



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Interview Summary – DCA22FM024

Interview of: Brady Lachney – Excavator Operator for Rigid Constructors
Date/Time: July 7, 2022 – 1333 to 1412 CDT
Location: USCG Marine Safety Field Office Lafayette Conference Room
Interviewed by: CWO3 [REDACTED] – USCG, Adam Tucker – NTSB
Attendees: Alan Breaud – Breaud & Myers (representing Rigid Constructors interests), Jefferson Tillery – Jones Walker LLP (representing LA Carriers interests), Tommy Plaisance - LA Carriers Operations Manager (Party in Interest), Jeff Mizzi – Rigid Constructors President of Marine Operations (Party in Interest), Mark Fazioli – 3D Marine (representing LA Carriers interests)
Accident: June 15, 2022, Capsizing and sinking of the e-crane barge *Ambition* in the Gulf of Mexico, about 18 nautical miles offshore of Freshwater Bayou, Louisiana (NTSB No. DCA22FM024).

This interview summary has been compiled based on Coast Guard and NTSB investigator notes taken during the interview of Mr. Brady Lachney, an excavator operator for Rigid Constructors assigned to secure the crane barge *Ambition*.

- Mr. Lachney has been employed with Rigid Constructors for 2 months. He was hired as an excavator operator and has about 8 years of experience as an excavator operator. His training and orientation with Rigid Constructors of safety training and on the job training.
- Mr. Lachney said that there was a phone call from his supervisor Ronnie telling him they needed to go and secure some stuff on the barge and prepare it for transport. He and the other crew departed from New Iberia and drove to Cameron. From there, they got in a skiff, near an LNG plant, and went to the *Ambition*. The launch was also near the Cameron ferry dock. They boarded the barge and began securing items on it.
- Mr. Lachney recalled he was with Dillard and Aiden in the truck. All of them arrived at the job site at the same time. He recalled they were told to go to the location of the *Ambition* and that is where they would be told what to do.
- Mr. Lachney said that Dillard gave instructions to secure all items on the barge.
- Mr. Lachney recalled they first secured a man lift, then some concrete blocks and quite a few things after that.
- When asked of the concrete blocks he secured, Mr. Lachney said they were square looking and not all the same size. They were located more to the back of the barge. He was not sure of how much each weighed. The concrete blocks were secured with ratchet straps which were maybe 4 inches or bigger.
- When asked where the man lift was on the barge, Mr. Lachney said he could not recall. He was also asked the location on the barge of the Conex box and Mr. Lachney said he was not sure where it was.

- After they finished securing everything, he got back on the skiff and two guys stayed on the barge. The skiff was tied to the barge as the barge rode in the channel at that time. The barge was then spudded down so the tug could regroup on the barge. After the tug regrouped, the barge was spudded up and the two guys got off the barge and into the skiff. They then departed back to the launch where they took the skiff out of the water and loaded it on the truck.
- When asked about the barge spudding down, Mr. Lachney said that the barge went sideways in the channel so that is when it was spudded down. The tug then got on the back of the barge, and they spudded back up. Mr. Lachney recalled the barge kit a pole, which he described as looking like a telephone pole. It was a “marker or something”.
- When asked if they had to use any kind of ladder to board and leave the barge to/from the skiff, Mr. Lachney said no, they were able to climb onto the barge from the skiff. He said he was not sure of its height, and he did not have to go back on the barge.
- When asked when he was on the barge securing items, who was with him, Mr. Lachney recalled Aiden and Fred were there.
- When asked if he saw Ronnie on the barge, Mr. Lachney said he did not see Ronnie on the barge at the time they were securing things. Dillard remained in the skiff.
- When asked how they secured items using the ratchet straps, Mr. Lachney said there were pad eyes on the deck which they secured them to. Mr. Lachney noted he was helping Fred with securing items.
- When asked if there was a checklist used to aid in securing the barge, Mr. Lachney said there was not. He said this was his first time seeing the barge and he had never been on it before. When he was done securing things, Mr. Lachney got back in the skiff which was tied to the barge.
- When asked of what he remembered of the weather that day, Mr. Lachney said it was sunny and the water was “choppy”. The water being choppy was why they wanted to take the skiff back.
- When asked if he knew the crane was secured, or if he saw someone securing it, Mr. Lachney said, no he did not see that.
- When asked if he saw the clamshells for the crane were secured, Mr. Lachney said that he could not remember.
- When asked if he saw manhole covers on the hatches of the barge, Mr. Lachney said he could not recall, and he was not looking for that.
- When asked what happened after they left the barge, Mr. Lachney said they went back to the truck, loaded the skiff, and went to the fuel place where they met the barge there.
- At the fuel place, they waited a long time for the tug to get the barge in. Mr. Lachney estimated it took 5 to 6 tries to get the barge docked. The barge went to one dock, but the tug could not get it in there so the barge was docked at another location at the fuel place.
- Once the barge was docked, Mr. Lachney said that he went to the water valve and handed the hose to Fred who was on the barge. Mr. Lachney stayed at the valve while Fred was putting water into the ballast tanks.

- When asked if the tanks were already open for where Fred put water into, Mr. Lachney said he did not know. He just handed the hose to Fred and stayed at the valve and did not board the barge. He recalled that Fred filled water in two spots.
- When asked to explain the hose that he handed to Fred, Mr. Lachney said it was a 4-to-6-inch hose maybe. He said the hose belonged to the marina. He could not remember the color of the hose. When asked if the valve had any kind of counter on or near it, Mr. Lachney said that he did not recall and did not see any readings.
- When asked if the barge *Ambition* had any kind of list or heel, Mr. Lachney said no and that it was level.
- Once Fred was done filling the water, Mr. Lachney took the hose back on the dock. After that, they got in the truck and drove off. They made it to the Cameron ferry but then Dillard got a phone call asking that they go back to the barge. Mr. Lachney noted he was not familiar with the area they were at.
- When they got back to the fuel place, Mr. Lachney said he stayed in the truck noting that he was not a deckhand. He had worked in the past with companies who have had barges, but he did not work on them.
- When asked to describe the pole that was hit, Mr. Lachney said it was green in color and it was on the side that the skiff was tied off to. The barge “took out” the pole and it leaned over when it was hit but then came back up. After that, the barge was spudded down, and the tug relocated behind the barge.
- When asked what he recalled regarding the instructions to fill the tanks with water, Mr. Lachney said he did not recall. He shut off the valve and opened it when requested by Fred.
- When asked if he had taken any pictures of the barge at the time he was with it or working on it, Mr. Lachney said he did not.
- When asked if he had any supervisory role at the time they were working on or at the barge, Mr. Lachney said no, he is not the supervisor of anyone.
- When asked if any kind of job safety analysis was done before going to the barge or at the barge, Mr. Lachney said he was not sure.
- When asked if he knew where the barge *Ambition* was going, Mr. Lachney said he did not know.
- When asked if he was aware of any missing hatch covers on the barge, Mr. Lachney said he did not know.
- When asked about the concrete blocks on the barge and where they were from, Mr. Lachney said he did not know.
- When asked if he was aware of how to properly ballast a barge, Mr. Lachney said he did not know how to.
- When asked where he was when Fred was filling the barge with water, Mr. Lachney said he was directly in front of the area where Fred was filling water.

End of summary