

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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CAPSIZING OF THE LIFTBOAT *SEACOR*
POWER SOUTH OF PORT FOURCHON,
LOUISIANA, ON APRIL 13, 2021

Accident No.: DCA21MM024

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Interview of: PAUL FREMIN, Operations Manager
Seacor Marine

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
April 20, 2021

APPEARANCES:

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National Transportation Safety Board

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U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation

MICHAEL RICHARDS, Meteorologist, Weather Chair
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I N T E R V I E W

(1517 p.m., EDT)

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2
3 MR. KUCHARSKI: I have started the recording, and today is
4 20th of April 2021. The time is 1517 Eastern Daylight Time. And
5 we are conducting an interview of Paul Fremin from Seacor. And
6 this interview is being conducted via Microsoft Teams. Some of
7 the participants in this interview are by video, if you will;
8 others are by telephone only. The purpose of the investigation is
9 to increase safety, not to assign fault, blame or liability. The
10 NTSB cannot offer any guarantee of confidentiality or immunity
11 from legal or certificate actions, if you have a certificate.

12 Again, you will get a copy of the transcript and suggest
13 errata. This interview will go in the public docket. You're
14 allowed to have a representative of your choice, and I believe he
15 will identify himself as we go around the room.

16 Are there any questions so far?

17 MR. FREMIN: No, sir.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. So Mr. Fremin, am I saying it
19 correctly, Fremin?

20 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir, that's correct.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. And would you spell your name for the
22 record, and also provide your title at the company?

23 MR. FREMIN: Yes. My name is Paul Fremin, spelled P-a-u-l
24 F-r-e-m-i-n, and my title is Operations Manager for Seacor Marine.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Thank you. And when you say

1 Operations Manager, were you the Operations Manager for the Seacor
2 Power?

3 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Thank you.

5 And this is Mike Kucharski, K-u-c-h-a-r-s-k-i. I'm the Group
6 Chairman for Operations for this investigation for the National
7 Transportation Safety Board.

8 Okay. Going down the line, if you will. I'm going to go by
9 what the list says here. And, again, I have 1-361-877-3323.

10 MS. HUFFMAN: Melissa Huffman with the National Weather
11 Service. Last name spelling H-u-f-f-m-a-n.

12 Thank you.

13 I see [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is next.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Good afternoon. Eric [REDACTED]

15 MR. KUCHARSKI: Could you spell your name, please?

16 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah. I'm sorry. Last name is spelled

17 [REDACTED]

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you. Thank you.

19 And next I have Carrolton Conference Room.

20 MR. TOMPKINS: Yes. This is Peter Tompkins here as
21 representative on behalf of Mr. Fremin.

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you.

23 And, Michael Cenac.

24 MR. CENAC: Michael Cenac, Seacor Marine, C-e-n-a-c.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you.

1 Further down the line I have Drew Ehlers.

2 MR. EHLERS: Good afternoon, Drew Ehlers. First name
3 A-n-d-r-e-w, last name E-h-l-e-r-s. I am the Investigator-in-
4 Charge for the NTSB.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you.

6 And let's see. We know who Paul Fremin is.

7 John Preston, please.

8 MR. PRESTON: John Preston with ABS, American Bureau of
9 Shipping.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Spelling, please.

11 MR. PRESTON: Sorry. J-o-h-n P-r-e-s-t-o-n.

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

13 MR. [REDACTED] Good afternoon. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Coast
14 Guard. Last name is [REDACTED].

15 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you. Thank you, [REDACTED]

16 And [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

17 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coast
18 Guard Marine Investigator, and I'll be audio only. Having some
19 camera issues.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Thank you very much.

21 And Marcel Muise.

22 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise, Survival Factors, NTSB,
23 M-u-i-s-e.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you.

25 Captain Phillips.

1 CPT PHILLIPS: Good afternoon. Tracy Phillips. I'm the
2 Chair of the Coast Guard's Marine Board of Investigation. Name is
3 spelled T-r-a-c-y, last name Phillips, P-h-i-l-l-i-p-s.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike Richards.

5 Thank you, Captain --

6 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, R-i-c-h-a-r-d-s. I'm the NTSB
7 Weather Group Chair.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: Thank you, Mike.

9 And I think that's it. That's what we have on the line right
10 now.

11 INTERVIEW OF PAUL FREMIN

12 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

13 Q. Mr. Fremin, in case you weren't aware, we have numerous
14 parties, that's what you're hearing, that are part of this
15 investigation besides Seacor Marine and the NTSB. We have the
16 Coast Guard, of course. We have the National Weather Service, and
17 we have last but not least the American Bureau of Shipping. Okay.
18 Those are all parties to our investigation. The one -- I don't
19 know if I've mentioned it, but I just want it to be clear also. I
20 think I said it, but this transcript will eventually go into the
21 docket, the public docket. Okay.

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. All right. Okay. So moving along, I'd like to establish
24 some back -- or have some background questions, understand your --
25 a little bit about yourself. So your schooling in general; and

1 then, particularly, related to the maritime industry or your
2 current position.

3 A. Okay. From south Louisiana. I graduated from Nicholls State
4 University with a degree in interdisciplinary studies. During
5 that time in high school as well as college, I worked for Montco
6 Offshore as a deckhand on a liftboat. That was all through the
7 summers. I believe it was for six years. Upon graduating, I
8 received a position in the Maintenance and Repairs Department for
9 Montco, where I worked from August 20, 2012, up until a promotion
10 April of 2019 to Operations Manager for Seacor Marine.

11 Q. Okay. And so your marine-related employment, were those two
12 entities; is that correct? Two different companies or --

13 A. Yes. They were the same company. Yes. Montco Offshore was
14 then in a joint venture with Seacor Marine for Falcon Global, and
15 then Falcon Global transitioned into Seacor Marine. So I have
16 technically been with the same company since 2006 -- go that far.

17 Q. Okay. And do you hold any Coast Guard license or
18 certificate?

19 A. I used to. I used to hold a merchant mariner's credential
20 whenever I was a deckhand on the liftboats, but I do not any more.

21 Q. Okay. Just out of curiosity was your deckhand -- did you
22 also work the cranes on the lift --

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. You didn't. Okay.

25 A. No, sir. Ordinary seaman.

1 Q. Okay. And do you hold any other credentials that are
2 directly related to your job, like, ISO credentials, auditor,
3 environmental, anything like that?

4 A. No, sir.

5 Q. So with your current position, how long have you been
6 Operations Manager for Seacor?

7 A. I was -- I became the Operations Manager in April of 2019 for
8 one particular vessel, the Liftboat *Jill*, stationed in Europe.
9 And a year later, in April of 2020, I became Operations Manager
10 for the liftboats of Seacor Marine. Other than the two we have in
11 the Middle East.

12 Q. So at your current position you're the Operations Manager for
13 liftboats?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay. And you mentioned other positions at Seacor or their
16 predecessor.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: And, actually, before I get right into your
18 job now, let me ask quickly around the room, around the phone
19 line, if there are any of those that have any specific questions
20 about Mr. Fremin's background?

21 Okay. None heard.

22 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

23 Q. So moving along, can you tell us on a day-to-day basis what
24 your job entails?

25 A. Yes, sir. In the mornings, I make phone calls to all my

1 active vessels, checking in with them on what happened the
2 previous afternoon. Talk about the weather, talk about current
3 operations. Any reported defects we'll go through. And from
4 there, it is just paperwork. If any incident reports come
5 through, stop work authorities. Just talking about daily
6 operations, but I do speak to the vessels in the morning.

7 Q. You speak to the vessels. Do you speak to all the vessels in
8 the morning?

9 A. The active vessels, yes. We do have active vessels, but we
10 also have stacked vessels. So I'll speak with the ones that are
11 active.

12 Q. Okay. So, I guess, now would be a time to ask that question.
13 Did you talk to the captain of the *Seacor Power* that morning or
14 the morning of the accident?

15 A. Yes, sir, I did.

16 Q. And what -- can you tell us what discussions you had?

17 A. Sure. They crew changed that morning. So I called him to
18 make sure they had a safe crew change, good handover, that
19 everything went well, and they were currently loading out for
20 their job. And so it's always on the agenda is to make sure
21 everybody is working safe; and, of course, that we were expected
22 to depart that day, so we discussed the weather forecast for their
23 voyage to Main Pass.

24 Q. Okay. I think I've opened Pandora's box, okay, but that's
25 okay. That's okay. I think we'll continue along there unless

1 there are objections. I don't think there will be any, but what
2 did you specifically did you discuss about weather?

3 A. Sure. We compare to what we each see. I use a subscription
4 called buoyweather.com, which he also has the same subscription
5 to. And we just compare just any forecast. We also get a daily
6 forecast from our dispatch every morning that we discuss, and
7 that's pretty much it.

8 Q. Okay. And you talked about the crew change, and that that
9 went well. And any other discussions operationally about the
10 operations specifically what they were going to do or anything
11 like that, cargo that they were carrying?

12 A. Yes. Excuse me. Yes, sir. We spoke about the positioning.
13 That is one of my job duties is to safely position the vessel
14 offshore at either a platform or subsea platform talking about
15 penetration and preloading and any obstructions around. I'll send
16 him a packet that is approved by our general manager of what he
17 can expect (indiscernible) he arrives to said platform. So we did
18 speak about the job, and the coiled tubing work that was going on.
19 Did not speak about cargo.

20 Q. I'm sorry. Did not speak about what?

21 A. Cargo.

22 Q. Cargo. Did not. You didn't talk about the deck load on that
23 particular voyage?

24 A. No, sir.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Before I go any further, I -- if you

1 would, I'll go around the group, and ask if there are any specific
2 questions as to what he and Captain Ledet spoke about?

3 Okay, Mike Richards, you're first up.

4 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB.

5 BY MR. RICHARDS:

6 Q. Do you recall what time, about what time you spoke with the
7 captain and reviewed the weather information the morning of the
8 accident?

9 A. Yes. I received a phone call from him at 0930, which I
10 missed it. I responded back with custom iPhone, call you right
11 back. And I think it was maybe 5 to 10 minutes later I called him
12 back (indiscernible) to discuss. So it would have been
13 approximately 9:45-ish.

14 Q. Okay. When you spoke with the captain that morning, did
15 either he or you express any concern with the expected weather
16 conditions for that day?

17 A. No concerns. No, sir.

18 Q. Okay. And one last question regarding your duties or someone
19 else in the company's duties. You said as part of your daily
20 discussions you talk about the weather with other people in the
21 company. Who is responsible for monitoring the weather during the
22 day in case there are changes to the forecast or something pops up
23 that people should be aware about?

24 A. I don't think there's a specific person that monitors the
25 weather other than the master of the vessel monitors the weather.

1 They have all the tools surrounding them to see updates, current
2 updates at any position.

3 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. I may have some additional questions
4 later, Mike, but that's all for now. Thank you.

5 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

6 Q. Mr. Fremin, I'm going to jump in here. Just a quick
7 question. So how does the master monitor the weather while he's
8 on the vessel?

9 A. Yes, sir. He has aides such as a Navtech, which receives
10 National Weather Service advisories. He's got his MR -- GMDSS,
11 which gives the same. He also has his ECS computer that's at the
12 helm where we can put any position that he's at, right click, ask
13 for a weather forecast at any position, and it will bring up from
14 the National Weather Service the expected winds, expected waves,
15 currents, things like that. And, also, we have -- we gave them
16 the login for our Bouy Weather, Seacor Bouy Weather subscription.
17 There's always others like windy.com and Weather Channel. So
18 there's an abundance of resources for weather.

19 Q. So and my following question to that is does he have computer
20 access to Bouy Weather and other Internet type weather while he's
21 on the bridge?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. He does. So there's a terminal on the bridge where he can go
24 into, and obtain the Buoy Weather or send an e-mail or whatever it
25 may be?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Drew Ehlers.

3 MR. EHLERS: Thanks. Yeah, this is Drew Ehlers, NTSB.

4 BY MR. EHLERS:

5 Q. That morning when you made your calls to each of the captains
6 or talked with each of the captains, was there any other liftboats
7 underway along the Gulf Coast that morning?

8 A. I had the liftboat *Paul* was underway, which would have been
9 off the coast of Port Aransas, Texas.

10 Q. Okay. And did you discuss weather with that captain as well?

11 A. Yes. If I recall, they were stopped due to fog.

12 Q. Okay. And had they jacked up?

13 A. Yes. If I recall that specific date. I can look more into
14 my e-mails, but they were jacked up waiting on weather for fog.

15 Q. Okay. So the captain of that vessel, his intention was to
16 get underway as soon as the fog cleared?

17 A. Yeah. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay. And did they in fact do that? Did they get underway
19 again that day?

20 A. I don't recall if that day, but they eventually did get
21 underway once the fog cleared, but I do not recall if it was that
22 day.

23 MR. EHLERS: Okay. All right, thank you very much.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Captain Phillips, please.

25 CPT PHILLIPS: This is Tracy Phillips.

1 BY CPT PHILLIPS:

2 Q. When you talked with the captain that morning, did he share
3 any other concerns with you? Did he have any concerns about the
4 vessel, about anything on the vessel? Was everything working
5 properly?

6 A. Yes, ma'am. No concerns from him.

7 CPT PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike Richards.

9 Thank you, Captain.

10 Mike Richards, you still have your hand up. Do you have
11 further questions?

12 MR. RICHARDS: Yes, sir. I'm sorry. One follow-up question.

13 Mike Richards, NTSB.

14 BY MR. RICHARDS:

15 Q. I believe you said that in routine circumstance when you
16 speak to the captain about weather you will compare what you see
17 through Bouy Weather with each other, and you also discuss the e-
18 mailed weather from the dispatcher from earlier that morning. Is
19 that correct?

20 A. Yes, sir. That's accurate.

21 Q. Okay. Our understanding is that the content, the weather
22 information that's in the e-mail from the dispatcher, does come
23 from Buoy Weather. So my question is, is there a material
24 difference between the weather information that's provided by the
25 dispatcher, which we understand comes from Buoy Weather, and what

1 one can access online through, I'm presuming, a website tied into
2 Buoy Weather?

3 A. Yes. So what we receive from dispatch is only one position
4 out in the Gulf. Primarily just south, southwest of Fourchon,
5 between Fourchon and Cat Island Pass. So we receive that as just
6 a roundabout because that is where our vessels primarily work in
7 that area. But we -- I, as well as the captain, am also able to
8 pinpoint a specific coordinate to view the predicted weather.

9 Q. I see. So if you're online with the website, you can tailor
10 your forecast position. Whereas, the e-mail in the morning is
11 just a static position that's predetermined?

12 A. That is accurate.

13 Q. Okay. Not necessarily on this call, but would you be able
14 after this interview at some point be able to provide exactly what
15 those coordinates are for the morning e-mail, the weather that
16 supports the morning e-mails?

17 A. Yes. It is a -- so what they do is a screen shot. So it has
18 the coordinates at the top of the screen shot. So, yes.

19 MR. RICHARDS: Oh, okay. Well, I'll review that again then.
20 Thank you.

21 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

22 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you, Mike

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Sure. Sure.

24 Any further questions along that line?

25 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

1 Q. Okay. I'm going to bring it back into just some more
2 questions about your current position. On a day-to-day basis, how
3 many vessels do you manage?

4 A. Currently, I now have five vessels I manage.

5 Q. Okay. And those are not the stacked vessels? When you say
6 five, those are all operational vessels in operation?

7 A. Yes, sir. We consider them active. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. And besides talking to the captains on a daily basis,
9 some of the other things that you do just on a day-to-day basis,
10 give us an idea.

11 A. Yeah. Of course, speaking with someone like Michael Cenac or
12 Barrett or HR. A lot of technical between -- we have technical
13 managers or technical superintendents for the liftboats. Mr. Joey
14 Ruiz, every day. Just speaking with all different departments;
15 not necessarily needing something, but just checking in if there's
16 anything going on.

17 Q. And on a broader basis, collateral duties, like, maybe not on
18 a day-to-day, weekly or monthly, some of your other collateral
19 duties.

20 A. Yeah. So if a vessel is working, we'll talk about what's
21 going on that day. If a vessel is not working, we'll talk about
22 supplies or groceries, provisions. I approve all the grocery
23 orders that come through. Just looking after the vessels. I
24 don't think there's a specific broader thing. Just attending to
25 the vessels' needs.

1 Q. I guess -- this is Mike Kucharski. What I'm looking at is,
2 do you have on a weekly basis, monthly basis, safety meetings that
3 you're part of attendance of those?

4 A. We get sent out a weekly occurrence from our Safety
5 Department that we review. SMS training on a quarterly basis.
6 But if -- we do not have -- we have scheduled meetings every
7 Monday to go over marketing, and then to go over the whole
8 operations of what happened on the weekend, and what we can expect
9 for the future. And then most recently has been our new
10 maintenance program of Helm CONNECT, getting that going. But
11 other than that, I have no scheduled safety operations, anything,
12 other than really on Monday.

13 Q. So this weekly marketing meeting, does that include current
14 charter parties or new charter parties?

15 A. Yes. It's just -- I'm included because I deal a lot with
16 Europe, and it's mainly the marketing guys and area managers just
17 discussing potential work, and what's going on with current
18 logistics.

19 Q. So the actual specifics in a charter party? You're familiar
20 with the term charter party or master charter agreement?

21 A. I am, yes. I'm familiar. But I do not have any, really,
22 anything to do with said agreement.

23 Q. But do you review it at all after it's --

24 A. No, sir.

25 Q. No. So you don't look at that charter party at all?

1 A. I receive a copy once -- in circumstances I will receive a
2 copy.

3 Q. Did you have a copy of the charter, the master charter
4 agreement for the *Seacor Power* for this -- with Talos?

5 A. No, sir.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. And your direct report is who?

9 A. Mr. Joseph or Joey Ruiz.

10 Q. Ruiz. Okay. And who reports to you?

11 A. No one.

12 Q. No one. Okay. So the ship masters don't report to you?

13 A. Oh. I'm sorry. I thought you meant internally office. Yes.
14 The masters of the vessels report to me. Apologies.

15 Q. No, no, no, no. Okay. I, obviously, wasn't clear enough.
16 Okay. So the masters report to you.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And the -- your job for incident response -- this will
19 follow us into the actual incident, run us along in that. So your
20 job, do you have a specific or set job in incident response?

21 A. Sure. As soon as an incident happens, I'll call the vessel
22 first to get any logistics that I can, and then make contact with
23 Coast Guard thereafter.

24 Q. Okay. So would you --

25 A. Pending the incident. Pending the severity of the incident.

1 But first contact is always the vessel.

2 Q. Okay. So and then you have -- you liaise with the vessel,
3 directly with the vessel, and then with the Coast Guard also?

4 Would that be a fair assessment?

5 A. Pending the emergency or incident of the vessel, yes.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. If it's a minor the Coast Guard needs to be contacted.

8 Q. Of course.

9 A. But, yes, they would be next on the list after the vessel.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. I'm going to hold there to see if
11 there are any follow-on questions. And, Mr. Fremin, any time you
12 want to take a break, just let us know. Okay. You let me know.
13 We'll stop the proceeding. Okay.

14 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

15 MR. KUCHARSKI: And any questions?

16 Thank you.

17 Any questions right now before we go into the incident?

18 Okay. I don't see any hands.

19 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

20 Q. So, all right, Mr. Fremin, from the very beginning, first
21 time you -- tell us how and when, if you can, best of your
22 ability. If you don't know, you don't remember the exact times,
23 that's okay. But, please, the detail, as much detail as you can
24 give us is going to be very helpful for us to piece this together.
25 So the accident, the sequence, if you will. So from the time you

1 were first made aware of there being any problem with the vessel,
2 and -- please.

3 A. In regards to the incident?

4 Q. Incident, yeah, the actual incident voyage, yeah.

5 A. Sure. Absolutely. I received -- I was sitting in my living
6 room, working from home due to Covid. Sitting in my living room
7 with my computer, and I received an e-mail at 1607 from our
8 dispatch office, Mr. Nicholas Daig (ph.), stating the EPIRB had
9 went off on the *Seacor Power*. That to contact this Coast Guard
10 number if factual. Well, first thing I did, I called David
11 Ledet's cell phone, Captain David Ledet, to no response. I then
12 called the bridge phone number to no response. We do have
13 secondary communications for contractors onboard for Elite
14 Communications. And I had those two numbers as well. Called both
15 of those numbers. Both said they were inactive. I then called
16 Elite Communications themselves to request if those numbers were
17 falsely given or if they were correct. They confirmed they were
18 correct, and then they said that their system shows that it is
19 inactive.

20 As soon as I hung up the phone with that, I tried looking
21 through my phone to anyone else I would have had from the vessel,
22 which I did not. And I contacted our technical superintendent for
23 Mr. Larry [REDACTED] cell phone number. I called, no response.
24 And at that time, Mr. Joey Ruiz called me asking about said e-mail
25 from dispatch, if I had heard anything. And I proceeded to tell

1 him I've been trying to call every number possible to no answer.
2 Which is when he told me he received word that the *Seacor Power*
3 had capsized. So we hung up, and I called harbor police in
4 Fourchon, thinking they would have heard or seen something.
5 Because I know the vessel was not far out. They had heard
6 nothing. They took my name down, any information I had.

7 Then my second phone call was to the Coast Guard number that
8 appeared on the e-mail from dispatch. Called that number. Asked
9 about the beacon for the *Seacor Power*, if they had heard anything.
10 I told them what information I received from Mr. Ruiz. And they
11 had not heard any information or -- any information about a
12 capsizing of the *Power*. They took my name and number down. Soon
13 as we hung up, Mr. Ruiz called me back asking if I heard anything.
14 I told him who I just contacted had heard nothing. And as we were
15 on the phone, Michael Cenac sent out an e-mail for the Emergency
16 Response Team to get together on Teams. We hung up, joined the
17 Teams meeting, and began.

18 Q. Okay. And then further on until, say the Coast Guard stopped
19 the active search for survivors, did you have any other role in
20 the vessel's search and rescue or anything like that?

21 A. I was in the Command Center doing anything, and anything
22 necessary to assist.

23 Q. So --

24 A. I was there the -- I'm sorry.

25 Q. No. Go ahead. Go ahead.

1 A. That's it. I was just there. If we needed to call somebody
2 else, I called. I was doing a lot of AIS tracking, checking to
3 see boats around, boats who are surrounding us, looking at the
4 Coast Guard cutters, that first cutter that was on the scene, the
5 *Glen Harris*, I believe. So just kind of watching AIS, and being
6 any assistance I could be.

7 Q. So working -- you were working from home the whole time of
8 even during when you went on the MS Teams conference call?

9 A. Yes. That is correct.

10 Q. So and you said 1607 was when -- about 1607 was when dispatch
11 called you regarding the EPIRB activation?

12 A. E-mail.

13 Q. Oh, e-mail.

14 A. E-mail, yes. Dispatch sent out an e-mail, not a phone call.

15 Q. And was that e-mail just addressed to you?

16 A. I would have to check said e-mail.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I am on a few distribution lists, so I'm going to assume, but
19 I can definitely check that e-mail.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. But knowing, knowing from Mr. Ruiz saying he received it, it
22 would have not just been sent to me.

23 Q. Okay. But then you talked to -- did you talk to dispatch
24 after receiving that e-mail?

25 A. No, I did not.

1 Q. Okay. So you went and made phone calls?

2 A. I called the vessel immediately.

3 Q. Right, right, right. Okay. And just out of curiosity so
4 that was 1607 Central Daylight Time.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. What was the weather like there at your -- where you were
7 working at 1507? Like, right in your facility what was the
8 weather like?

9 A. I do not recall, sir.

10 Q. How about two hours before? Do you recollect --

11 A. I know we had some -- yeah, we had some weather come through,
12 yes.

13 Q. Okay. I'm just trying to get a sense. I was wondering at
14 first if you were in the office, but you were at home.

15 A. Oh, no, sir.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. We had rain, rain, winds come through, Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Because I think we're going to ask you some specific
19 questions about weather. I have a bunch of them --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. -- but I'd like now to go back to the actual incident
22 and Mr. Fremin's involvement in that incident.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do we have any questions from the group?

24 I see Drew Ehlers hand up.

25 MR. EHLERS: Yes. This is Drew Ehlers, NTSB.

1 BY MR. EHLERS:

2 Q. So when you were making your phone calls -- no, let me ask
3 this question first. The e-mail I believe you said was sent at
4 1607. Do you know about what time you read it?

5 A. 1608.

6 Q. So you read it almost immediately?

7 A. Yes, sir. I was sitting at my -- my computer was on my lap
8 open, e-mail open, yes.

9 Q. Okay. And you made several phone calls. Was that using a
10 cell phone or a landline?

11 A. My cell phone.

12 Q. Okay. Is that a company provided cell phone or is that
13 personal phone?

14 A. I purchased it. The company pays for the service. So they
15 have control of it.

16 Q. Okay. All right. And do you know what time you called the
17 Coast Guard back or what time you called the Coast Guard?

18 A. No, sir. Not offhand.

19 Q. Okay. If you can after this interview, if you can look at
20 your phone, and see if you can go through the call logs, and see
21 if you can locate that time, that would be helpful.

22 A. I, unfortunately, cannot. It would have to be through my
23 billing activity. My recent call list pretty much only goes back
24 to two days from the amount of phone calls I receive a day.

25 Q. Okay. Understood. All right. And when you called the Coast

1 Guard, do you know who you talked to?

2 A. Yes. I believe Michael has the name. It was Mr. Seth Gross
3 (ph.).

4 Q. Okay. And I know you said it, but can you say again what
5 information you passed to him?

6 A. Yes. I said my name, who I work for, and that I received an
7 e-mail that the EPIRB had gone off, and I also was told that the
8 *Seacor Power* had capsized, if he had any knowledge of this. And
9 he said no. So he took down my name, my phone number, and said if
10 he heard anything he would get right back with me.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Which he did.

13 Q. Okay. So the -- he did call you back?

14 A. Yes, he did call me back. Once we hung up, Michael Cenac
15 took the notes down that I had spoken with Mr. Seth Gross, took
16 his number down, and Michael called him to say he would be the new
17 point of contact for the Coast Guard.

18 Q. I see. Okay. And I'm sorry, I'm going to bounce back to the
19 time of the call again. How long would you say between the time
20 you got the e-mail, can you estimate, and the time you called the
21 Coast Guard back once you had attempted to call the other numbers
22 and talk to, also talk to Mr. Ruiz?

23 A. Again, this is -- I can't recall the definite number, but if
24 I had to guess, I would say 15 minutes.

25 MR. EHLERS: All right. Thanks.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: Captain Phillips.

2 CPT PHILLIPS: Good afternoon. This is Tracy Phillips.

3 BY CPT PHILLIPS:

4 Q. You talked about your conversation in the morning with the
5 captain of the *Seacor Power*, and then you talked about the e-mail
6 at 1607. In between those two times, did you have any
7 communication with the *Seacor Power* at all during that day?

8 A. Yes, ma'am, I did. I believe I spoke with Captain David one
9 last time before departure. Would have been possibly around maybe
10 an hour later after we had previously spoke to see how is cargo
11 loading and mobilization progressing. And then we -- I received
12 along with our distribution received an e-mail at approximately
13 12:22 Central Standard Time saying that he was securing the deck,
14 and getting underway from Ballinger, jacking down, and getting
15 underway, and gave 20- to 22-hour ETA to Main Pass. And then we
16 received -- our distribution received another e-mail at 1508,
17 which is a standard daily afternoon report from the vessel at that
18 time.

19 Q. Okay. Going back to the, I guess, that would have been the
20 second phone call that you had with the captain that day.

21 A. Yes, ma'am.

22 Q. Can you tell us more about that? Did you call him or did he
23 call you?

24 A. I don't recall who called who, but I do remember it was just
25 to discuss mobilization and timing, if he just had an idea when he

1 would possibly be departing, making sure that everything was
2 running fine. Because we did have mechanics onboard the day
3 before, and we also had contract hands from the shipyard that were
4 working on some grading on the cranes. So we just discussed that.

5 Q. Okay. Tell us what he said.

6 A. He said the two engines that were being worked on were
7 running fine, no issues, and that he was about to -- wrapping up
8 Ballinger shipyard with doing the clips on the grading on the
9 cranes, and that he would be getting underway shortly.

10 Q. Okay. Did he say anything about his cargo or how that was
11 going?

12 A. If I recall, we may have discussed just how much, but not
13 into the matter of where it was going to be positioned or lashed
14 down or anything like that. I may have just asked if it was a lot
15 because I know they had started loading, I believe, it was at 0600
16 that morning, and it was -- had been going on four hours of
17 loading. So I think I just asked about the quantity for this coil
18 tubing job.

19 Q. Okay. What was his response? Did he say it was a lot or?

20 A. He said -- he just said it's a normal coil tubing spread.

21 CAPT PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. FREMIN: Yes, ma'am.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay, I see, Drew, your hand still up. So
24 you have follow-on questions?

25 MR. EHLERS: I have just -- yes, I do. Thanks. Drew Ehlers,

1 NTSB. I do have a quick follow-up, and that's just a
2 clarification.

3 BY MR. EHLERS:

4 Q. You mentioned that in the call the captain said he was
5 securing the deck. Was that related to the crane decks, making
6 sure the clips are down on that? Is that what he was referring
7 to?

8 A. I can't speculate what me meant, but I would say it would
9 just be securing the deck. Meaning, picking up, making sure the
10 submersible pump hoses are up, ring buoys are where they need to
11 be. Just securing the vessel for to get underway --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- integrity, things -- cranes in the rack. Not necessarily
14 securing cargo.

15 MR. EHLERS: Okay. Thanks.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Moving along out of the actual
17 incident. We can come back to it at the end. I'll open it back
18 up.

19 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

20 Q. But some general questions for you now, Mr. Fremin. Are you
21 familiar with the *Ops Manual* that was onboard the vessel there,
22 the *Seacor Power*?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. Okay. So I've pulled up the *Seacor Power Marine Operations*
25 *Manual*. Do you see it now?

- 1 A. Yes, sir, I can.
- 2 Q. Okay. Section 6, heavy weather. It says tropical system or
3 I have it highlighted there, high winds. Do you see that?
- 4 A. Yes, I do.
- 5 Q. Does Seacor define high winds anywhere in their policy?
- 6 A. Not to my knowledge.
- 7 Q. Okay. Do you -- or high seas? Do you have any
8 interpretation of what high winds or high seas are? I mean in the
9 manual are you -- I've thumbed through it. I don't want to be
10 cheeky here, whatever you call it or snarky, I guess that's a buzz
11 word today. But could you help me or point me to anywhere in
12 there where it tells me what a high wind or high seas and swells
13 forecast is?
- 14 A. Not for a forecast. I could point you to where it will show
15 what the vessel's max capabilities or max limitations are.
- 16 Q. Okay. I'm just looking at some of the monitoring and
17 everything, and triggers, and we're trying to figure out where
18 high winds and high seas come -- at what point --
- 19 A. Right.
- 20 Q. -- they need to be -- and curtail operations.
- 21 A. Right. Of course. I mean, they're in the *Ops Manual*. There
22 is, I believe, a section saying that if winds are forecasted above
23 50 knots to seek safe harbor. I can pinpoint that one.
- 24 Q. I've looked at that. It's like a table for it. But before
25 you actually get to that point is there something else that

1 defines a high wind or sea or is it just right at that point they
2 need to monitor? Because I'm looking at Section 6.1 and 6.1.1,
3 when a heavy weather forecast is received, and trying to get our
4 arms around this whole process.

5 A. Right. Well, of course, and that could be up to the master
6 what he feels as high winds or high seas for his vessel. Every
7 vessel is different. Every vessel reacts different to the
8 elements. So especially maneuvering around Fourchon, which is a
9 large port, but not for a 120-foot wide vessel. So it could be
10 determined to that.

11 Q. Okay. Do you visit the vessels?

12 A. I do.

13 Q. Do you ever visit? How often do you do that?

14 A. It's not a set schedule. I believe I visited the *Power* last
15 was the 4th of February.

16 Q. Does anyone from the office visit the vessel on a routine
17 basis when they're in port?

18 A. Not necessarily.

19 Q. Okay. So we also had asked Mr. Ruiz does the client provide
20 weather to your vessels? Do you know if they did? Do they do on
21 a regular basis or they did on the day of the accident?

22 A. Not to my knowledge have they provided any weather.

23 Q. Okay. And the -- I know you said -- I just realized this,
24 and I apologize. It makes it look like I'm trying to blindside
25 you here, but I'm trying to get my arms around this thing. I

1 really didn't set it up this way, but I know you said you don't
2 get involved with the charter party. But this is in your job
3 description here, technical and operations manager, and I really
4 do apologize for setting it up this way. I wasn't trying to do
5 this.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. But it says in here provides guidance, instructions to the
8 master relative to navigation. But down here it says and charter
9 party instructions. Have you ever gotten involved with charter
10 party instructions, and guidance to the master?

11 A. The only thing I deal with the charter party is what I am
12 told from our logistics and sales team. I do not speak direct to
13 the charter party. Whatever I am told, I just relay to the master
14 if need to know.

15 Q. And what kind of guidance would you provide to the master --
16 charter party instructions? Can you give us -- have you ever --
17 if you haven't done it, that's -- it's okay.

18 A. No. The only thing, the only information I gave them was
19 that would be a coil tubing job at Main Pass 138.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And possible POB number whenever I find out. Persons on
22 Board. Addition to their crew.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And that's the extent of the information that I give.

25 Q. Fair enough. Fair enough. And so how about instructions for

1 cargo operations? What kind of instructions do you give to the
2 master for that?

3 A. I do not.

4 Q. Okay. I'm just -- provides guidance and instructions to the
5 masters relative to navigation, comma, cargo operations. So you
6 don't? Okay. And how about --

7 A. Guidance if requested.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And then for the voyage itself, instructions for the voyage
11 besides specific charter ones? Do you give them any instructions
12 for the voyage?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. Okay. And then it says here overall responsibility. Can you
15 see my hand, the little hand moving --

16 A. Yes, I can.

17 Q. Okay. Wasn't sure --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- what you can see. Overall responsibility for
20 implementation, dynamic position, and navigational standards.
21 What kind of navigational standards do you -- are you responsible
22 for?

23 A. Yes. I make sure that all his charts are up-to-date per the
24 ECS. And since we're not ECDIS, he's required to have paper
25 charts. So if any paper charts are requested to be updated, I'll

1 handle all of those. Same thing with any SOLAS manuals for
2 navigation, navigation tables, admiralties, anything like that.

3 Q. Okay. Great. Great. And do you know whose responsibility
4 it is to load? I know overall responsibility, I think, Mr. Ruiz
5 has told us that it's overall the master's responsibility. But
6 does the charter have any responsibility to load or secure cargo
7 under the agreement; do you know?

8 A. Not that I'm aware of.

9 Q. Okay. I also saw the term though that the -- I think it said
10 that the charterer is supposed to provide or that -- provide you a
11 list of shoring equipment for securing cargo. What does shoring
12 equipment meant to you? Have you ever seen that term used before?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. I'm just, I'm trying to understand if this -- I mean, I know
15 what shoring is generally speaking. But maybe that had term --
16 did they provide any chains or ratchets or anything like that that
17 you're aware of?

18 A. No, sir. The vessel is equipped with that equipment.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I guess, I can't comment though. There are some instances
21 where third-party or the charterer instead of being chained down
22 or bind down, they will actually weld little clips to their
23 equipment for a voyage. So, I guess, in that instance that would
24 be shoring, I guess, yeah.

25 Q. Well, that's a good example. Thank you. Thank you.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. That makes sense. Okay. Do you review any forms or
3 procedures completed by the vessels?

4 A. Forms? Like any form? We do quite a few forms and
5 procedures.

6 Q. Okay. Well, you do it, but that the vessels do that come
7 shore side that you actually review? Are there any --

8 A. Right. Most of it is held onboard the vessel. And, of
9 course, those are retained, and made sure are being done by our
10 internal audits. But I do receive forms such as we do on or
11 (indiscernible). We receive stop work authority forms, incident
12 forms. Those are the main ones that we will receive.

13 Q. Okay. And the heavy weather related risks, is there a risk
14 assessment for heavy weather under -- in your Safety Management
15 System?

16 A. We have a severe weather planning sheet.

17 Q. And is there a risk assessment in that?

18 A. Yes, there is a risk assessment. Not attached to the form,
19 but we do have a risk assessment for weather, yes. Especially for
20 a (indiscernible) jacking down, changing modes, anything like
21 that.

22 Q. And do you review that risk assessment at all?

23 A. No, sir. Only if it's sent to me.

24 Q. Only if it's sent. So who at the company would review the
25 risk assessment?

- 1 A. Again, it's only reviewed if it is sent ashore.
- 2 Q. Okay. I see. Do you know if the vessel has an approved
3 stability program or if it had one?
- 4 A. Stability program as in, like, a computer-based program?
- 5 Q. Yeah, not, yeah, not pencil and paper. Yeah. Computer
6 based, yeah. That's a good -- could be on a computer, could be
7 standalone.
- 8 A. Understood. I'm not aware if it was approved, but I do know
9 it has been onboard in Excel format.
- 10 Q. Okay. And I think we -- I just received the -- I believe I
11 know the answer to this, but I think Michael Cenac just sent it to
12 us just very recently, but there was no stability manual on the
13 vessel. Is that correct?
- 14 A. I cannot confirm. We do not have a stability manual in our
15 office.
- 16 Q. In the office. Okay. And the *Operations Manual*, I think I
17 mentioned that earlier when I showed you that. Do you have any
18 idea -- to scratch my head sort of there in looking at this, and
19 trying to figure out which manual it was that was aboard the
20 vessel. Do you know that?
- 21 A. If the operations manager -- manual was onboard?
- 22 Q. No. Which version of it, it was, which date?
- 23 A. Oh, that I do not know.
- 24 Q. Is there anybody that keeps track, maybe the technical super
25 -- somebody that keeps track of what publications are actually the

1 latest versions of what is -- are on the vessel?

2 A. That's the vessel that keeps track of publications and orders
3 as necessary.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. The last *Operations Manual* we have is from when the
6 (indiscernible) the extra 15-foot of leg was added to the *Power*,
7 which I believe was in 2012.

8 Q. Okay. That's the last one you believe. Okay. Again, I'm
9 trying to get a sense -- you say certain things on the vessel,
10 but, like, the master's overall responsible for safety, but you
11 work on Coast Guard inspections. Shore side helps there, right?
12 The master doesn't do it by himself, right?

13 A. No. The technical superintendent that assists --

14 Q. Okay, okay.

15 A. -- the inspections.

16 Q. Right, right. So I'm trying to see if there's anything else
17 that you all help the master with here besides those technical
18 type issues. So let's -- if we can, go back to the heavy weather
19 section here, and do you -- I asked you about high wind, seas,
20 swells and all that. Have you ever seen a heavy forecast or are
21 they -- do you know if they're -- it says the vessel master shall
22 follow this procedure when a heavy weather forecast is received.
23 Have you ever seen a heavy weather forecast?

24 A. Have I ever seen, like a hurricane forecast?

25 Q. No. I get that further up here we talk about -- we use these

1 terms heavy weather. I asked specifically about high winds, seas,
2 swells forecast --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- and use heavy weather, and then we talk about heavy. So
5 here we have heavy weather forecast. Here we have high wind,
6 seas, swells forecast. I'm just wondering where these terms come
7 from or you have any definition for them? I know I've already
8 asked you, and you've answered that for these particular ones.
9 But how about heavy weather forecasts?

10 A. The only thing I can determine would be a heavy weather
11 forecast is whenever we discuss forecasted weather if the master
12 deems that heavy weather means exceeding limitations or close to
13 limitations of operations, whether it's crane activity, transit,
14 even jacked up. So I can't define what heavy weather is specific
15 to a forecast.

16 Q. Okay. So and so when you say the master deems it's getting
17 close. Do you have any idea on the *Seacor Power* how close it had
18 to be? You know, I'm trying to -- you may have seen instructions
19 and other things. If you get this particular one before you get
20 there, you know, there are little sort of points, set points to
21 come in or triggers. Just trying to understand if the company had
22 or it was all the master had some triggers, and what they were.
23 That's what we're trying to determine. If you --

24 A. Right. I mean, we just, again, we look at forecasts. So
25 it's whatever is forecasted. Whether it's going to be six hours

1 forecasted for even two days forecasted, and that's just what
2 we'll follow. And, again, it's heavy weather in regards to,
3 again, it could either be his operations. Because whenever he's
4 jacked up, he can be in winds of excess of 60 knots or 70 knots.
5 Waves could be 15 foot waves while he's jacked up. So that would
6 be heavy weather for that operational mode. Whereas, transit, 50
7 knots is more being alarming for transit. Same thing with seas.
8 Five-foot or above would be heavy weather for transit. So, I
9 guess, it all depends on what operational mode the vessel would be
10 in.

11 Q. Okay. So there's no, but there's no set time necessarily
12 then to get this heavy weather forecast of whatever it is?

13 A. I'm sorry. Set time? I apologize.

14 Q. Yeah. You know further up there you have tropical system.
15 Have you ever seen a tropical forecast out seven days or three
16 days or whatever it is?

17 A. Well, of course, yes.

18 Q. Okay. Would that be considered heavy weather?

19 A. A tropical system, yes.

20 Q. Oh, okay. So all right. But would thunderstorms be
21 considered heavy weather, a squall line?

22 A. Again, it really depends on the operational mode of the
23 vessel.

24 Q. Okay. In transit.

25 A. In transit what?

1 Q. Going from point A to point B while it's afloat. Would a
2 squall line be considered heavy weather?

3 A. I would have to see the forecast of the squall line.

4 Q. Okay. So you would look it? It wouldn't necessarily be the
5 master? You would look at it too?

6 A. Well, we would jointly look at it, if requested, yes.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Going to hold there, and see -- do you
8 need a break, Mr. Fremin? Are we doing okay?

9 MR. FREMIN: No, sir. I'm fine.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Are there any follow-on questions
11 along this line from the group?

12 Okay, Captain.

13 CPT PHILLIPS: Good afternoon. Tracy Phillips.

14 BY CPT PHILLIPS:

15 Q. You mentioned stability spreadsheet that was onboard the
16 vessel. Did you ever get a copy of that Excel spreadsheet?

17 A. No, ma'am. I do not have a copy of that.

18 Q. Okay. Thank you. And then you also mentioned modifications
19 to the legs of the *Seacor Power* in 2012. Are you aware of any
20 other major modifications to the *Seacor Power* between that time
21 and present?

22 A. Not to my knowledge. I know the legs are stated in the
23 revision of that *Ops Manual*, and that is the last that I'm aware
24 of.

25 CPT PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you. That's all.

1 MR. FREMIN: Yes, ma'am.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Heading into the home stretch then.
3 I'll move off of those questions.

4 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

5 Q. I think I already asked you, but do you attend any shore side
6 safety meetings on a regular basis?

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. Okay. And do you review any of the safety meetings from the
9 vessels?

10 A. I do not review, but sometimes we'll discuss if I had a phone
11 call with them, if they're have a safety meeting in the morning or
12 the afternoon, and I'll ask, what did you all talk about? Oh, we
13 talked about, you know, talked about the job, hand placement,
14 housekeeping, things like that. So I do not review, but if it
15 does come up in conversation, I will ask.

16 Q. Okay. And were you involved in any post-incident meeting
17 with everyone regarding the incident?

18 A. Not to --

19 Q. When I say everyone --

20 A. -- my knowledge.

21 Q. I'm sorry. When I -- let me just clarify.

22 A. I guess we still consider this ongoing.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Once around the room before we
24 complete the interview.

25 Mike Richards.

1 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB. Thanks.

2 BY MR. RICHARDS:

3 Q. Sir, I just wanted to go back, and clarify something from
4 earlier regarding the morning weather e-mail, let's call it. Are
5 the same coordinates used for the weather forecast each day or
6 would the coordinates that determine what weather information is
7 included in those e-mails, could those coordinates be different
8 each day? I don't think I understood what you had said before.

9 A. Yes, sir, they could be different. Not every screen shot
10 that we get has specific coordinates. So I can't attest to
11 exactly what position if they're going, clicking their mouse on
12 the exact same position. But it is normally in the same vicinity
13 of the Gulf of Mexico in that Cat Island Pass, Fourchon area.

14 Q. I understand. Okay. And I'm sorry for this question I got
15 to ask. I'm just not familiar yet with Bouy Weather and how it
16 works. I reviewed a copy of the e-mail that was sent on the
17 morning of the accident, and I do not see any coordinates included
18 on the e-mail or in the screen shot, captured in the screen shot.
19 Is it possible to somehow find out what those coordinates were at
20 this point in time?

21 A. No. No, sir.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Well, I shouldn't speculate. It would be up to the dispatch
24 for Nick to say if he recalls the exact coordinates he clicked on.

25 Q. I understand. We will ask. I will ask the dispatcher.

1 Thank you.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you, Mike.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: You bet.

5 Captain. Captain.

6 CPT PHILLIPS: I'm pressing my mute button too many times.

7 This is Tracy Phillips.

8 BY CPT PHILLIPS:

9 Q. Of the vessels that you manage, that you currently manage,
10 the liftboats, how would you rank the *Seacor Power's* condition as
11 compared to the other liftboats that you manage?

12 A. Can you define condition, please?

13 Q. Your general sense of the operating condition of the vessel,
14 the equipment, how many maintenance problems you have with it.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. Crews are happy with the vessel or not? Those types of
17 things.

18 A. Yes, ma'am. Well, if we're including the *Seacor Power* now,
19 at the, at the time I had five vessels, and again we just
20 reactivated one. So, now, I'm currently at five with the loss of
21 the *Power*. So between the liftboat *Jill*, liftboat *Robert*, the
22 *Paul*, the *Hawk*, and the *Power*, my opinion I do not have a negative
23 or a out of shape vessel. Yes, this one is approaching 20 years,
24 but not many maintenance issues. I have other vessels that are
25 more high tech, I guess we'll call it that have plentiful more

1 maintenance issues. But as far as the vessel with critical
2 issues, I'll put that one as a mid-tier. Just because of sheer
3 age. Age and just wiring and vibration, and in those wiring and
4 things like that. So I'll put it mid-tier just because of its
5 age.

6 Q. Okay. That's helpful. Thanks. And my last question is
7 going back to what you said about the afternoon update you got
8 from the captain on the *Seacor Power*. You said he sent that at 15
9 -- via e-mail at 1508, I think you said.

10 A. Yes, ma'am.

11 Q. Is there a specific time that captains are required to send
12 those updates in?

13 A. Yes, ma'am. We ask them to send on in the morning around
14 their 0600, and in the afternoon around 1500 their time.

15 Q. Okay. And are there any kind of penalties, if they don't get
16 it in at a certain time?

17 A. No, ma'am.

18 Q. So if they have something going on, they can send it to you
19 an hour or two later?

20 A. (No audible response.)

21 MR. EHLERS: This is Drew Ehlers from NTSB, if I can jump in.

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yep. I'm here too. Can you hear me?

23 MR. EHLERS: Now I can.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: You can. Go on in, Drew.

25 MR. EHLERS: Okay.

1 BY MR. EHLERS:

2 Q. Just a couple questions. One is you mentioned stop work
3 authority reports. Do you receive all stop work authority reports
4 from the vessels or do you review those? Tell me about those a
5 little bit.

6 A. Sure. Stop work authority, if sent to me, would go on
7 distribution normally sent to our distribution for safety as well
8 as operations. And it could be for a number of things, stop work
9 authority, not just the weather, but to any unsafe act that any
10 employee, whether ashore or on the vessel sees. So, yes, those
11 are reviewed, and then ultimately it is the master, who has the
12 ultimate work authority to say if and when it can proceed. So if
13 a stop work authority is called by me for something on a vessel,
14 it is the master, not me to say we can continue working.

15 Q. I see. So you mentioned, an aside, but you mentioned that
16 distribution, the safety distribution and operations distribution.
17 Are you on both of those distributions or are those separate?

18 A. I'm definitely a part of the operations, and I'm not going to
19 assume that I am on the safety. But I do receive stop work
20 authorities from the vessel, so I'll assume that I am on it.

21 Q. Okay. And are you part of the process for clearing a stop
22 work authority? You did mention that the master is the final
23 authority, but are you part of that process?

24 A. If requested by HSC to be part of it, yes.

25 Q. Okay. Do you know was there any stop work on any Seacor

1 vessel at the time, the day of the accident? Any active stop work
2 authority?

3 A. We had an incident report reported by a third party where he
4 tripped over a door frame, and that was the only thing reported
5 that day.

6 Q. Okay. And that was from the *Seacor Power*?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. And that issue was resolved?

9 A. Yes. We asked if he needed medical treatment, and he
10 declined.

11 Q. Okay. Were there any other stop work authority incidents
12 that day from other Seacor vessels that you were aware of?

13 A. Not to my knowledge.

14 Q. Okay. And just to be clear, no stop work authority incidents
15 related to weather that day?

16 A. Not reported, no. Not reported as stop work authority, no.

17 Q. Okay. The last question I have is related to your calls with
18 the master on the morning of the accident. And my question is
19 this. Do you feel -- did you feel or do you think the master felt
20 any pressure to get underway? And before you answer, that
21 pressure can be overt, somebody, the charterer, whichever,
22 demanding something, or it can be not overt, just a pressure from
23 a business standpoint to get underway. Do you feel that you or
24 the master had any pressure to get underway that day?

25 A. No, sir.

1 Q. Okay. So if the master felt that there was a danger, do you
2 feel that he would have made a decision not to get underway?

3 A. Absolutely.

4 MR. EHLERS: All right. Thank you very much.

5 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: [REDACTED] I see your hand up. Just give me one
7 jump in here.

8 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

9 Q. Mr. Fremin, were you -- was there any situation, were you
10 aware of any situations which would put the vessel off hire? When
11 I say the vessel, the *Seacor Power*. Or off charter.

12 A. Well, at the time, the vessel had -- it came in. It was
13 still on charter, but no day rate. And then that morning we went
14 back on day rate. But there was no -- nothing of my knowledge.
15 It's happened before where we'll have, I don't know, mechanical
16 failure or we'll have to tell the client, hey, we need to postpone
17 24 hours. And so it's not uncommon to have to delay a start for
18 any particular reason, and the client, of course, says, okay. Let
19 us know when we can proceed. And they may put us off hire, but I
20 don't deal with that type of stuff. I just relate to our sales
21 and marketing what's happening on the vessel, why we need more
22 time, and they speak with the charter.

23 Q. Okay. And so there were conditions, but there could be
24 something that would take it off of day rate, as you called it,
25 but and it was off of day rate when it came in this time, and then

1 went back on; is that correct?

2 A. That's absolutely correct. Yes. We were in for -- yes,
3 routine maintenance.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So Talos put us off day rate, which we totally obliged to
6 because it was our own maintenance. And then when the equipment
7 started loading up that morning, we went back on day rate.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know if you can go off or go off of day rate
9 for any set amount of time before they can cancel the contract,
10 the charter? If you don't -- if you're not aware of it, that's
11 okay.

12 A. No. I'm not aware.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I'm not aware of what's the standard, if it's longer than
15 this. I'm not sure.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I see your hand up.
17 Please.

18 BY MR. [REDACTED]

19 Q. Yeah, Paul, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard. Paul, if
20 Captain Dave for any reason had any question about leaving because
21 of the weather, would he have completed a stop work authority or
22 issued a stop work authority or would he have completed any other
23 documents or forms or what would have been the process of saying
24 I'd rather -- I want to wait for weather?

25 A. He would have -- yes, sir. He would have definitely done a

1 stop work authority, as he along with the other masters have done
2 multiple times. So he would have completed it, and I would have
3 relayed that to the logistics team, say, hey, look, weather's bad.
4 We're not going anywhere. And that's just what it is. There
5 would have been no feedback, no, oh, you can leave, don't worry
6 about it. Just nothing like that. Especially with Captain David.

7 Q. Okay. So there would have been a stop work authority
8 completed for weather?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And I believe we have multiple records of that as well.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Good. Thank you. That's all I got.

13 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Is there anyone else before I have a follow-
15 up question here?

16 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

17 Q. Okay. So I'm going to share my screen with you again and,
18 hopefully, you'll pick it up. There we go. Okay. Can you see it
19 now, Mr. Fremin?

20 A. It's trying. All right. Yeah. Go ahead.

21 Q. Okay. Great. It says these are instructions to the vessel
22 to close all hatches, vents, watertight doors, manholes. Is there
23 any list that -- list of all the hatches, vents, watertight doors
24 and manholes for the vessel?

25 A. Yes. It's within the *Operations Manual*.

1 Q. It's in here somewhere?

2 A. It's not a list, but there's detailed drawings of what is
3 available. It's not that many.

4 Q. Okay. So it's on the drawings, but is it in one place, which
5 has this, this, this, this that you're aware of?

6 A. No, sir.

7 Q. Okay. And I did see it somewhere in here where it talked
8 about margins for weather. But you're not aware of any specific
9 margins for doing a -- for a weather type of operation; is that
10 correct?

11 A. I'm sorry. Margins for what?

12 Q. Yeah. Yeah. Margins. Some kind of a margin where if it
13 exceeds a certain margin if they are supposed to do anything,
14 whether it's for weather or for -- specifically weather.

15 A. To my knowledge, no, there's no margin.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The only margin we have is for crane operations.

18 Q. Okay. Very good. Thank you.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: Any -- around the room, any other questions?

20 [REDACTED] I see your hand is still up. Do you have a follow-on
21 question?

22 MR. [REDACTED] No. I just forgot to lower it. Thank you.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Oh, okay. And no further questions.

24 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

25 Q. Let me ask you, Mr. Fremin, is there anything else that you

1 would like to add?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Okay. Well, then I think this interview has ended. Thank
4 you very much for your time. Oh, I -- you know what, this
5 computer age, there is some -- there are some good things about
6 it. So I'm going back into this again, and I found it, actually
7 found it. So you see my screen again, do you?

8 A. I do, yes.

9 Q. Okay. So weather precautions. This is again to the master.
10 Do not move the vessel when there is only a margin -- I knew it
11 was in there somewhere -- marginal chance of arriving safely. So
12 you don't have any idea what that margin is, margin? I'm still
13 trying to get my arms around this.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. I'm not trying to, like I said, you know, I'm just trying to
16 understand if we don't know what the margins are.

17 A. No. Yeah, of course. I mean, I can't that definition of
18 marginal. I mean, this is the *Operations Manual* for the *Seacor*
19 *Power*. So that's up to the vessel master to know what he thinks
20 the marginal chance is of weather. He knows his vessel. So
21 that's completely up to him. I cannot define marginal.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I'm not there. You can have still four to five-foot seas,
24 but if the periods are close together, it's not as bad as having
25 eight-second or nine-second swells that can really rock the

1 vessel. So, again, I don't think there's a clear definition of
2 marginal.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. And you had nothing to add. I think
4 unless there's any other -- I don't see any hands raised. So
5 we'll note that the time is 1640 Eastern Daylight Time or 1540
6 Central Daylight Time.

7 Thank you again for your time. Really appreciate it. And
8 for patience with some --

9 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir. Thank you to all.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: -- my questions anyway. Thank you.

11 MR. FREMIN: Yes, sir.

12 (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: CAPSIZING OF THE LIFTBOAT *SEACOR*
 POWER SOUTH OF PORT FOURCHON,
 LOUISIANA, ON APRIL 13, 2021
 Interview of Paul Fremin

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA21MM024

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: April 20, 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.



Katherine Motley
Transcriber



Office of Marine Safety
Transcript Errata

Matter: *Seacor Power*
Ref Nbr: DCA21MM024

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the transcript of interview for Mr. Paul Fremin taken on April 28, 2021. Kindly ask Mr. Fremin to review this transcript for accuracy and provide suggested corrections, if any, in the attached table.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

5/19/21
Date

Michael J. Kucharski
Captain Michael J. Kucharski
Senior Marine Accident Investigator

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

PAUL FREMIN

TAKEN ON

APRIL 28, 2021

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED WORDING
9	9	April of 2020	May of 2020
14	11	they were stopped due to fog	vessel was underway on the 13th and stopped on the 14th
21	7	1607*	1616
21	21	Larry Lawrence	Lawrence Warren
25	5	1608**	1617
45	24	HSC	HSE
			*this time was mistaken multiple times throughout the transcript
			**reflects corrected time

If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the below statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

NO CORRECTIONS NEEDED. _____
Initials

Paul Fremin
Printed Name of Person providing the above information


Signature of Person providing the above information

26-May-2021
Date



Office of Marine Safety
 Transcript Errata
 TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

 PAUL FREMIN

TAKEN ON

 APRIL 28, 2021

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED WORDING	NTSB REPLY
9	9	April of 2020	May of 2020	DISAGREE – transcript is true to recording
14	11	They were stopped due to fog	Vessel was underway on the 13 th and stopped on the 14 th	DISAGREE – transcript is true to recording
21	7	1607*	1616	DISAGREE- the transcript is true to what was said on recording
21	21	Larry [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Warren	AGREE – note that this occurs at line 23 of page 21.
25	5	1608**	1617	DISAGREE -the transcript is true to what was said on the recording.
45	24	HSC	HSE	AGREE
			*this time was mistaken multiple times throughout the transcript	
			**reflects corrected time	

FREMIN Errata with NTSB reply, SP