding at about 11 1/2 knots and we had a new second mate and
7 a new 12 to 4 third mate. So as we were leaving -- before leaving
8 San Pedro and then during San Pedro, it was just the basic
9 familiarization. I was making sure that the officers were
10 comfortable with understanding how the main telegraph works or
11 communication with the engine control room, both the chief and
12 then the duty engineers are entering and exit, and then -- so we
13 were adjusting rpms in the 12 hot zone and then we proceeded to
14 start to load up to 65. And then we want -- we -- basically, I
15 knew that we needed come up to about 80 rpms.

16 Generally speaking, when we're on low-sulphur diesel, I don't
17 go any higher than -- generally any higher than 80. We can do
18 like 85, but I generally try to stay under that. In any event, I
19 sent night orders. We -- I was there for loading up and then back
20 (indiscernible) to the bridge. We count to 80 rpms, the 12 to 4
21 third mate -- I wanted to make sure he was comfortable, so I was
22 checking on him and -- you know, around -- well, he came up early
23 which was great. And then outside the third mate, Edward Carey
24 worked with the other -- the 12 to 4 third mate so that we were
25 all on the same page and everything. And then I stepped down --

1 I'd written night orders and then about 0154, the fire alarm went
2 off, immediately dressed and went to the bridge, had my radio then
3 and proceeded -- we had -- it started out with a -- with the fire
4 alarms and I got a confirmation we had a fire in the
5 (indiscernible) boiler room and so I heard -- I heard from the
6 chief bay -- chief bay, first engineer. The whole crew got up.
7 The fire emergency signal was already going off.

8 The whole crew mustered, squads one and two checked in,
9 dressed SCPH (ph.) ready, fire stations were being let out and the
10 -- so the two -- squad two took the lead and starting fighting the
11 fire. They went in and -- they went in from the back access. I
12 could see the smoke. I went to the -- aft to the house and could
13 see the dark smoke billowing out of the (indiscernible)
14 ventilation. And the bridge started to get filled with dark
15 smoke, so I went back and looked at the -- I was looking at the
16 video cameras. The main engine room had clouded up but the
17 auxiliary -- but the boiler space, that's where you could see the
18 burning of the wood, but when you look out the aft of the house,
19 you could -- I only saw one or two sparks and what I was seeing
20 was a huge amount of -- you know, vaporized fuel in the air. And
21 so I knew it wasn't just a fire like -- like (indiscernible) or
22 something on fire. This was way -- much, much, much larger than
23 that.

24 So in any event, we cancelled (indiscernible) we started to
25 break down -- to load down and then we cancelled (indiscernible)

1 from 80 down to 65 and then down through the bells to stop -- I
2 was -- took the con at the time of the -- right after -- as soon
3 as I got to the bridge. I had the third mate grab a clipboard and
4 some paper and just start writing down the times from 54 onward.

5 And so basically, I'm just listening on the radio and I'm
6 stepping out on the bridge so I can breathe and then coming back
7 in and adjusting the course and just seeing what our situation is.
8 Meantime, I'm hearing from the chief, you know, we're going to
9 deploy the water vapor system, that's done. The fire pumps have
10 already started and then (indiscernible) says like, we need to
11 deploy CO2. I'm in agreement, we deploy the CO2. We also -- get
12 a little -- we also secured ventilation and it was done -- I was
13 doing it on the bridge and they were doing it in the fire control
14 room. So we went through the steps of securing the ventilation
15 first. We deployed the water vapor in the meantime. We took a
16 muster for the crew and then proceeded -- you know, for the --
17 after 10 minutes, I went back. I've got a video of the -- of the
18 -- of a confirmation of the black smoke clearing and getting more
19 of the water vapor and the change in the dynamics of the -- of
20 what's exhausting from the main engine spaces through the stack
21 that -- ventilation. So -- and then we took a muster and then we
22 deployed CO2.

23 And in the meantime, after that, we were just checking the --
24 I sent the chief mate and the first engineer in pairs to go check
25 on the CO2 room with the CPA on, and we started -- and the chief

1 mate at the same time was verifying that he was checking
2 ventilation on the back of the house and up on different levels,
3 visually inspecting that. Then we, at the same time, in order to
4 (indiscernible) we started to set up boundary cooling both on the
5 -- along the main deck after the house from the bulk heads and
6 then the chief mate -- well, after the CO2 checked cargo hold 8
7 and we did that a couple of times and then basically, everybody's
8 just calling in and checking, checking, checking, checking. So I
9 made sure that for the bridge -- from my perspective on the bridge
10 fire teams were effective in doing what their job, we had good
11 communications, we knew exactly what we -- we didn't know exactly
12 what happened, but we knew that we had executed what everything
13 that we needed to to put out the fire. And now I'm concerned more
14 about, okay, loss of propulsion -- intentional loss of propulsion
15 and how's our drift. And so we had -- when we set up our channel,
16 we had the Hondu (ph.) rig, -- California, and so everything
17 turned over.

18 In the process, I will back up, I started with notifications,
19 it's in the deck log. I can give you the times. We called the
20 U.S. Coast Guard, LA/Long Beach sector, went for a hot line to
21 report engine room fire and then we called -- I called Mac Cleary
22 (ph.) and I -- then I called Gallagher Marine emergency lines as
23 per the (indiscernible) tank vessel plan and then made
24 notifications there. And that got the ball rolling, 'cause I knew
25 we were going to need to touch until we get back to San Pedro. We

1 established (indiscernible) what, a 103 miles to get back to Port
2 San Pedro. And we had no concerning traffic. We put up
3 (indiscernible) commands, lights, and we also had -- we didn't
4 have any concerned traffic. But it's also at the same time, the
5 chief pre-ran the EMDG (ph.) and then we were -- now we were on
6 the EMDG circuit and so we had to run some emergency lights and
7 power. And I was supposed to check the equipment on the bridge
8 just to see how everything powers and what was stabilized and so
9 on and so forth.

10 So -- and then we got -- I got a call from the Coast Guard --
11 got multiple calls from the Coast Guard. We set up for drug
12 testing and breathalization and then proceeded with follow-up
13 calls and then eventually computer -- setting up the computer, we
14 could work off the racks and the computer for email communications
15 and I was basically using my phone, 'cause it was -- Wi-Fi was
16 strong and we were in cell phone service with the coast, so it was
17 just easier just to continue to make cell phone calls and send
18 texts out with some pictures and so forth. And we just started
19 using the (indiscernible) for our (indiscernible) basically a time
20 to go. We would take the current course of the ground and set up
21 to -- a heading factor and a stern factor, which is easy just to
22 put on the actives, and then we had basically a VRN (ph.) to the
23 Hondu rig and then a VRN to the closest point of land and with
24 time estimates when we would get there, and I kept on sending
25 those to the company with an explanation. And we created a -- we

1 had a, you know, a yellow piece of paper with every half hour
2 where we're at, where we're going. And we started to arc away
3 from the rigs and I knew -- I had confirmation from Mac Cleary
4 that we -- there were three tugs dispatched and one -- we had a
5 tug assist from Alameda coming out around 1400. I knew that the
6 fire chief was going to be coming around 3:00, 4:00, and they used
7 a supply -- first a supply boat and a U.S. Coast Guard boat.
8 First a U.S. Coast Guard small, like 40-footer showed up and was
9 on station just to assist.

10 We didn't get -- I tried to communicate with them but they --
11 I mean, I could call on the radio, but they didn't want to just
12 sit and talk, they just were -- just stood off and made sure --
13 you know, just said, you know, we're here in case of if you need
14 us. And then a helicopter flew over and then he --
15 (indiscernible) rig -- it's a supply boat that works with the
16 Hondu oil rig came over and they offered assistance. I called the
17 office, they said we -- this other tug's going to show up, that
18 they're the approved through TNT Salvage, so don't take a line
19 from the -- what they offer. And I thanked them for that. And
20 then --

21 Q. So once the tug showed up -- sorry, you said there was a tug
22 that showed up that you didn't take the line to?

23 A. It wasn't a tug, it was a supply boat.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Two thousand horse power. So it was -- he really couldn't do

1 anything -- I mean, he could have taken a line or something like
2 that, but it wouldn't have done anything. If -- in the worst case
3 scenario, I had still had both anchors. I didn't have -- I could
4 drop them, but I couldn't get them back. So there's a -- you
5 know, we were in about 600 feet of water. Well, it's actually 600
6 meters of water, rather, and I knew that I could use the anchor at
7 200 feet, 300 -- 200 feet effectively, but that, you know, more
8 towards the coast. So anyway, once the Teresa Brosco (ph.) showed
9 up, I talked with the captain there and I said the best thing you
10 could do for us is -- and they're the approved tug, I said, look,
11 the transom has good support. I said, what I'd like you to do is,
12 you know, easy push on the transom and push us away from the --
13 from the coast and get us back to the Santa Barbara town, because
14 by 1600, the Shirley Sea (ph.) would be on site and we would take
15 a forward tow from our 92-tug (indiscernible) fixed chock and 100
16 -- I was going to do what I did on the port side and a 112 rated
17 baller, that's for the emergency plan.

18 So which I reviewed with the chief mate, the second mate, the
19 third mate, bosun (ph.) and the engineers to back up. We had no
20 winches. So I verified -- so when the Shirley Sea showed up, that
21 (indiscernible), I got his cell phone number so I had direct
22 commun -- I could talk with him on the VHF radio. And I also
23 talked with the Delta Billy tug that was en route that was going
24 to be available to help at 2200 at night. So I had a couple
25 different tugs that I was talking to, with their ETAs, all the

1 time looking at the (indiscernible) and the tide (indiscernible)
2 drift pattern. Once I got the Teresa Brosco pushing away, we were
3 making about three knots south toward Santa Barbara -- or
4 perpendicular to the Santa Barbara channel, just coming south. So
5 instead of being towards the land, we were just going directly
6 south. And then proceeded to pick up the tow line from the
7 Shirley Sea. Once we did that, the other tug is -- so we had two
8 tugs, one pushing and the other one sort of pushing on the --
9 toward the starboard cord to keep us straight so that we would
10 just run better with the tow. Because the wind started to pick --
11 was picking up to about 35 and so the ship wanted to turn away
12 from the tow direction up into the wind instead of going back
13 towards San Pedro.

14 So we got across the Santa Barbara channel to the -- so we
15 keep heading back toward -- we cross it, you know, perpendicular,
16 but we got south, headed back to the Santa Barbara channel and
17 then proceeded with a lot of wind. The Delta Billy was on site
18 around 2300 that night and they helped stabilize -- we decided we
19 were originally going to go with a two-tug tandem tow, but because
20 of the maneuverability and the way the ship was, it was easier for
21 just one tug, so we set the ETA for like -- originally, it was --
22 well, based on four knots for about 1:00 in the morning. Once we
23 got past (indiscernible), we'd come further south out of the
24 basically ETS lights, so we wouldn't be holding up any traffic and
25 then just proceeded back to Santa Barbara -- or San Pedro. In the

1 meantime, we were -- I was receiving email and could see that we
2 had an approved plan for the continued return to San Pedro, and
3 then once we did a -- you know, a full gear check (indiscernible)
4 and everything, and (indiscernible) course and everything else and
5 then I turned to San Pedro to the cautionary area. I called the
6 LA pilot, talked to both senior pilots, Captain Flynn and there
7 was a gentleman -- I have him on cell phone -- and beforehand, the
8 day bef -- well, we got (indiscernible) so it's like maybe 3:00 in
9 the afternoon, I talked to the senior pilot with the LA pilots and
10 said, well, how do you want to do that target range? Do you want
11 the Shirley Sea to continue taking with -- (indiscernible) all the
12 way to the breakwater or do you want us to end the tow outside and
13 then get the tugboats on. And they said they wanted the Shirley
14 Sea to run the tow all the way through the breakwater up past Buoy
15 Seven, so that's what we did. And it worked out great. So we
16 were very fortunate.

17 I will offer to say that I thought the crew performed very
18 well, we just had a crew change and we had a lot of maintenance
19 conducted in San Pedro and so we were headed up to Oakland and you
20 know, the way they responded, you know, immediate response,
21 dressed, ready to fight the fire. It was great. Very lucky. I'm
22 glad no one was hurt and so now we're here to get her -- you know,
23 get her repaired.

24 Q. So Captain, let me ask. You said that you were on the bridge
25 and you had to step out occasionally to get -- catch a breath of

1 air.

2 A. To the bridge -- do the starboard bridge (indiscernible).

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. I was still on the bridging but I was using the bar -- well,
5 we call it the barbecue but it's the starboard navigation. I set
6 it so I had the speed, rudder, and rpms and everything there. And
7 it was just done -- I just opened it up, just so I had a reference
8 in case I needed it. It was just back and forth. I got masks,
9 you know, for regular 1095 masks where they had the third mate run
10 to the PPE locker and grab some free -- regular paint respirator.
11 Paint respirators. And I had those on hand in case anyone else
12 came out to the bridge that needed that wasn't -- you know, that
13 was just wearing a regular mask, they could wear one of those.

14 Q. Yeah. I guess my question is like so when you got up to the
15 bridge, was the bridge already covered in smoke?

16 A. Starting, yeah.

17 Q. It was starting?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So when did it go from like starting to get a little smoky to
20 like you -- it was very hard to be in the bridge and you had to
21 like step outside to get some air?

22 A. It just was in the -- was in that 15 -- 10- to 15-minute
23 period, just --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I mean, I could -- I went back to the -- I didn't -- I wish I

1 could have videoed more, it's one of those things sometime. It's
2 a -- one of those things where some people say no big deals. But
3 I mean, it's just -- it was -- you had to go to work, we're going
4 to need to survive this. It just became the one from
5 (indiscernible) you know, it's a fire alarm (indiscernible) you
6 know, boiler to both fire teams, here we go, we've got to get this
7 out. This is what we're going to do. And then, boom, we did it.

8 Q. Okay. And then how long until the bridge was clear of smoke?

9 A. Once the Chief Pedro came up, he had already been to the CO2
10 room, he'd already checked the cargo hold and so forth and he came
11 up and we talked on the bridge wing and he said, oh, I can -- if I
12 -- and so he adjusted the vents on the aft end of the house and
13 things started to clear up.

14 Q. So roughly what time? Just estimate?

15 A. Probably around 3:00.

16 Q. okay. So roughly, you had about 45 minutes --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Of smoke on the bridge?

19 A. Oh, yeah.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah. My concern was that the whole house was filled with
22 smoke so we used -- you can see in the deck log basically the
23 different points that the chief made was hitting the room. You
24 know, everybody was doing different things. But we used a multi-
25 gas indicator. Once things calmed down and we had the engine room

1 was all buttoned up and we had verified everything and just now we
2 had to sit and bank the CO2 and wait for the temperatures to come
3 down. And then Michael's focus was changing to, you know, getting
4 his ship towed back to San Pedro. But in the meantime, to address
5 the safety of the crew, we (indiscernible) and with the chief to
6 the first, I went down -- I basically -- once the things calmed
7 down, I had the third mate take the con and I went down to the
8 main deck and talked to the crew, assessed everything down there,
9 looked things around and then simply say, okay. You know, the
10 crew's been up all night, we've all been up all night and so
11 basically we used the multi-gas indicator, we had both passageway
12 doors open, we had windows in the rooms open. We were lucky
13 enough that we actually could open some of these windows and
14 established good ventilation and assured that we had good air and
15 no POCs in any of the rooms, and that's what the chief made
16 (indiscernible) verified and everything. So --

17 Q. So you stated, Captain, that you saw smoke and sparks and
18 some vapor and fuel coming out of the engine hatch on the stern?

19 A. Well, just -- out from the engine, it was just billowing out
20 and coming out of the main vents on the aft -- upper aft
21 ventilation of the stack.

22 Q. So is that hatch normally open? Like is that --

23 A. The engine -- the main engine room hatch?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. I can't see it from the -- I cannot see it from the bridge.

1 It depends. Sometimes, what happens, on a diesel engine is
2 sometimes you will leave it open, it depends on the chief will be
3 adjusting the fans and sometimes he wants natural ventilation.
4 What you get from -- when you go from below 60 up to 72, you have
5 your auxiliary blowers. They're on. They're on at the lower
6 rpms, we have four turbos and auxiliary blowers. Usually we use
7 three -- we use three auxiliary blowers. They go -- but they're
8 in -- you have to -- what you want to do is get through that 65 up
9 to about 72 and above because the blowers will come on and off and
10 it puts a tremendous amount of load on your generators. And so
11 just to stabilize that, you come up to -- we usually -- we call
12 our economic running at about 72 rpms, 'cause that's where the
13 blowers are off, and then we can manage the generators more
14 efficiently. If you -- you either dab or you're down on -- at 65
15 or lower, you can anchor, you're displacing your cargo load and
16 you have to have the blowers on all the time. So the chief will
17 take the engine hatch and sometimes he'll just -- he just walks
18 from the engine room up there and he'll crack it open and
19 sometimes he only needs to have like a block of wood in it, it
20 just depends. Usually, you see it's secured.

21 Q. Do you recall what it was?

22 A. I don't. I don't have a direct line on that.

23 Q. Okay. And so it sounds like that's a normal practice for the

24 --

25 A. It's no -- yeah, it's the normal practice and I -- but

1 usually after a -- once we get up in rpms, it's secure.

2 Q. Okay. So this was just something that you were doing because
3 you had to do the -- reduce steaming through the (indiscernible).

4 A. It's like you -- yeah, it's -- I mean it's secured when you
5 go to -- it's secured when you go -- after you're (indiscernible)
6 your store strength is secured, your gangway's secured, your
7 engine hatch is secured. But sometimes if the ventilation in the
8 main engine room is not correct, he will come out and crack it
9 open. And he knows it's open and he'll say, hey, the main engine
10 hatch is open, I cracked it open. But it's done -- he's done it
11 for the purpose of balancing out the air in the engine room.

12 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. Anyone else want to --

13 BY MR. BARNUM:

14 Q. I have some questions. Thank you, and it sounds a very
15 harrowing experience, so thank you for talking to us and I know
16 it's -- we're a headache here, but we have a job to do so I
17 appreciate it. Sir, you're talking about after you got to the
18 bridge, the decision was made to release the water mist and then
19 secure the ventilation. You said you were on the bridge doing it
20 simultaneously as the chief in the fire control room?

21 A. Yeah, I was standing over there -- because I'm standing over
22 it and I -- there's three buttons to press.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. But he was -- he's verified he's doing it and I'm hearing
25 that it's being done.

1 Q. Okay. And maybe later tomorrow I could see them, just
2 curious, I've never seen it, but -- so it's something on the
3 bridge that you -- you're not actually doing it, he's doing it and
4 you're verifying --

5 A. Yeah. (Indiscernible) fire control board and do it from the
6 bridge.

7 Q. Okay. Is it -- I'm trying to understand like some vessels
8 you have a manual (indiscernible) that you have to shut.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And then you also have to secure fans. So this ventilation
11 trip, this is to secure the dampers and the fans?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. It does?

14 A. All in one.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. But it takes out everything.

17 Q. Okay. Is there different zones? Is it the engine room zone
18 or is it the -- you know, when --

19 A. It's the -- those are basically the whole (indiscernible) --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. But there are different areas, but yeah, this is a whole
22 engine --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Engine space.

25 Q. Is that ventilation shut down or tripped? Is that something

- 1 that's tested periodically?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. How frequently, do you recall?
- 4 A. Well, annually, I mean, you test the major --
- 5 Q. Yeah.
- 6 A. Dampers once a year.
- 7 Q. Is it --
- 8 A. There's -- and in a spot, there are job -- there are weekly,
- 9 monthly, semi-annual and annual jobs for all that. And that
- 10 includes greasing and maintenance as well.
- 11 Q. After the chief -- did the ventilation trips you've
- 12 confirmed, did anybody go around locally and look at dampers?
- 13 A. Yes. That -- that's what the Chief was out hustling -- I
- 14 mean, he was all over the place, which was great. And he was
- 15 verifying everything.
- 16 Q. And then at what point was the fuel secured? Was that before
- 17 the ventilation? After?
- 18 A. It was -- I think it was after the ventilation. I have to
- 19 look at the -- in the deck log, it's got everything.
- 20 Q. And how is that done?
- 21 A. The fuel?
- 22 Q. Yes, sir.
- 23 A. The fuel? There's a red button, it's managing fuel stop and
- 24 we test it annually, but yeah, you test that and it just kills the
- 25 engine.

1 Q. So managing the fuel stop, where was that pressed? Did you
2 do it on the bridge?

3 A. Yeah, for the -- it was -- I actually did it from the bridge.
4 I know the chief actuated it from the engine room so it was like a
5 simultaneous thing.

6 Q. So the chief, was he in the engine room or --

7 A. No, he was in the fire control up on the main deck.

8 Q. Okay. So there's a manual stop --

9 A. And he was running and looking at the video monitors in the
10 cargo office.

11 Q. Okay. I mean, I can check after, but is it a -- is it an
12 electronic shutdown where the -- it shuts off the fuel to the --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Control system or is it a valve that shuts, do you know?

15 A. I think it's electronic.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. It shuts it down.

18 Q. And I can ask him to --

19 A. Yep.

20 Q. I'm sure he's more familiar with that. So that's the main
21 engine. What about the other consumers in the engine room? You
22 said you have a boiler. Was that on, (indiscernible) boiler?

23 A. The chief was handling all that.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So I'm not -- once you get it above 65 rpms, the boiler is

1 generally secured because you're making enough steam with your
2 econolizer (ph.).

3 Q. Okay. So when he shut off -- you said you shut the engine
4 off, he shut it off as well, but is it all -- is there a different
5 button to push for the generators?

6 A. The chief has control of that and he's doing all that.

7 Q. Did he do that as well at the same time or when were the --
8 when was the generator shut down?

9 A. We were concerned with the main engine and so he -- I could
10 hear him saying what he was doing, but he was handling all that,
11 balancing -- as far as balancing the power and then switching over
12 to the NTG (ph.) that -- he's handling all that.

13 Q. Sure. Sure. I'm just trying to understand --

14 A. I (indiscernible) in a lot of tough situations and he's an
15 excellent engineer.

16 Q. Sure.

17 ENSIGN [REDACTED] My apologies. We have --

18 LT. [REDACTED] Right. For the record, we're going to do a brief
19 pause in our interview (indiscernible).

20 (Off the record.)

21 LT. [REDACTED] All right. This is Lieutenant [REDACTED] We're going
22 to resume the interview with the same parties (indiscernible).

23 BY MR. BARNUM:

24 Q. All right. This is Bart Barnum again. So just to finish
25 that, Captain, the -- we were talking about the generators being

1 secured, you're not entirely sure when that was done, the chief
2 did that. Do you know if they were secured before the release of
3 CO2?

4 A. I'm not sure. I'm just -- 'cause I'm not looking at the
5 engine schematics, I'm -- I had -- I was dealing with the fire
6 protection system 'cause it can -- it was going off
7 (indiscernible) alarms and then it's interfering with everything
8 'cause we can't -- so I like -- some are fixed alarms and so
9 between that the navigation and everything else, the third mate's
10 running everything down, I'm focused on the safety of the vessel
11 and the overall condition of things and I'm trusting that the
12 chief's doing exactly what he needs to do, which I believe he did.

13 Q. Okay. In the --

14 A. To execute --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. You know, operation.

17 Q. The -- and the entire time you're communicating, it's on the
18 radio or is it by phone?

19 A. On the radio, yeah. Mostly on the radio.

20 Q. I'm understanding, we talked to some of your crew members
21 earlier, you guys train quite a bit. For this emergency situation
22 where you're securing ventilation, switching each emergency power
23 generator, does your estimates have a specific procedure for that?

24 Or --

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. How do you know to --
- 2 A. Yeah, there's --
- 3 Q. How did you know to do all that?
- 4 A. Guidelines and just booklets that we have that's a list of
5 what to do.
- 6 Q. And I think you answered this question earlier that your
7 notifications to the Coast Guard, you called the command center on
8 your cell phone?
- 9 A. Yep. Yes. I made all my notifications on ,you know -- on my
10 cell phone. But I can also do it through the Wi-Fi and if I -- if
11 necessary, I can do it on the -- via satellite call. So I have
12 multiple ways to do it, but I just -- I knew I could get it done
13 on the cell phone, so that's what I did.
- 14 Q. And who did you speak to at the command -- was it just the
15 one call to the command center or did you speak to anybody else at
16 the --
- 17 A. I called the 24-hour hotline.
- 18 Q. Okay.
- 19 A. I made an additional notification that way. And then I
20 proceeded to call Mac Cleary and (indiscernible).
- 21 Q. I'm ignorant. Mac Cleary, could you --
- 22 A. Mac Cleary is our qualified individual -- our sort of DP.
- 23 Q. Designated person ashore?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Okay. And the other person you contacted?

- 1 A. Was Gallagher (ph.), which is our -- sorry --
- 2 Q. Take your time, it's fine.
- 3 A. Is a -- they're -- they handle there for the (indiscernible)
- 4 customers response plan.
- 5 Q. Customer response plan.
- 6 A. And so once they -- once you contact them, they put us in
- 7 touch with TNT Salvage, and that says something with our fire team
- 8 that came out to the ship.
- 9 Q. Very good. Thank you. Maneuverability -- so after the fire,
- 10 we're talking getting it towed back. You said you had
- 11 maneuverability to have the control of the rudder?
- 12 A. We had control of the rudder and --
- 13 Q. And that's because it's -- on the emergency boss or --
- 14 A. Yes, it's 'cause it's on the emergency boss.
- 15 Q. The -- you departed San Pedro. Where was the vessel headed?
- 16 A. To Oakland. We had an ETA of 1500 the next day, on the 28th.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. That was our original ETA.
- 19 Q. All right. Are you fully loaded or were you going to
- 20 discharge?
- 21 A. We were fully loaded. We're actually heavier now. So we're
- 22 on -- we're in the same condition. We were 12, 4, 12, 9 by the
- 23 stern. We actually were -- had more cargo and were heavier and
- 24 deeper in draft than when we arrived from (indiscernible) after
- 25 our trans (indiscernible).

- 1 Q. So are you doing the old route that the --
- 2 A. We're doing the (indiscernible) today.
- 3 Q. So here, Oakland, Pusan --
- 4 A. Here -- so San Pedro, Oakland, and then we proceed to
- 5 Yokohama.
- 6 Q. All right.
- 7 A. And then Baja, Okinawa, Pusan, South Korea, Qingdao, China,
- 8 down to Shanghai, back to Pusan second call and from Pusan to Long
- 9 Beach, California.
- 10 Q. Thank you. You changed -- you get a new second mate, third
- 11 mate in San Pedro?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. I'm not looking at a list, but what is your complement of
- 14 officers on board?
- 15 A. At the time it was 22 total.
- 16 Q. And so had you sailed the second -- the second mate, third
- 17 mate before you got --
- 18 A. No, I never sailed with them before.
- 19 Q. Well, you --
- 20 A. I looked up their crew history and so forth. I know that
- 21 Steven -- Mr. Steven Partridge, the second officer, had sailed as
- 22 second mate and chief mate for the company. That's always a good
- 23 sign. And then the -- Joshua Ortega was new, this was his second
- 24 vessel after graduating from California Maritime.
- 25 Q. The vessel -- you said the vessel completed a lot of

1 maintenance in San Pedro. What was that maintenance?

2 A. It's the standard -- we did our regular annuals on the
3 bridge, so all the radio equipment was checked, PER, everything
4 has gone through this annual service and a safety check. It's
5 very -- main engine maintenance, electrical, there's different
6 things. We have a west coast game plan that the chief engineer,
7 the S and T (ph.) and that the port engineer work through and we
8 come up with a list of the agreed requisitions and POs that we're
9 going to work on.

10 Q. Do you know any specific main engine maintenance carried out?

11 A. No, it was -- it's general. There wasn't anything super
12 specific that --

13 Q. Was it all planned maintenance or was there some --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Unplanned?

16 A. I'd have to look back at the west coast game plan, but it
17 wasn't -- there wasn't anything outstanding that was -- it was
18 just more or less -- it was a lighter list, I would say, overall.

19 Q. Is that --

20 A. But we also have COVID, so like we don't have -- we didn't
21 necessarily have the standbys on board and so on and so forth.

22 Q. Is that something we can get a copy of, the west coast game
23 plan? Can we get a copy of that?

24 A. Yeah. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. Who does most of the main engine maintenance on board?

1 Is it the vessel's crew, is it a third party?

2 A. It's the -- it's a combination. And that's scheduled by the
3 port engineer, Kevin Miller.

4 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED] Now -- sorry --

5 MR. BARNUM: Go ahead, [REDACTED]

6 BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]

7 Q. Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] just interjecting. So has this --
8 like you said it's interchangeable but like, for the main engine
9 maintenance, is that done mostly by shore -- shore game or is that
10 --

11 A. It's a combination.

12 Q. Combination.

13 A. It depends how --

14 Q. Now, did that --

15 A. Large a project it would be if a large project if
16 (indiscernible) shore side vendors (indiscernible) to assist.
17 Because of the nature of time.

18 Q. Has any of that changed because of the COVID -- because of
19 COVID?

20 A. No, we still would have main engine service on it.

21 Q. Okay. So none of that has changed (indiscernible).

22 A. We're not putting off -- you know, if it's -- if we were
23 definitely doing it. But all the regular checks, you can go
24 through NS5 and everything else and every -- we're still going
25 through -- you know, we went through -- I mean, like PTS, you

1 know, Thomas, the chief engineer worked through all those, you
2 know, before last year's annuals and everything else regards to
3 COVID and still everything's -- we're working all through that.

4 BY MR. BARNUM:

5 Q. Captain, you might have mentioned it. How long have you been
6 on this vessel?

7 A. Well, we -- I've been working on -- I work -- usually it's a
8 schedule of 84 days on and 84 days off since July of 2018.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. (Indiscernible) when the vessel is flagged in
11 (indiscernible).

12 Q. And how about the chief engineer? Has he been on here --

13 A. The same time.

14 Q. Same time?

15 A. Same amount of -- same amount of time.

16 Q. And what about his first and second? Are they --

17 A. The same. Mike -- Mike Glessing has been here since the
18 reflag and -- but yeah, the absentee -- and Pedro came on a little
19 later. We had a couple really (indiscernible) but then he's been
20 around as well. So, I mean it's a good group.

21 Q. You'd mentioned the main engine is very specific on what rpm
22 you can -- what it functions best at under different conditions
23 and that you have to burn the low-sulphur fuel in this zone. And
24 have you had any issues with burning that low-sulphur fuel?

25 A. No.

1 Q. No? In --

2 A. I mean, (indiscernible) --

3 Q. Performance problems?

4 A. There was a couple of protocols, there are a couple of
5 suggested operational protocols. One of them is that dead slow
6 ahead is 30 rpms, not 24, because if you stay 24, she tends to die
7 off, and if you can immediately restart the engine so it's not
8 like it's lost propulsion, but it's less consistent. If you go to
9 30, she'll maintain solid 30 rpm. So that's in our -- that's in
10 our master pilot exchange. Anytime the main engine's used, we
11 review it, usually when it's -- it's tugged to the center lane tug
12 and tow, which is how LA law -- LA pilots and San Francisco pilots
13 have major tug arrangements, we can still come down the same, like
14 three and a half knots with good steerage using 30 rpms. I would
15 just say that, you know, (indiscernible) you just -- when you make
16 your initial -- your first bell, I always go slow. So if
17 someone's asked for dead slow ahead on the first bell, I go to
18 slow, hit the start and crank it down to 30 rpms. So those are
19 just smart ways of starting the engine to ensure that you don't
20 have any like fail to start or anything like that. The fuel is a
21 little -- it can be a little fluky, but if you -- using those
22 simple directives that -- I've had 100 percent reliability.

23 Q. Okay. So you haven't had --

24 A. The only other thing --

25 Q. No issues with it?

1 A. The only other thing is that you're generally going -- like,
2 I mean, I just don't like to push the engine if I don't have to.
3 I listen to my chief engineer. If he doesn't -- if he's seen --
4 if he doesn't see the water temperatures or whatever else
5 parameters that he's looking for or have a bad fuel pump or
6 something else or just a specific liner or just that it's running
7 hot, we'll keep the rpms down. So it's a -- you know, it's a
8 working relationship.

9 Q. Yeah. Did he voice it --

10 A. But -- but I'm respecting the equipment. I know its
11 limitations, but I'm not going to purposely destroy something I
12 don't need to.

13 Q. Yeah. Did he voice any concerns with you departing San Pedro
14 with respect to the main engine? Anything to --

15 A. No, as long -- I mean, basically we were just trying to keep
16 it at 80 and not go any higher than that (indiscernible). And if
17 -- then once we get -- and also, when you start to come up to rpms
18 above 65, you have to look at your load condition and not -- and
19 once you get up to 80, you just back it off because you might
20 exceed your required speed, and if that's the case, then once I
21 see what -- where we're at and I can say, oh, well, we'll just cut
22 down a couple rpms and back it off. And that's -- that's -- the
23 ship actually likes to keep adrift -- a draft. She runs better,
24 it's actually faster (indiscernible).

25 Q. And the turn-out gear and SCVA's, how many are you required

1 to have on board, do you know?

2 A. Six.

3 Q. Six packs? Where are those located?

4 A. In the emergency gear lockers, port and starboard side, main
5 deck.

6 Q. Three in each?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. And then we were talking that your crew earlier, your
9 crew list, muster list, are these kept in the -- the turn -- turno
10 (ph.) gear lockers, too?

11 A. Yeah, outside, yes.

12 Q. And how often are they updated?

13 A. They're updated with the crew change, but I always tell the
14 crew that, you know, look at your station bill. Your article --
15 your article number is -- and they're always assigned by article
16 number. So whatever your article number is, go to your article
17 number and look on the station bill. It's located on every single
18 deck on the ship. So no matter what the paperwork says at the
19 muster station, it's -- that article number is -- whoever's that
20 article number, that's their -- that's their job.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. For emergency conditions.

23 Q. We understand there was a little confusion while you were
24 remustering prior to CO2 release. Was that -- how was that
25 resolved and how quickly was that done?

1 A. They -- they took a count. I knew that I had accounted for
2 22 people on board including myself. Whether or not the names
3 were right, the station bill, the article numbers were there and
4 the crew numbers were there and that's all I needed to know.

5 Q. Twenty-two POV?

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So that's how that -- so if the -- I'm not hearing about the
9 -- no one's telling me about the -- that there's a different name
10 on the list or that the li -- you know --

11 Q. Sure.

12 A. You know.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. We're also -- I mean, as we go up the coast, depending on the
15 number of people that -- our crews going to change up, we're going
16 to do a fire drill at 1300 the next day, depending on if we've
17 changed more than 25 percent of the crew. So -- but the
18 familiarization starts when the crew member comes on board. We
19 have the initial familiarization, review of company policies, ship
20 tour, and then we go on to the drill phase where you're assigning
21 turn-out gear to the crew members and so forth and assigning their
22 lifeboat station and duties and then that -- so it's all -- it's a
23 continued process that -- that you want to propose.

24 Q. Right. And had you turned out --

25 A. (Indiscernible)

1 Q. Have you turned over 25 percent when you left San Pedro?

2 A. No.

3 Q. It wasn't 25 percent?

4 A. No.

5 MR. BARNUM: Okay. Thank you. That's all the questions I
6 have this round. Thank you, Captain.

7 BY CHIEF FOREIGN OFFICER [REDACTED]

8 Q. Chief Foreign Officer [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Captain, what was the
9 first alarm that you noticed? Or the first alarm notification
10 that came through?

11 A. It was the fire alarm.

12 Q. Fire alarm? Okay.

13 A. That was the one that -- (indiscernible) boiler.

14 Q. Okay. And you noticed that on the fire control panel from
15 the bridge, is that correct?

16 A. I came -- I was in my state room. Once the general alarm
17 went off, I came up to the bridge (indiscernible).

18 Q. All right. And that was automatic activation, the general
19 alarm, that wasn't --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Something you initiated?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Automatic.

25 Q. Okay. And do you know, as far as the changeover to low-

1 sulphur fuel, when did that take place?

2 A. That took place prior to arrival at San Pedro. So we arrived
3 on the 23rd. It was -- it happens, you know, 200 and some odd
4 miles --

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. (Indiscernible) Well, for us, (indiscernible) it was 391
7 miles in from the ECA.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And we slow down beforehand, come down -- we come down to 65
10 and below. The chief tells the bridge what rpms he wants and it's
11 a three-hour notice and then it's a two-hour time period that
12 we're changing over the fuel.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Confirm on both sulphur NGO and then request the ECA and
15 we're in the ECA.

16 Q. Okay. And what --

17 A. And I -- and I -- sorry. I purpose -- I run -- we run --
18 well, the chief likes to run so we come across, we got a little
19 push on HFO and we'll come down to a lower rpm on NGO, that's
20 cost-effective and the engine runs better. That way, you're not
21 pushing 'cause -- there's less lubrication in the fuel. So it's
22 better for the engine running at a lower rpm than trying to push
23 80 and plus into San Pedro.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. If you had to, you had to, but we generally purposely plan

1 not to do it. We're very decisive in using low-sulphur fuel --
2 NGO versus HFO.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And the other thing it to -- the other thing is that because
5 of the delays on the west coast, we're also doing that so that
6 there's no chance that we're going to run out of low-sulphur while
7 we're coastwise, which was the delays that we had with the
8 anchored vessels and everything else. So we're purposely making
9 sure we have a good fuel supply of low-sulphur NGO on board. So
10 we're kind of protecting it if that makes sense.

11 Q. And when did you arrive within the ECA zone? What was that
12 date or time? Any idea?

13 A. It was around -- I think it was around 8:00 at night. It
14 could be -- I could be wrong, I'd have to look at the log.

15 Q. And that would be -- let's see (indiscernible) --

16 A. (Indiscernible)

17 Q. The far east, so that would have been at 8 -- that would have
18 been 2000 on Wednesday? Or Thursday?

19 A. On the 2 -- on the 22nd.

20 Q. Oh, 22nd.

21 A. I look at the log.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. A little --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So it was a smooth transition. We put it in K-drive, we make

1 our notification in the V2PS (ph.), which is our like voyage app
2 track system, and we make a -- there are a couple of places we --
3 there's also the deck log.

4 CHIEF FOREIGN OFFICER [REDACTED] Okay. All right. That's
5 good.

6 BY LT. [REDACTED]

7 Q. This is Lieutenant [REDACTED] Captain, would you please just
8 state who you conducted alcohol testing on and at what point?

9 A. We conducted the -- the chief mate and I authorized the chief
10 mate and the second mate to drug test the first engineer, Mike
11 Glessing, and the second engineer, Conor Golden, because they were
12 the cargo and duty engineer and the first engineer was with him,
13 and they were the last people -- they were there for the loading
14 up of the main engine on departure from San Pedro up to Oakland,
15 and they were -- they -- we loaded up to 80 rpm and they were the
16 last ones, they did a round through the engine room. And then
17 they were the last ones to go unattended. They were the last ones
18 in the space. And that was as authorized by the U.S. Coast
19 Guard.

20 Q. And you -- you said that was drug testing or alcohol testing?

21 A. Both.

22 Q. At what point did you conduct the alcohol testing?

23 A. I conducted the -- the drug testing after 4:00 in the morning
24 and the alcohol around 6:00. I should have done it together but
25 we were -- it just wasn't one of the things where -- at first, it

1 -- I just -- we knew this was one of those things where it just
2 got spread out. But that's partly because of ship duties and so
3 forth, and just the whole extenuating circumstances and people
4 doing different jobs, getting pulled back -- getting back together
5 when they were both at a point where it was safe to do so.

6 Q. Okay. I just had one other question. You said that when you
7 were on the bridge, could you just describe one more time -- you
8 said you saw smoke and what looked like (indiscernible) fuel?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Could you just describe like how you -- how you knew that
11 that's what that was?

12 A. Well, I can tell you how it was because I've had a lot of
13 brush fires because I live on an island back in Maine and I have a
14 John Deere tractor and so I burn a lot of wood and I've also used
15 diesel to start those fires. So I know what a fuel fire looks
16 like versus a classic wood fire. I've worked on -- I've worked
17 (indiscernible) tower (indiscernible) cantankerous (ph.) AV for
18 six months back in the day in the Gulf of Mexico and so forth, up
19 along the eastern seaboard. We just had huge, billowing amounts
20 of smoke emanating from the aft of the house through the -- and
21 the engine ventilation spaces. And so I wish I could have taped
22 it, but I didn't, because I was -- we were just right on in the
23 middle of (indiscernible) firing and inviting -- getting ready to
24 stage a fight to fire, and you know, I'm checking our position and
25 traffic and everything else, a lot of different things are

1 happening.

2 But yeah, there was just a lot of billowing smoke and it
3 just -- it feels kind of slightly oily and there's a certain tinge
4 to the smell from it. And I knew that we had more -- it was, you
5 know, it was uncombusted but in the air, fuel, and -- so anyway, I
6 knew that we had a significant situation and we needed to -- so I
7 -- I mean, what everything -- the crew made it very easy for me to
8 -- the chief made it very easy for me because we expedited
9 everything.

10 There was no doubt in our minds that this is -- it was
11 the rightest thing to do. So I thanked the chief and the squad
12 teams for doing their jobs and in a -- doing it in a safe manner,
13 no one got hurt. But that's -- but that -- yeah, so I mean, like
14 I said, I was monitoring as best I could without having, you know,
15 really getting away from the third mate who was fairly new and I
16 wanted to make sure he was comfortable, but he was getting as much
17 information down as things were happening, and still -- but being
18 able to verify to the fire chief down below, hey, this is what I
19 see. Keep going. What -- you know, and then verifying the
20 change, that to me was very significant they were making some
21 progress and that we had effected a change on the condition of the
22 fire.

23 Q. All right. And then just one last item, I apologize if you
24 already stated this, but which -- which crew member actually
25 physically activated the CO2 system?

1 A. The chief engineer.

2 Q. Chief engineer.

3 A. Yeah.

4 LT. [REDACTED] That's all I have, gentlemen.

5 BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]

6 Q. Captain, I have -- I have just two more questions for you,
7 Captain. This is Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] So after the fire's
8 out and you're discussing with the chief engineer and your other
9 engineers, what did you guys come up with and what did you guys
10 conclude the cause of the fire on board the vessel?

11 A. We all gathered in the cargo office and reviewed the video
12 together and we just took it back to what we figured -- you know,
13 what we could tell that the time difference to start was and we
14 looked and we could verify a fuel leak at -- it looks like
15 cylinder five. There's a banjo fitting pipe that goes into the
16 fuel injector and that's right where the -- we could see this --
17 the misting occur and you could see it pump out, pulse out, and
18 then you could see the -- you could just see the black hole where
19 the atomized fuel hit the heat from the exhaust manifold on the
20 main engine, and then it just flamed up from there. It's right
21 there on the video.

22 Q. When you say banjo line, what are -- what do you mean by
23 that?

24 A. It's a return line. I don't know that -- it's just a -- it's
25 a pipe that -- that I've heard the engineer talk about. I'm not

1 that familiar with it. I'm familiar with having fuel leaks and
2 stopping the ship at sea, and you know, basically, just want to
3 get the ship stopped and you want to get the fuel line changed.
4 It happens periodically. It's happened when I was, you know,
5 third mate, second mate, chief mate, and then master. But this
6 one, it just -- you know, it caught fire and we had to deal with
7 that. So that's what happened.

8 BY CHIEF (INDISCERNIBLE) PERRY (ph.):

9 Q. This is Chief (indiscernible) Perry speaking. Captain, so
10 have you had to stop for a fuel leak on this vessel at any time in
11 your recent memory?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. How long -- how long ago did that occur?

14 A. Oh, maybe a year ago.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It's not an uncommon thing, though. It's -- it happens on
17 different ships.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. We report them.

20 CHIEF [REDACTED]: Okay.

21 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. Captain, I'll open (indiscernible).

22 BY MR. BARNUM:

23 Q. Yes, sir, Bart Barnum at TSB. Captain, that particular banjo
24 line, you said you had previously a year ago or whatever, you had
25 to stop, but do you know if that line's been changed out recently,

1 perhaps off the port, you didn't have to stop?

2 A. No, I don't know -- I didn't -- no. And it's different --
3 it's different fuel lines, not -- I mean, there are high-pressure
4 fuel lines with the metal outer layer.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. Sometimes it's just -- it can be generally those that -- that
7 have the issue. So it just depends. Sometimes it's an O-ring or
8 just a simple gasket or something like that.

9 Q. But to your knowledge, has either one of those high-pressure
10 braided lines or the return, smaller diameter banjo line have --
11 any of those been changed out recently on the main engine?

12 A. No, not that I know.

13 Q. Just to follow up, you might have understood it yourself, on
14 the alarm, so you -- do you have a fire alarm panel in your
15 stateroom, sir?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You do? Okay. And then how does it work? Is it -- if that
18 alarm isn't acknowledged at a certain time, then it sets off the
19 general alarm?

20 A. Well, it -- you -- I get an all-call -- it was an all-call
21 alarm that I got in my stateroom. It's not -- I mean, it's not
22 specific, it's just -- it's just going off in my room and going
23 right up to the bridge.

24 Q. So an all-call fire alarm?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Now, why is that triggered? Because more than one sensor is
2 active or --

3 A. If it -- if the fire alarm -- if the fire alarms go off and
4 they're not acknowledged within two -- within two minutes, then
5 they'll -- it sounds an all-call.

6 Q. So why was not -- why was it not acknowledged in two minutes?

7 A. It -- because if you have multiple alarms, you -- they can
8 load up and then so you're behind. There can be multiple alarms.
9 Also it's a -- it's -- you know, the third man on watch, there's
10 about ten different nautical alarms on the bridge, so when an
11 alarm goes off, it takes a little while to get used to knowing
12 that it's happening over here, it's not the GMT (ph.) assess
13 center or it's not the radar or it's not the Ektus (ph.), so the
14 -- because they both -- so it -- you don't necessarily pick up it
15 up, so he may not have picked it up, but when he -- I think
16 because there were two alarms that went off that that's why it
17 kicked off to a general alarm to an all-call.

18 Q. Okay. The -- all right. Just to clarify, sir, you might not
19 know --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Exactly, but it was because one of the alarms was
22 acknowledged or if two alarms go off simultaneously, it
23 automatically --

24 A. I think it's two -- I think if two goes off simultaneously --

25 Q. Then it automatically --

1 A. Goes to a general alarm.

2 Q. Yeah. Okay. Then the decisions to release the CO2 and water
3 mist.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Who made that decision?

6 A. The chief said we need to release it and I said I'm in
7 agreement, do it.

8 Q. Okay. Thank you. Kind of unrelated, but during the
9 maneuvering, when you have a pilot on board --

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. Do you require a -- either the chief or first to be in the
12 engine room? Or are they required to be in the engine room?

13 A. When you come in for any arrival or departure, for the
14 arrivals, I have a -- well, APL had -- we call it (indiscernible)
15 time sheet and then I put it -- it's one of the things you master
16 from second mate to chief mate to captain. And it's just a --
17 it's an orchestrated schedule of events and it's -- it's when you
18 call people out to clear the anchors and -- and assume the forward
19 lookout position, it's when the sailors go down and open the side
20 port and rig the pilot ladder as per the instruction given by the
21 pilot (indiscernible) and so on that is standby engine -- standby
22 engine is the chief engineer's required -- it designates who the
23 duty engineer is and it rotates on a daily basis. And so it just
24 sets up all the communications, who you're -- who the watch
25 officer's going to be calling when you're coming into port, what

1 channels they're going to be on, what sailors are going to be
2 called based on their watch schedule. It just orchestrates
3 everything out and so part of that is you have a duty engineer
4 that you're going to be calling out to come in from -- he's got an
5 hour call-out to get up, get down to the engine room, check
6 everything out, start the diesel generators and everything else,
7 balance out the power and then load program down, come down to
8 maneuvering bells and then -- and part of that process is when --
9 is to when the chief is required to be in the engine room.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. So standby engine is always required.

12 Q. Okay. What is your longest -- of the ports you named
13 earlier, what is your longest transit time as chief engineer would
14 be required to be down there for?

15 A. Shanghai. It's about -- you know, it's like about a six --
16 six and -- six-hour transit, it might be longer if you're
17 (indiscernible) banker, you're going standby and the chief's in
18 the engine room, the duty engineer's there with him.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And then, you know, you're heaving anchor in Shanghai, coming
21 -- and that might take an hour and then there's another two hours
22 down at the pilot station and the pilot station increments are in
23 four-minute increments. It's a real rodeo. And then coming to
24 Shanghai, you might have a third-degree leeway because of the
25 current there. It's really strong. And the ships go slow in the

1 beginning, so you're going like six knots sideways up the river
2 until you get to the -- well, there's two -- there's a deeper
3 secondary channel for smaller coastal traffic and it goes to the
4 right and the big ships come up to allow nine (indiscernible).

5 Q. But --

6 A. But anyway -- but the point being is that it's like between
7 that, he's up there, he's on for the whole thing. That's about
8 seven hours.

9 Q. But other than that, if your transit -- if you're not on
10 standby, you're not doing this transit -- the -- it's an unmanned
11 engine room, correct?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. But there's -- and there's day workers that are down -- but
15 then there's designated duty engineers for each day.

16 Q. Okay. So --

17 A. So there's a full -- there's a full watch system and anytime
18 we're maneuvering, there's an empty chair in the engine room.

19 Q. Okay. We were down there earlier and we -- behind the
20 switchboard panel, there's like some sort of bed down there.
21 Maybe someone was sleeping down there? A bed. We were just --
22 but it's usually an unmanned space while --

23 A. There -- I mean, there are times if you're going to -- you
24 may have a transit where you're -- it's like when you're in -- in
25 Chindau, if you're out at the outer anchorage, I always go to the

1 outer anchorage, I don't come to the inner -- I don't stay in the
2 -- I don't like small anchorages necessarily. I'd rather stay
3 outside. The ships easier -- and I'll tell the pilot, like, we
4 need five and a half hours' notice for the berth just because it
5 makes more sense to stay outside. If you go inside into a tight
6 anchorage, you can have issues with fishing boats and a lot of
7 other stuff. So like Chindau, so you're outside, so you've got
8 the duty engineer and you know you're -- but -- so you -- you get
9 under way, then you know what your required speed is. You might
10 be half ahead or full ahead, which is about 17 knots. But you
11 know you're going to have a certain long distance, so you tell --
12 put your feet up or you can either go to your room or put your
13 feet up in the engine room and then -- and then I'll call you and
14 then we're going to -- and then I'll need you because we're going
15 to start to maneuver from this buoy here. And so it's just a
16 chance for everyone -- just, he's there but you don't need him
17 because you're not making multiple rpm changes.

18 Q. Understood. Thank you for that.

19 A. So that's what that is.

20 Q. And just two more questions here, sir. Fire detection in the
21 engine room. What kind of sensors do you have?

22 A. We have smoke sensors and heat sensors.

23 Q. Smoke and heat. Any flame eyes?

24 A. The -- I think in the boiler.

25 Q. Boiler fire?

1 A. It may be in the -- in the scavage (ph.) space. We have a
2 separate local steam suppression system for the scavage space, but
3 it's only locally activated. So there's no way to get to it from
4 -- during this -- in this particular (indiscernible).

5 Q. Of -- I'm an engineer at trade. I've worked in engine rooms
6 where an automation system, you can disable alarms, you can
7 inhibit alarms if you're working on them. There's certain
8 procedures for that. Does your company or your vessel have a
9 procedure for -- in place for disabling an alarm or inhibiting it?

10 A. Yes. But it's -- as per the chief engineer, and there's
11 notifications where if -- if you're off (indiscernible) or
12 something like that, you're notifying the bridge and it's
13 something that'll be logged.

14 Q. If I were to disable a fire detector, for instance. Would
15 that be something that would be logged or --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Yeah. How about a main --

18 A. And every time the duty engineer comes down or goes
19 unattended, like all the working doors have to be -- and actually,
20 generally speaking, the -- those alarms have to be reactivated
21 when they go unmanned.

22 Q. And how about like a main engine alarm? Are those -- are you
23 notified if those are disabled or inhibited?

24 A. Generally, yes. If it's something small, I just -- generally
25 the large ones, yes.

1 Q. Okay. Do you know of any alarm -- main engine alarms or fire
2 alarms that are currently -- sorry, not currently, but prior to
3 the fire that were disabled or inhibited?

4 A. No. No.

5 Q. No alarms. Okay.

6 A. I don't know of -- I was not aware of any.

7 Q. Okay. Thank you. And just my last question, sir, I've been
8 asking everybody, knowing what you know now after the fire,
9 knowing how well your crew performed as you'd say, is there
10 anything that you think you could have done better or maybe just
11 differently that would have benefitted in this situation,
12 something that we can take away for all of us?

13 A. I thought the -- you know, the first time you -- you review
14 the video of the multi camera images, it goes by fast and then the
15 second time or third time you look at it, and you just see that
16 thing burning, you know, it seems like it's going slow and gee,
17 maybe we could have done this faster. We did -- we actually did
18 it pretty fast, but it's the same thing with -- like, you know,
19 when they had the collision in the John McCain (ph.) off of
20 Yokohama and then the AZX (ph.) Crystal, I think was the ship that
21 hit it, and they said, oh, it took them 45 minutes to turn around
22 and come back to aid -- aide the Navy vessel. Well, when you
23 figure a crew of 22 and you have the chief mate and six sailors
24 and you say you're going to go check the six cargo holds, it's
25 going to take 45 minutes.

1 So overall, you know, I've never dumped CO2 before. I'm
2 either going to win the lottery or dump CO2, and so I guess I'll
3 dump CO2. You know, you don't want to do it, but once you -- once
4 you know how significant the fire is, you're in it and so you've -
5 - you've got to safely dump that -- you know, muster the crew and
6 safely dump the CO2. And that's what we did. But we -- I feel
7 that the chief -- I trust the chief made the right decisions at
8 the right time. And executed in a safe manner for the crew and
9 for the ship. So I thought that the time was pretty good. I
10 don't think we could have cut it much shorter than it was.

11 Q. Other than the timing, any certain suppression system or
12 equipment that you wish you would have had?

13 A. Yeah. I -- I mean, I've -- I've been the -- the water
14 systems, I think -- I mean, I -- this is going to sound -- the
15 traditional water systems, I think that the water vapor systems
16 that are employed on this vessel now, the -- of the finer droplets
17 are the way to go. They are so much better at absorbing heat and
18 any sort of major collision or -- not just a -- not a collision
19 but a fuel oil fire, they're just really good for that. And so I
20 just think in the long run, like more houses and commercial
21 buildings and everything else should have that type of suppression
22 system as opposed to just like the heavy water system.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. Thank you, sir.

24 A. Believe me, I consider this a learning experience and am very
25 grateful that no one was injured.

1 BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED]

2 Q. Captain, this is Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] again. Just to
3 clarify, so you said you drug tested the first and the second
4 engineer?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. The first -- so who was actually on the duty watch? Was it
7 the first --

8 A. The second --

9 Q. Or the second --

10 A. The second engineer.

11 Q. Okay. And so why did you drug test the first engineer?

12 A. Because he was actually down there with the -- with the
13 second the whole time, just lending him a hand.

14 Q. Okay. Well --

15 A. He -- 'cause he had joined the ship in San Pedro and though
16 he's been here before, it was just a little harder (indiscernible)
17 process.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But he's -- I mean, he could have done it himself. Conor's
20 very capable and I trust his judgment and he learns fast and --
21 but it was just a -- it was a team effort.

22 LIEUTENANT COMMANDER [REDACTED] Okay. Understood. Thank you.
23 Okay. Again, last call for any questions, follow up? Okay. I
24 think that -- good.

25 LT. [REDACTED] All right. The time is 1549 on board the

1 President Eisenhower. We have concluded our interview with
2 Captain -- how do you pronounce this?

3 CAPTAIN KOMLOSY: Komlosy.

4 LT. [REDACTED] Kom --

5 CAPTAIN KOMLOSY: Komlosy.

6 LT. [REDACTED] All right. Captain Komlosy.

7 CAPTAIN KOMLOSY: It's Hungarian. Komlosy. But Komlosy.

8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

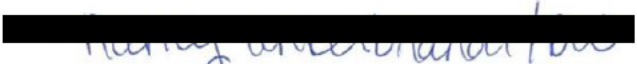
IN THE MATTER OF: FIRE ON THE *PRESIDENT EISENHOWER*
SOUTHWEST OF SANTA BARBARA
HARBOR, ON APRIL 28, 2021
Interview of Captain Jonathan Komlosy

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA21FM026

PLACE: Los Angeles, CA

DATE: April 30, 2021

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.



Nancy Ankenbrandt
Transcriber