

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

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*BOW TRIUMPH* VESSEL CRASH \*

INTO WHARF BRAVO PIER NEAR \*

Accident No.: DCA22FM040

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA \*

ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2022 \*

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Interview of: CRAIG MITCHUM, Captain

*Bow Triumph*

North Charleston, South Carolina

Wednesday,  
September 7, 2022

APPEARANCES:

LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator  
U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Charleston

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator  
U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Charleston

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JOHN CAMERON, Counsel  
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DAVID GALLOWAY  
Chairman  
Commission of Pilots for the Lower Coast Area

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STEVEN KICKLIGHTER  
Vice President and General Manager  
McAllister Towing of Charleston

MICHAEL COLLINS, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

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By Lt. [REDACTED]

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By Mr. [REDACTED]

30

By CWO Mike Collins

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:21 a.m.)

1  
2  
3 LT. [REDACTED] All right. Good morning everyone. This is  
4 Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with Coast Guard, Sector Charleston.  
5 Today's date is September 7, 2022 and the time is 10:21.

6 We are here to interview Captain Craig Mitchum, who is a  
7 docking pilot onboard the *Bow Triumph* on September 5th, 2022 when  
8 they had the incident of the collision into the Navy Pier Bravo.  
9 We're going to do an interview and we'll start by going around and  
10 doing introductions.

11 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Craig Mitchum.

12 MR. MCRAE: I'm Colin McRae, I'm counsel for Mr. Mitchum.

13 MR. CAMERON: John Cameron, Executive Director, Charleston  
14 branch pilots and also representing party in interest, pilot John  
15 Thomas.

16 MR. GALLOWAY: David Galloway, Chairman of the Commission of  
17 Pilots for the Lower Coast Area.

18 MR. GILSON: Brian Gilson, and counsel for party in interest,  
19 vessel owner and technical managers of the *Bow Triumph*.

20 MR. KICKLIGHTER: Steven Kicklighter, I'm Vice President and  
21 General Manager of McAllister Towing of Charleston.

22 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'm U.S. Coast Guard, Sector  
23 Charleston.

24 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. That concludes the introductions.

25 INTERVIEW OF CRAIG MITCHUM

1 BY LT. [REDACTED]

2 Q. And now, Captain Mitchum, if you just go through your story.  
3 And just, you can give all the details that you wish regarding the  
4 incident from your perspective.

5 A. Okay. Well, we had two turns, and we undock the *Bow Triumph*,  
6 the Bow incident. Everything was normal and the tugs were  
7 detached from the ship. And basically, at that point, I was a  
8 passenger.

9 I had no job to do. Captain Thomas took the ship on down the  
10 river there. And then, coming off range Delta he took his radio  
11 and call tugs on 13. Said, she's not making the turn. That was  
12 at the turn on to range Charlie, and descending to Bravo.

13 And I was in, standing back in the back of the wheelhouse  
14 looking at the estimates, and just being a passenger. Like, I had  
15 no job before. And the tugs, one of my tugs was about three  
16 quarter, three quarters of a mile ahead of us.

17 And one of my tugs was somewhere behind the ship trailing.  
18 So, at this point there was no chance of getting one of the tugs  
19 back to us before anything happened.

20 And, and I'm standing back there. Like I said, I'm not  
21 saying a word. I don't have a job at this point. I don't have a  
22 position of, on the bridge, other than being a passenger. I was  
23 in the con down river. I went to dock.

24 But John Thomas had the con. Well, he called the tugs, and  
25 said she's not making the turn. I'm looking at what's happening.

1 And John talking port anchor, four shots, arm port, fullback, and  
2 he answered, briefly, complete. As an, as an advice to the job, I  
3 said, it's a job.

4 And he did it ASAP. He gave the command without hesitation.  
5 He saw what had to be done. He didn't need to hear from me. And  
6 I saw him just line up from the starboard, from the stern.

7 And you'll hear all this from John. You'll hear it, you'll  
8 it in my voice. John answered without hesitation. He knew  
9 exactly what to do. Very professional how everything was done in  
10 the correct tone of voice. As professionally as possibly,  
11 managing the crisis situation.

12 And it, let's see, it was quite a sight to see. And I can't  
13 explain why the starboard anchor was dropped. But we got one  
14 down. And then, finally, it takes time to go from full head to  
15 full start. It takes time, especially on a ship that has a 9-knot  
16 navigational full speed.

17 So, you're dealing with a tanker that's rather underpowered,  
18 as most of them are. So, anyway, the anchor's down, full becker  
19 (ph.) was ordered. All of this has happening quick, quick, quick.  
20 You don't have time to think. You have to react as a pilot.

21 He's trying to manage the situation. He's trying to minimize  
22 what could possibly happen. And the ship, the ship did go  
23 aground, and probably would have gone through the pier, probably  
24 to midships on the tanker had that anchor not went down.

25 And by that time, the engine's cranking full start. It

1 stopped it. It could have been a lot worse, a lot worse. And you  
2 have to understand, things like this don't happen very often.  
3 People react.

4 And I think that Captain Thomas handled himself very, very  
5 professionally and well, managing a crisis situation. Why the  
6 starboard anchor was dropped, I don't know. I don't know. That  
7 would be a question for someone else.

8 But as bad as the situation looks, it could have been worse  
9 if the tanker had gone on through the pier and breached a hull.  
10 It, it barely got through the dock. It barely got through it.  
11 And Pier Bravo's old and decommissioned for a long, long time. It  
12 doesn't, it didn't take much. It didn't take much.

13 And you can look at the damage on the ship. As bad as it is,  
14 it could have been so, so much worse. Especially if she'd gone on  
15 through that dock, caught (ph.) up. And the tugs got to us. And  
16 just chew at full stern. I thought I was going to have to pull  
17 her out of there. She wasn't, but she came off real easy.

18 Well, John brought the engine down, she back right off of it.  
19 Backed right out. She really didn't get into the dock, like you  
20 think she might have. She, she just -- that's good, and the whole  
21 thing pulled out. Quite a sight.

22 So brought a tug in, starboard quarter. I asked the tug to  
23 come up to my starboard bow. I said, can't, the debris is too  
24 much, too much debris in the water. So, we backed on out, the  
25 ship's drift, you know.

1           And brought the tug in a little more than midship. Turned  
2 us. It was enough. Backed the tug off on my quarter. We headed  
3 down on the 49 range, range Charlie without incident. We came  
4 down and docked at Odfjell without incident. That's it. Open to  
5 questions.

6 Q.    Okay. All right, Captain, thank you for all that  
7 information. I know it's not fun reliving it. I know it wasn't  
8 a great situation. And I wish we were meeting under other  
9 circumstances. But I very much appreciate your cooperation and  
10 all the information you've added to the --

11           If you could go back a little bit and just discuss like your  
12 background as a pilot. How long you've been working in this  
13 industry. Maybe go into how many trips and lengths, you've been  
14 on. Just all of your experience.

15 A.    I started in 1976 working on the tugs, and worked my way up.  
16 Trained for seven years as a docking pilot, and with the Navy  
17 harbor pilots. And finally, I got my chance. Handled my first  
18 ship, February 12th, 1985.

19           I've handled 35,000 vessels in Jacksonville, Charleston,  
20 Georgetown, and Wilmington. I've also leading ships on the  
21 Mississippi River with the Crescent River pilots. I was a Navy  
22 pilot for, I worked the watch deck for ten years. I worked with  
23 the Navy for ten years as a harbor pilot, doing the harbor pilot  
24 work, and the docking, here in Charleston.

25           Spent two years working in Jacksonville, Charleston, and



1 Georgetown. Put 80,000 miles on my vehicles in two years, working  
2 three ports. And finally, McAllister Towing gave me a break.  
3 They hired me full-time on November of '90, I believe. And I've  
4 been docking ships for McAllister Towing ever since.

5 Q. In Charleston?

6 A. In Charleston, Georgetown, and let me see, these past four  
7 years. So, I have an unlimited Master's ticket for inland waters  
8 of the United States and the Great Lakes, western rivers, and  
9 pilotage (ph.) in Charleston, Georgetown, them too.

10 I let my pilotage go in Jacksonville because I don't like  
11 Jacksonville. And I've trained six docking pilots. That's why I  
12 have all this grey hair. And that's about it. Raised a family,  
13 as well.

14 Q. Okay. And can you just explain, like, I basically  
15 understand, but you know, the difference between the docking pilot  
16 and the harbor pilot, where your duties delineate, and what you're  
17 normal routine.

18 A. Yes, the harbor pilot doesn't mean --

19 MR. MCRAE: Let her finish the question.

20 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Excuse me?

21 MR. MCRAE: I said, just let her finish her question.

22 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Absolutely.

23 MR. MCRAE: Go ahead, say that again, please?

24 LT. [REDACTED] Well, that's fine.

25 BY LT. [REDACTED]

1 Q. What where your duties delineate and the difference between  
2 between the two. What your normal duties are.

3 A. My normal duties are to bring tugs alongside and direct the  
4 tugs in the docking and undocking maneuvers. That's what they pay  
5 me for.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. It's an intricate knowledge of the tugs, their capabilities,  
8 who you have down there, what the tug's capabilities are. Half  
9 limb (ph.), burning, staging, A-9, everything, all that, plays  
10 into docking and docking maneuvers.

11 And I board vessels, and the harbor pilot directs the vessel  
12 into a safe approach. I enter the ship to the dock. And allows  
13 me to work the ship in. But basically, that's what, that's what  
14 it's all about there. We work together. I'm not sure if I'm  
15 answering the question like you --

16 Q. Yes, that's fine. So, what exactly? Like how do you know  
17 when your job is over, and his begins? Is there a handoff? Or is  
18 there --

19 A. Oh, absolutely.

20 Q. -- a period of time where --

21 A. Oh, absolutely.

22 Q -- you're working in conjunction?

23 A. Absolutely. Pilots, they're very, very good about telling  
24 the captain, I've got your ship. But we work together to make a  
25 safe, a safe docking, a safe undocking. And then, my job's done.

1 I handle the tugs and the sea pilot takes, or the harbor pilot  
2 takes the ship on out all ready, as necessary, without assistance  
3 from me.

4 I'm a barge servant on the vessel. I shouldn't do that. And  
5 I'm not sure, what else should I? I mean, how do I describe my  
6 job? I mean, I dock and undock ships. And I work closely with  
7 the captains, of course, chief mate, the bridge team.

8 Bridge management's essential because every time you dock or  
9 undock a ship, you're in close quarters. These are large, heavy  
10 vessels affected by weather. And the intricate knowledge of what  
11 the tugs can and cannot do. So, relies on me to assist the vessel  
12 to a safe docking and undocking.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And we always, always have a good turn over, as in charge at  
15 the top.

16 Q. What does that normally look like? Like how do you conduct  
17 that turn over?

18 A. Chief of the Harbor (ph.) will come out here to, well, he's  
19 standing behind the site, correct? She looks good. And then,  
20 turned to the captain and said, captain, I have your ship. I have  
21 the con.

22 And then, proceed on down the river. We leave finally. I  
23 couldn't leave this one because we were docking down in Odfjell.  
24 That's why I was just standing in the back of the wheelhouse being  
25 quiet.

1 Q. But normally, at that point when the other pilot says I have  
2 con, I have the ship, captain, that's when you would disembark?

3 A. That's correct. And that was all done. I was going to be  
4 undocked at BP. That's why I stood in the back of the wheelhouse.  
5 Because I didn't have anything to do, but watch, or you know,  
6 whatever, so.

7 Q. Just to help piece their timeline together, when exactly, or  
8 possibly did that happen? Where he took the con?

9 A. Excuse me?

10 Q. When exactly did that happen on that day, when he passed the  
11 con?

12 A. As soon she was pointed in a good safe direction, that ship  
13 was what we call, headed fair. At throw away, I had the ship  
14 going. John came to me, and said, she looks good, Craig, I got  
15 the ship. Rendered it to the Captain. Captain now had the con.  
16 I have your ship.

17 Q. Okay. But from what I understand, the ship was back off the  
18 pier, that was almost a, you know, full 360 turn --

19 A. Yes, it was.

20 Q. - turn fork. And then, you kind of out your planned headway.

21 A. I got her, I got her, I was moving ahead. Steadied, and John  
22 says, she looks good Craig. And that's the normal change over  
23 that we give. And then, turn to the Captain to say, Admiral, I've  
24 got the con, I've got your show.

25 Q. Okay. And at that point, you said you were standing in

1 terms, in back of the wheelhouse.

2 A. I was.

3 Q. John was up front?

4 A. At that point. We're all inside now. And I'm in the back,  
5 to the wheelhouse as a passenger. I chose to get down from, as we  
6 were approaching (indiscernible). That's the normal, the sequence  
7 of events that was to transpire for thousands and thousands job.

8 Q. Possibly how many times would you say you've conducted that  
9 sequence of events, where you've gotten a vessel underway from the  
10 pier, handed it off to the pilot? And --

11 A. Handed it off, it's just a lot. I can't tell you.

12 Q. How many in that specific section of the river? Like how  
13 often did you, often is it that you're working there in that part  
14 of the river? Or maybe even on that specific pier? Like how  
15 frequently is that?

16 A. Frequently, frequently, frequently.

17 MR. KICKLIGHTER: Until that, several years (indiscernible)  
18 shows that he's been taking ships out, I would estimate  
19 (indiscernible) at least two a month. And he has still gotten  
20 out, so through there. He's probably done through that part of  
21 (indiscernible).

22 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I was up there all the time. To me, next  
23 one, all the time.

24 LT. [REDACTED] So it --

25 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Spent a lot of time in the area.

1 BY LT. [REDACTED]

2 Q. So at least, probably, in the hundreds?

3 A. Over the years.

4 Q. That you've done that same --

5 A. Running tugs, as well. Because that, that facility has been  
6 there a long, long time. I rode as an apprentice pilot on that  
7 part there. I ran tugs for other pilots up that there at dock  
8 since 1970s. I think about '78 or '79, when I started running  
9 tugs. So, I must have spent my, I spent a lifetime out here, in  
10 this river, and a lot of time in the BP plant.

11 Q. Understood. And, now I know it wasn't like procedure to stay  
12 on a vessel. Normally, you'd be getting off before --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. -- you'd get to that point. But you staying on because --

15 A. Because we were --

16 Q. -- you were going to help dock it.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Had there been a lot of other times when that's happened?

19 Where you've actually remained kind of as a passenger on the  
20 bridge, on around that specific turn?

21 A. I've made that turn hundreds of times with the Navy and the  
22 tugs.

23 Q. What about, or a like larger ships, like the tanker?

24 A. There's been a few times that I've gone with the tugs. I say  
25 a few times, probably more than a few times I've been with tugs

1 and docking tankers, running down there.

2 Q. Was there anything different about those experiences than  
3 this one in regards to either people, environment, machinery?

4 A. No. Everyone seemed to be rested. Everyone's conducting  
5 their jobs as they should. The crew was responsible, making fact  
6 the tow and that everything was okay. Everything, the machinery  
7 was acting normal. And we had normal things that happened. We  
8 had piers off, got to the back.

9 Q. What was the weather like in the afternoon?

10 A. Beautiful, very select south, a breeze, a little cloudy, but  
11 very nice weather, very nice weather.

12 Q. What about the tide and current?

13 A. About 1 mile, a foot.

14 Q. And where do you get that information from?

15 A. My brain.

16 Q. And --

17 A. And I found myself --

18 Q. -- is that from visual?

19 A. I know I'm trying to be funny. I can look at the tide. I  
20 don't need this, or anything. I can look at the -- to know what  
21 the tide is, I tell you what the currents do in any stage of this  
22 river.

23 Q. Were --

24 A. And what the velocity will be. Looking at the tide, the  
25 wind, the range of the tide. And that's just because I've spent

1 my life out here. I hope I never have to rely on that stuff.

2 Q. So, it was not a flood current.

3 A. No.

4 Q. Do you think the flood current and the velocity, exceed the  
5 direction, or anything would be any different like around that  
6 particular turn, than it would be on like other turns? Like the  
7 previous turns that you made? Or further down the river? Like  
8 does the velocity change?

9 A. It's only going to get weaker as we went down river. But at  
10 that point in the river, we had nine knots. As we were moving  
11 down the river, it would be slow dimension. I don't know if I  
12 answered that question like you wanted.

13 Q. That's was fine. Do you think it was different in that  
14 particular channel where the pier was struck, then the turn that  
15 you had, prior to that?

16 A. No difference. Everything was normal. Everything was  
17 normal. It was just a normal maneuver coming down the river that  
18 I could see from the back of the wheelhouse. And then -- because  
19 that's where I was.

20 And I was just standing there being quite like I'm supposed  
21 to be. And let the people work and do their jobs. The only  
22 reason you're going to hear my voice on that DVR is, we were in a  
23 crisis. And I held, I, I --

24 My tugs were away. One was three quarters of a mile away.  
25 The other one was behind ship. I couldn't jump in and grab a tow



1 and get them on the outside to help that, to help the pilot, or  
2 help the ship. And I did -- and you're going to hear it on the  
3 DVR. I advised, I recommended to John. I said, John, drop your  
4 port anchor, four shots, full becker.

5 Q. And where is a full becker?

6 A. It's a flap on the water. And John, without hesitation,  
7 without hesitation, it wasn't a second, the words were out of his  
8 mouth. Captain, drop the port anchor, four shots. And when the  
9 dust was flying, so that starboard anchor was dropped. I can't  
10 explain that one. And that's it.

11 I had them try to set the brake. John, try to set the brake.  
12 Try to set the brake. And they did. And that's what kept us from  
13 going on through the pier. And it jerked the ship to starboard.  
14 Oh, do that. And that's why she didn't go in any further.

15 By that time, the engine was stopped and started. He gave,  
16 he went ahead told them, told them full stern. And that takes so  
17 much time. It takes a lot of time. By that, by that time the  
18 engine was starting to come stern good.

19 But that anchor getting down kept that ship from going  
20 through Bravo to midships. That's what happened there. And it  
21 could have been so much worse. It would have been, it would have  
22 opened up that ship all the way back to midships. The debris, it  
23 was incredible.

24 Q. How much of the ship do you think was affected? Like how far  
25 down the ship did the pier go?

1 A. Say that again, please?

2 Q. How far -- like me strike. Like, how many feet of the front  
3 of the ship was affected by the pier? How much of the ship made  
4 contact with the pier? I know it didn't get all the way to  
5 midships.

6 A. Oh, no, no, no. Maybe 100 feet.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But she was going to go through that pier. There was no  
9 doubt in my mind, she was going through that pier.

10 Q. Do you know what the ship speed was when it made contact?

11 A. Seven or eight knots.

12 Q. Seven or eight knots at contact?

13 A. Oh, no, no, not at contact. Because the anchor was down.  
14 And they were, they were setting the brakes. It's amazing that  
15 she did not go, that they got her stopped. It's -- irregardless  
16 [sic] of which anchor they dropped, the crew on bow did a  
17 fantastic job.

18 I have turned thousand-foot ships that lost power on the  
19 anchor. And they did a wonderful job up on that bow. It's  
20 dangerous work. He hits that pelican hook with a sledge. It goes  
21 and slides. And when that Captain tells him, in whatever language  
22 he was talking in, to set the brake, that guy's got to get right  
23 there and start setting that brake.

24 And it's, it's frightening. There's a lot of chain coming  
25 out. And it's big chain. And there's sparks flying. And there's

1 dust and debris going everywhere. They did a fantastic job.

2 Q. Do you know how many shots went out?

3 A. I can't tell you that. Well, we recommended four. That's  
4 about it have the length of the ship. That has four, maybe, six.  
5 And I use that as a rule of thumb when ships lose power, if I'm  
6 turning, depending on how I do that turn.

7 Whether I'm stillborn (ph.), less, wearing the ship's speed.  
8 But the ship's speed didn't matter at this point. It was trying  
9 to keep the ship from running through the pier, and opening up the  
10 bottom of the vessel. As a result she, she, she impacted the  
11 pier. But as old as the dock is, and as much abuse as the dock  
12 has gotten --

13 Because I spent Hurricane Hugo trying to hold out an  
14 ammunition ship on that dock with 140 knots of wind, both anchors  
15 down. Coming ahead on both anchors. We literally tore the pier  
16 down. I got hit by a tornado. That's been up hard-knicked pier.

17 And she has been peppered over the years. So, it didn't take  
18 much to knock her down. And if you look at the damage to the  
19 ship, it's not that severe above the waterline that I can see.  
20 You can tell that the ship didn't go into the dock very far. I  
21 don't know what else to tell you.

22 But the crew did an outstanding job up on that bow. I can't  
23 explain why the starboard anchor was dropped. But the guy that  
24 was setting that brake, the guy that hit pelican hook, and the guy  
25 that was setting that brake, they did a good job.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. They did.

3 Q. They were ready to go?

4 A. Well, I'm telling you the dangers.

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. Dangerous -- they did good job.

7 Q. I don't think I've asked you this already. How, just an  
8 estimation of how far the ship was from the pier when that  
9 decision was finally made, an order was given to drop anchor?

10 A. You've got about 750 feet of room , 72 beacon to the Pier  
11 Bravo. And I would say that, and I'm just estimating because,  
12 like I said I was, because of my age, I felt like I was thrust to  
13 try into the situation. Anything, like any input that I could  
14 offer John to help him avoid this collision.

15 And I would say at that point we were, we had about 300 feet  
16 of the ship. With anchor finally, I think we had about 300 feet  
17 of the ship, possibly 400 feet of the ship past 72. Which it was  
18 getting down to the critical, critical critical.

19 It was going to happen. But it was, it was -- I was a  
20 passenger, and I held my tongue. I remained silent for as long as  
21 I could. When it was apparent to me, after John said she's not  
22 making the turn, I offered assistance to John.

23 He never relinquished the con, but he was, with his, with his  
24 level of experience and mine, as well, we were in complete  
25 agreement on what needed to be done. And he without hesitation or

1 acknowledgement to me, repeated what I suggested to the get. And  
2 why that starboard anchor came down, I don't know. So that's  
3 was --

4 Q. Looking back, you know, hindsight's 20/20, is there anything  
5 differently that you would do at all?

6 A. I'm not --

7 Q. There anything differently --

8 MR. MCRAE: Let her finish. Let her finish. Let her finish.

9 LT. [REDACTED] Like throughout the voyage down river, is there  
10 anything different that you would do?

11 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Well, not a whole lot on the docking part.  
12 So, I --

13 BY LT. [REDACTED]

14 Q. In your capacity? With what you were doing that day?

15 A. I'm not sure what you're asking me.

16 Q. Like, would you have given him more recommendations? Would  
17 you not give him the recommendation?

18 A. I would never give a recommendation --

19 Q. Would you have done anything different?

20 A. -- to a professional pilot, unless it's crisis situation.

21 These guys are good. They do, they do a great job each time.

22 That's not my job to advise a pilot, a professional with 30 years  
23 of service, impeccable safety record. That's not my job.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. That's not my place. But anyone can dire straits -- any ship

1 that was in danger, I can't imagine anyone not welcoming a  
2 suggestion. And there wasn't any time for protocol. I actually  
3 had no, no job. I was a spectator. I was a passenger.

4 Q. Sure.

5 A. But I did offer, John. And without hesitation, we were in  
6 completed agreement about dropping the port anchor, and the stern  
7 on the ship.

8 Q. From where you were standing on the bridge, could you see  
9 like the rudder angle indicator --

10 A. Everything --

11 Q. -- was in order? Everything?

12 A. Yes, I could see the instruments.

13 Q. Did it seem like the ship was responding, as per his orders?  
14 Like was everything in alignment or did you notice anything usual?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The rudder?

16 LT. [REDACTED] The rudder?

17 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: The ship's crew, the bridge team was  
18 responding to his commands normally, professional, all, everything  
19 worked. Everything was working properly. He was making this  
20 turns and making this turns. The situation normal.

21 BY LT. [REDACTED]

22 Q. Do you recall what the rudder was at before you all kind of  
23 made that emergency decision to drop anchor? Was it over hard?

24 A. It was already impacted. That's when he knew that it was, he  
25 wasn't going to make the turn.

1 Q. So, moving backwards, anchor was dropped, before then, the  
2 rudder was over hard. Prior to that, what was it?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you came out of Delta, there?

4 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: He steadied out there. And then, when he  
5 stopped, he knew it was regular. And then, he just turned. And  
6 put the (indiscernible) whatever he put it was. Whether it was  
7 420 or port. So, when she didn't move, it was hard port.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's 35?

9 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's 35 degrees. And it wasn't moving.  
10 It wasn't turning. I believe he grabbed his radio, and the ship  
11 stopped making the turn on 13. I believe, that's what he did.  
12 And he ordered just about full port. And at that speed, the  
13 thruster just yielded. It cannot, it didn't have any effect.

14 And I stepped up there at the job in the same tone of voice  
15 that I have now, I'm talking to you. The track recording makes  
16 portion. Full, full beakers, which is a flap on the rudder. And  
17 without hesitation we were in complete agreement that, that was  
18 what needed to be done.

19 And as she was approaching, the anchor was down. We saw that  
20 collision was eminent, stopped the engine. Full emergency to  
21 stern, which takes time. And then, she struck the pier.  
22 Amazingly the crew was able to get the actor down break set.

23 And to keep the ship from going on through the pier, would  
24 you figuring seven to eight knots, UAIS (ph.) tracking showed  
25 exactly what it was. And a 600-foot tanker doing 218 with a nine

1 knot navigational tool belt will not stop. They just don't have  
2 the power to stop as such. And the people up on that ballast,  
3 they didn't save the ship, but it could have been so, so much  
4 worse, so much worse.

5 BY LT. [REDACTED]

6 Q. What do you think would have happened if the port anchor had  
7 been dropped instead of the starboard anchor?

8 A. I think the ship may have jackknifed to port, for lack of  
9 better words and laid up, starboard due to the inevitable. Might  
10 have been beautiful approach, heart stopping. But there was a  
11 chance. There was chance that it might have laid up on the Bravo,  
12 starboard side too, minimizing the damage of the pier, not all of  
13 the ship.

14 Q. So was it the sheer load, you're saying? Look it was  
15 incorrect?

16 A. I can't go there. I can't tell you that. Only going back 20  
17 years, turning the ship on anchor that lost power, I missed the  
18 dock by three meters. That's what they use if you hit the merit  
19 house. That happened to me 20 years ago. A ship lost power. And  
20 I got to stop three meters clearance. I only need a foot, and  
21 then we don't have a collision.

22 Q. There's the only, other, like collision type incident you've  
23 ever had in your career?

24 A. No. Up at the shipyard we had a miscommunication with a tug.  
25 And there was a jagged piece of metal sitting out now from pier



1 hotel and the work the depends in there. So, 300 feet inside  
2 there -- you'd have to go to that shipyard. And they had a jagged  
3 piece of metal out, stuck a little hole about this big for ship.  
4 I was docking in the slip over there. Started me out there  
5 sitting there.

6 Q. So, I mean it sounds like with this whole incident, I mean,  
7 it seems it really started to go wrong when the vessel wasn't  
8 turning to port as everyone expected.

9 A. Exactly.

10 Q. Why did that happen? In your opinion, your perspective what  
11 went wrong? What was different about this trip from other trips?

12 A. Well, the difference is that she didn't make the turns. The  
13 hydrodynamic forces that were working on the ship will probably be  
14 better explained by someone that has more training as a harbor  
15 pilot than I do, to be honest with me.

16 I dock ships and undock them. And I have a lot tasked with  
17 transit work. And I would have to basically leave that up to a  
18 professional pilot, especially a harbor pilot. They could explain  
19 the hydrodynamics of it.

20 Q. Did you acknowledge everything on the ship to be operable?

21 A. Everything seemed to be operable. Everyone seemed to be  
22 rested. Everyone seemed to act normal. Everyone was doing their  
23 job.

24 Q. How many tugs did you say were aft of the vessel?

25 A. Just one trialing us somewhere back this. And there was one

1 about two quarters of mile ahead of us.

2 Q. Were there any other vessels aft of you, other than the one  
3 tug?

4 A. Not to my knowledge. He was so far back that he couldn't do  
5 anything. Now, that situation was quickly as things were  
6 happening.

7 Q. And why weren't the tugs closer to the ship? I mean why they  
8 wouldn't have been made off. But --

9 A. Well, they don't, they don't, you really don't want them too  
10 close you. I mean, unless, you feel like something's not on.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Did you leave the call?

12 (Audio interference)

13 LT. [REDACTED] Coast Guard Investigations, Agent [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED] my line

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [REDACTED] my line dropped, I'm calling  
16 you on a different landline.

17 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. Are you still recording? Or are you  
18 going to start back up?

19 COURT REPORTER: I'm still recording.

20 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, roger. Okay. He's on. His phone just  
21 dropped. Okay.

22 BY LT. [REDACTED]

23 Q. You were talking about scenarios where we might be, you know,  
24 we were talking about -- in transit. Go ahead.

25 A. We were (indiscernible).

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) in that situation? You  
2 didn't have bad weather forecast --

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: It was only made (indiscernible).

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

5 BY LT. [REDACTED]

6 Q. Who makes that decision. How does that decision making  
7 process go?

8 A. We, it's a mutual decision between the harbor pilot and  
9 myself as the docking pilot. I'm there to assist him. He's  
10 asking is there any turmoil, help me make this turn. And nine  
11 times out ten, they are aligned. But are situation that could be  
12 without align. But there was no time in this. That's what he  
13 told me.

14 So, it was almost like three quarters of away. That was  
15 about, I don't know, a (indiscernible) ship. And those are the  
16 big and heavy, when they get, you can rush them. Okay.

17 You're get there, yes got it with that. I mean, there's just  
18 no time. I mean, there was just no time to get the tug on it.  
19 And I mean, they were doing what they were supposed to be doing.  
20 And waiting on the ship, basically navigating the rear. Don't get  
21 in his way.

22 Q. I understand. Yes, I think I understand what you're saying  
23 about scenarios. What's he's doing if the tugs were closer? I  
24 think I understand what you're saying there.

25 A. Of course.

1 Q. I mean hypothetically, like I understand why they, if the  
2 tugs were there, what happens. Would they have made then without  
3 it?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. With the equipment that we have.

6 A. Was there a --

7 Q. If I had the equipment. If I had had (indiscernible) no  
8 matter how the vessel behaved, for all the various reason, I would  
9 have overcome it with our power.

10 Q. Would it make a difference what speed the ship is going?  
11 Like with the vessel have need a certain speed for the tugs to be  
12 able lead and push, or not?

13 A. They were going to lock out, so. So, every scenarios good.  
14 I mean I appreciate the scenarios thing. I don't believe that  
15 there are never two things exactly the same. But you know,  
16 washing a tug with a (indiscernible).

17 There are so many different scenarios that can alter the  
18 course of that ship, those turns. And even if the ship is  
19 speeding at great knots, my backing, on one bow or the other,  
20 either stern, it's going to, the equipment is amazing. Compared  
21 to the (indiscernible) great boat.

22 Q. Okay. Now we're really getting into the weeds, here. I  
23 think I can cover a couple of other questions. Did you have like  
24 organizational policies, like standard practices? I know you've  
25 talked about like how you come to your decision making.

1           Are there any like written policies or processes that you  
2 follow, other than your 30, 40 years of experience. Anything like  
3 written, like either by McAllister or anything that you follow?

4 Q.   Follow the Captain's Bridge Handbook, basically, as pilot, a  
5 docking pilot. I (indiscernible) program, I watched with  
6 McAllister.

7           I not sure if I'm not answering correctly. I just try to do  
8 my job. And to behave as the best possible docking pilot. Make  
9 sure I get rest. I'm not inhibited by alcohol, or anything like  
10 those when I come to work. I just try to keep my nose clean, and  
11 do my job, and go home. That's all I want to do.

12 Q.   For example, are there any, like, written policies, or  
13 outlines, like specifics about taking the con, hand me the con  
14 words, or but, let --

15 A.   No.

16 Q.   Any words for readers, for that?

17 A.   I'll have to refer you Capt. Cameron, if there's written  
18 procedures for that.

19           MR. MCRAE: Yes, there all in the harbor stuff, the  
20 regulations. And they know better than you, the policies. You  
21 can say no.

22           MR. CAMERON: Let me preface. So, there's data that  
23 regulates the docking pilots in many ways. The State regulates  
24 that and all that. The pilot is allowed to give the con to a  
25 registered docking pilot, McAllister, who's registered to report

1 that to. Okay?

2 And when the ship is under, when the becker of the ship is  
3 controlled by tugs is the appropriate time for the docking pilot,  
4 to pilot to allow the docking pilot to have the con. The docking  
5 pilot does (indiscernible) constitutes a hand over, because there  
6 were two pilots that had the con.

7 LT. [REDACTED] That sounds something that might help us get  
8 more familiar with like why you all do all the things you do. And  
9 why the things are done, and are the things all the same?

10 MR. CAMERON: Well, I know a lot on it.

11 LT. [REDACTED] It's like reading organizational policies. But  
12 I'm familiar with them. I might, if you need any help, you know,  
13 it's whatever you guys have written down. If you won't mind. Do  
14 you want to say anything?

15 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

16 LT. [REDACTED] I know that we've take a lot of your time.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, Captain, yes, I'll try to be, run through  
18 these as quick as I can. But you know, to add some questions  
19 because you already answered a lot. But thank you so much for,  
20 you know telling us what, you know, what you observed out there.  
21 You know, what you witnessed.

22 And you know, thank you for you know, working with Captain  
23 Thomas. And you know, making those recommendations. You know, if  
24 we could avoid, or other than, because been much, much worse. So  
25 I'm glad to hear that we're first and we didn't have, your have

1 (indiscernible) cargo all open down the traverse.

2 So, yes, investigators don't have the, all of us, have a  
3 mystery to solve here. You know, try to figure out what happened.  
4 We're trying to, you know, rule out mechanical issues. Or if  
5 there any, any errors.

6 I mean (indiscernible) place blame, we're just trying to  
7 figure what happened because we may have a waterway issue, it may  
8 be a mechanical issue with the vessel. We just don't know at this  
9 point.

10 So you know, really appreciate you volunteering all this  
11 information for us. So we can, we can figure out what exactly  
12 happened. So we won't have this happen again. What's your  
13 relationship with Captain Thomas?

14 A. Professional.

15 Q. Okay. About how long have you known him?

16 A. Thirty years.

17 Q. Okay. Are you friends?

18 A. I would say we're acquaintances. I know his (indiscernible)  
19 offhand when we're not working.

20 Q. Okay. I wanted to just follow up on Lt. [REDACTED]'s question  
21 regarding like, so would have been McAllister, is there any  
22 written procedures for releasing the tugs, controlling the tugs,  
23 as far as how far away should be from the vessel when you're in  
24 operation like you were?

25 A. Not to my knowledge.

1 Q. So in that case, they're just released?

2 A. They're released.

3 Q. Okay. And who released them?

4 A. Well, I did.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I tell them to get their line (indiscernible) and back width  
7 of the vessel.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I've done that thousands, and thousands, and thousands of  
10 time. (Indiscernible) that's the way we do things.

11 Q. And so in that case, do they just make their way to the next  
12 location, that dodge the --

13 A. The next staging point, whether they'll be coming alongside,  
14 to take a position still, at a point the river.

15 Q. How many times --

16 A. I feel like we won't make as a good as speed as the ship will  
17 and if we could get a little head start there, and if we start  
18 running down the head there. These guys know what they're doing  
19 with these tows.

20 They know what their tug speed is. And they know about what  
21 they're going to do. So you know, that's why one of them was  
22 three quarters of a mile ahead of us. And the other guy was  
23 somewhere behind us. Normal operation, absolutely everything  
24 normal.

25 Q. Okay. So after you relinquish the con, what did you do then.



1 You said you were standing on the back of the bridge. Were you  
2 observing the entire time? Or were you, you know, having coffee  
3 or doughnuts up there?

4 A. Yes, I was watching --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- stuff, and I was keeping my mouth shut. Let people do  
7 their work.

8 Q. So is it fair to say you were observing the entire time?

9 A. Well, I would, I would say I had the state of visual that I  
10 would have if, if I was the harbor pilot. Because I was a  
11 passenger at that point.

12 I like, I like to take the time, when the hollitzer (ph.) or  
13 taking ships up and down the river and look out, look at my  
14 surroundings. And I'm training myself. I'm looking. I use, as a  
15 Navy pilot, without the sophisticated instruments that we have  
16 now, everything was done by line of sight and landmarks.

17 And I can tell you within meters it was where it should be,  
18 in the line, or not particularly. And I still like to look at  
19 those things, review those things in my mind. So, even though  
20 I'll never use them.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Because you know, I was Federally a pilot for the Navy, which  
23 doesn't equate to what we're doing now. I'm a docking pilot.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. And we don't do the fast approach, but you used to.

1 Q. So, while you were observing the approach to that turn there  
2 at Pier Bravo, did you see any issues? Were there any issues?

3 A. We came over Delta. And that's it, simply (indiscernible) as  
4 far as could tell.

5 Q. But is there anything you would have done differently? In  
6 your experience?

7 A. Well, meaning as I've handled 35,000 ships, I probably would  
8 have done something different. Because I've never had to do the  
9 same. And I can tell you that right now. You can look at, look  
10 at these ships and you'll probably tell me. Could be same  
11 currents, same ship, same wind, and we'll do it a little  
12 differently.

13       Something's going to be different. It's just handling  
14 characters. Something is going to be different. You're never  
15 going to do two jobs exactly the same. Okay? So I promise you, I  
16 wouldn't have done it exactly like him. And if I was taking this  
17 thing down and he was in the back watching me, he won't have done  
18 it like I did.

19 Q. Did you see any, well then, in that case did you observe  
20 anything that you deemed to be unsafe?

21 A. Everything was going along well. You know, all of sudden it  
22 was not then.

23 Q. Okay. What about the approach speed? You mentioned about  
24 eight knots?

25 A. Give or take.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. They said it was nine and we had a one knot flood on  
3 navigational pull on knots. So she's mostly underpowered.

4 Q. And no, no concerns about that? Can you expand on the, you  
5 mentioned that before. You mentioned that earlier, as well. As  
6 far as the vessel being underpowered. Can you explain a little  
7 bit more?

8 A. All tankers are underpowered. All container ships, all the  
9 newer container ships are underpowered.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. They're only building ships to get from point A to point B.  
12 They're not building ships to come into harbors and come out.  
13 They just don't have the power and the need.

14 Q. Fuel savings?

15 A. Is why they're building ship, just like they did in World  
16 War II. A to B, if they make in one then. All ships, as a  
17 general rule, are underpower.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Except for destroyers and Coast Guard cutters, and things  
20 like that. I mean, that's a different class of vessel. These are  
21 merchant ships. These are merchant ships. You can't equate the  
22 destroyers, things like that to merchant ships.

23 Q. Okay.

24 LT. [REDACTED] Can you explain what you mean by underpowered?

25 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That you need to use all of your elements

1 in turn, just capabilities or other capacity. They can do that,  
2 taking into account the extreme and where you feel like that pivot  
3 points going to be. How you're going to set in that turn. All  
4 those things are going through your mind without thinking about  
5 it.

6 BY MR. [REDACTED]

7 Q. But what do mean by underpowered?

8 A. What I'm telling you.

9 Q. So, are you saying, is there efficiency? Is there something  
10 wrong? That it's maybe less --

11 A. No.

12 Q. -- than what it's capability was?

13 A. No, there was nothing with the ship. All ships are  
14 underpowered. All merchant ships are underpowered. They're built  
15 for economy between ports. So, they're not using 50 tons of fuel  
16 a day. It's normal. Normal navigational pull for a ship of that  
17 class is about ten knots. It's normal.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So, that's my opinion.

20 Q. Understood. So, during the approach, and any time before you  
21 slowed up, did you have any concerns about the orders given by  
22 Captain Thomas?

23 A. No, not at all.

24 Q. Or the timing of the orders.

25 A. No, no.

1 Q. Okay.

2 LT. [REDACTED] So you think he started the turn at exactly the  
3 right time?

4 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes, if not early.

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]

6 Q. And when did you know that there was an issue that the vessel  
7 is in trouble?

8 A. Well, I knew for sure when he told, when he got all  
9 (indiscernible) and he called the tugs.

10 Q. Okay. So, what prompted you to speak up?

11 A. That's my, that's my -- as a docking pilot, as a docking  
12 pilot, I don't have time to think. I have to react to a  
13 situation. If you have to think about it, it's too late. And it  
14 is a normal reaction for me. So --

15 Q. What factor, what did that cause -- you know, at what point,  
16 how far did it go before you said, I need to say something to the  
17 pilot.

18 A. It's not making the turn -- to the pilot.

19 Q. Okay. Did he ever turn to you to ask any questions like --

20 MR. MCRAE: Let him finish the question.

21 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I did.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. No. But he was without hesitation, without hesitation,  
25 repeating, my recommendation.

1 Q. Okay. So, I mean, if, if -- do you have anything to help us  
2 solve this issue? Any theories? What, what do you think went  
3 wrong? I mean, as far as why this, you know, did make the turn?  
4 Did make the turn?

5 A. I honestly would have to defer that to the harbor pilot. You  
6 might be able interview some them and ask them why. But I am not,  
7 I don't feel like that I'm qualified to go behind the professional  
8 pilot of 30 years, and say why he didn't make this happen.

9 All I know is, once the situation develops, and I felt like I  
10 could offer advice, and maybe Captain Cameron can elaborate on why  
11 he didn't make the turn. But I can't tell you that.

12 Q. Well see, we're not. For our investigation, we're not  
13 looking to blame a person today. But it could be a mechanical, be  
14 an environmental, or it could be a human factor. We just don't  
15 know at this point.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. That's why we're trying to figure this all out.

18 A. I know you are.

19 Q. All right. Captain, that's all the questions I have for you.  
20 Before I bring in Captain Collins.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Captain Collins?

22 LT. [REDACTED] Mr. Collins, please.

23 MR. COLLINS: Hi, this is Mike Collins with the NTSB. And  
24 Captain Mitchum, I thank you for your time and I'm very interested  
25 in speaking to you as a witness because you were present on the

1 bridge. And you are a docking pilot with many years of  
2 experience.

3 So, I'm really looking, I'm going to ask questions, you know,  
4 about what you saw what you heard. And there may be some  
5 experience questions in here, but. So, I'll start when you got  
6 underway at BP Amoco. Do you recall what the trim of the vessel  
7 was? What the drafts were?

8 A. Twenty eight and 28.06.

9 Q. And based on your experience, well, have you ever handled  
10 this ship and other ships of this class?

11 A. I've handled this ship here in Charleston. I've handled this  
12 ship, I've handled that ship in Wilmington.

13 Q. And is there any -- can you tell me about the loading  
14 conditions that might make it better or worse to maneuver?

15 A. Whenever you handle a vessel, lighter by the bow, ports  
16 below, then you're going to better. But the pilot knowing what  
17 the vessel's brim was, basically even keel, he knew what he was  
18 dealing with. And that's part of the pilot's job.

19 Q. Well, Captain, I want to, I'm going to keep my questions  
20 focused on your experience to help me understand how this ship  
21 might be behaving. So you know, with a 28 foot forward, 28 foot 6  
22 aft, you know, was that adequate? Could it have been, you know,  
23 better trimmed?

24 A. That's very adequate. But we handle even keeled vessels all  
25 the time up to 14 immediate in meters, in draft, 45, 46, 47 feet.

1 We do it all the time. It's just a matter of knowing well, how  
2 this vessel's trimmed. And he takes it from there knowing that.  
3 And steers the vessel up and down the river with the current, and  
4 then situations deals with --

5 Q. What was the what --

6 A. -- the draft. I'm sorry.

7 Q. -- what was, where was the pivot point of this vessel when  
8 you were operating it, in going forward?

9 A. Well, this vessel's pivot point was, you know, about a third  
10 of the way back from the mound, as in all keeled vessel.

11 Q. Say that again. My phone hesitated just a little bit.

12 A. Had an even keel, about a third of the way, third of the way  
13 back way back from the bow, the pivot point. And as all, even  
14 keeled, about the same.

15 Q. And can you give me a geographic location as to, on a chart,  
16 you know what was out what was out the wheelhouse window when you  
17 handed over the con to Captain Thomas?

18 A. A geographic window, I was about 150 feet off of the BP pier.

19 Q. All right, thank you.

20 A. With the engine coming stead. I'm sorry, did I interrupt  
21 you?

22 Q. No.

23 A. After that, was after the turn.

24 Q. When you gave engine orders to the ship, who was taking those  
25 orders and responding to them?



1 A. The ship's, or the captain was taking their orders and  
2 relaying them to his mates.

3 Q. And was, can you, can you describe how they would then  
4 repeat, repeat the orders?

5 A. How they would repeat the -- they give Captain, slow to  
6 stern, or slow to stern. And he would go immediately either radio  
7 if the ship is being, or do it himself if you have a small range,  
8 or something. They're all different.

9 Q. Well no.

10 A. So --

11 Q. I'm asking the question. When you had, you know, when you  
12 were undocking the vessel.

13 A. You know, the Captain tells the chief mate what I say,  
14 inside. And it's just he repeats verbatim what comes out of my  
15 mouth. I give engine commands, he gives them straight to the  
16 show. We, I worked with him and through the captain.

17 Q. And then, did, did you receive confirmation back that your  
18 that the command had, in fact, been done by the mate?

19 A. I did not. We don't confirmation. But we have the mess that  
20 we look at. Anybody that's doing that job will look at their  
21 instruments. And there'll be needle. And you'll see if that  
22 engine is coming ahead, or astern, as you ordered.

23 It's just a matter of a glance. You don't have to stop what  
24 you're doing or go anywhere to look at it. It's all in plain  
25 sight. And this is posted on every vessel. It's, and I can

1 actually feel it in my feet when that propeller turns. I don't  
2 have to look at the needle, but I do. I can already tell whether  
3 he answered it correctly, or he didn't.

4 Q. All right. How about when you gave the rudder orders? Who  
5 acknowledged them? And then, how did you get feedback that the  
6 rudder orders were being done? Again, this is when you were in  
7 control of the ship.

8 A. Again, I gave them to the captain. The captain orders,  
9 orders inside to the helmsman. I look at the instrument, make  
10 sure the rudder's going the right way. And again, if it wasn't, I  
11 can feel it. It takes seconds, a split second to look at that  
12 instrument, which is posted on every ship, see if the rudder's  
13 going the right way.

14 Q. When you undocked the vessel from BP Amoco, did the tugboats  
15 have lines on the vessel?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Going to the bend by Pier Bravo, during any of this time when  
18 the ship was not turning, and everyone thought, you know, the  
19 rudder order had been given, did you note the location of the  
20 rudder angle indicator? And could you tell me what that was?

21 A. Hard port, 35 degrees.

22 Q. Had you also -- so, you actually saw the rudder angle  
23 indicator at hard port, 35 degrees?

24 A. Well, that's natural for me to be looking at everything,  
25 watching, looking.

1 Q. And then, you also, then going a little bit before that, did  
2 you, did you ever see the rudder angle indicator at 20 degrees  
3 port?

4 A. Going forward from the hard port?

5 Q. No, before the hard port.

6 A. Oh, well, what it was, whatever he did, I really wasn't --  
7 like I said, I was standing in the back of the wheelhouse, and he  
8 had the con. So whatever he was doing, it looked good to me.  
9 Everything's behaving normally. But when he said, rudder, the  
10 ship's not make the turn, I immediately glanced at the rudder  
11 angle indicator and got it hard port. It was the correct command.

12 Q. Okay. Prior to viewing the rudder angle indicator at that  
13 time -- or shall I say was that the first time you looked at the  
14 rudder angle indicator on the, on the approach to that bend?

15 A. He had a difficult turn to make coming out from BP, which he  
16 did a splendid job. And I watched him closely, watched the rudder  
17 angle, watched the helmsman to make sure that the helmsman  
18 followed his directions. And no, but it was not the first time  
19 that I had looked at the rudder angle indicator.

20 Q. Oh, well, specifically I'm asking, what I'm looking for, you  
21 know, as we look at, you know, how the rudder and the ship  
22 responded, you know, and how this accident happened, the, you  
23 know, I'm looking for, for evidence that the rudder angle  
24 indicator was at, at 20 degrees at one point in the bend by Pier  
25 Bravo. So, I'm wondering if, if you saw, if you actually saw the

1 rudder angle indicator at 20?

2 A. No, I did not. He probably started his turn with 20 to see  
3 if the ship would make it without going hard over. That's what he  
4 would normally do, a seasoned pilot. And then, put it hard over  
5 as soon as he would know that the vessel wasn't turning.

6 I glanced up to make sure that the helmsman had follow his  
7 command. And that's when I saw, and you know, that you know, he  
8 was just not turning. At that point, he's already called the tugs  
9 on 13 with handheld, I believe.

10 And again, like say, I was standing in the back of the pilot  
11 house trying to stay out of the way, let the bridge team do their  
12 job, just observing, looking around. I have no responsibility as  
13 a, as a participating partner in the bridge team at that point.

14 Q. Understood. At that point, can you recall what was dead  
15 ahead of the ship?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And what was that?

18 A. Pier Bravo, dead ahead.

19 Q. That, could you, can you give me an angle perpendicular to  
20 it?

21 A. In that turn and at the ship's heading, if you can visualize  
22 a tee in front of you, the left side tilt down about 20 degrees,  
23 that's what you got.

24 Q. Can you tilt -- I don't understand the tilt down by 20  
25 degrees. Can you --

1 LT. [REDACTED] Are you saying, you weren't looking at the pier  
2 directly? We're --

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Just on one end, at 20 degrees. That's  
4 what we've been looking at.

5 LT. [REDACTED] Wait, what the --

6 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: This is pier.

7 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. That's the pier.

8 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: This is right here.

9 LT. [REDACTED] I thought the pier was on this side?

10 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: The pier was dead ahead. The pier was dead  
11 ahead --

12 LT. [REDACTED] Right.

13 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: -- in the turn.

14 LT. [REDACTED] And you were looking directly at the side of  
15 the pier? I think he's asking, if you were saying, only the side  
16 of the pier?

17 MR. COLLINS: Well, I guess, the question would be at what  
18 angle was, at that point, the pier was dead ahead and at what  
19 angle was the ship to the pier?

20 LT. [REDACTED] Right. Yes, if the pier was another vessel,  
21 were you looking directly, port, port bow? He's drawing me a  
22 photo.

23 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's what we're looking at. Maybe you  
24 can elaborate, better describe it.

25 LT. [REDACTED] So, it's pretty much looking a beam of the

1 pier.

2 MR. COLLINS: Okay, looking at, looking at (indiscernible).

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Looking at Pier Bravo (indiscernible)

4 LT. [REDACTED] And the ship struck the pier at  
5 (indiscernible). Is that what you're saying? Okay.

6 MR. COLLINS: All right.

7 LT. [REDACTED] So not 90 degree, so maybe like a 100, 101 type  
8 angle.

9 MR. COLLINS: All right.

10 LT. [REDACTED] And let me show that later.

11 BY MR. COLLINS:

12 Q. And then, at that point, Captain, what was out the window on  
13 your port and starboard sides, if you can recall?

14 A. Beacon 72 on my port side. Water and water on my starboard.

15 Q. Thank you.

16 A. Fifteen hundred feet of open water, which would have been  
17 Water Harbor (ph.) would be the next landmark on the other  
18 all four sides. Why don't do more of it. glinting Huddersfield  
19 which would have been or would be the next landmark on the  
20 starboard side.

21 LT. [REDACTED] That and the shore on the other side?

22 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes, I mean, about 1500 feet out.

23 LT. [REDACTED] At that time, when you were approaching the  
24 turn, would you say your vessel was center, to the left, to right.

25 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: There is no documented center channel on

1 the Federal chart. It's where the pilot, documented center line.

2 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Fort (indiscernible) that area. Been a  
4 Navy pilot for ten years. It's a problematic area. It's not an  
5 easy place to work. You're in a turn. When you're getting a  
6 ready to turn, go into wharf.

7 You're coming up the channel, you got a Pier Bravo sitting  
8 there. And you've got three knots of (indiscernible) running down  
9 on the north side of that. Do not slide on the south side. Every  
10 time you go there, it's (indiscernible), just open.

11 LT. [REDACTED] But was he more or less in the documented  
12 channel or to the right?

13 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Well, it wasn't, first of all, there's not  
14 a documented channel. And he was and he was --

15 LT. [REDACTED] Well, pushing the land on this side?

16 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Well, he was closer, he was closer to the  
17 right side, on the channel.

18 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

19 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: He was almost there.

20 MR. COLLINS: Yes --

21 LT. [REDACTED] Did you anticipate the -- did you believe he  
22 was current with the format?

23 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I do.

24 BY MR. COLLINS:

25 Q. So Captain Mitchum, in the vicinity of the bend -- well, let

1 me ask you this, can you recall when the pilot ordered full ahead?

2 A. No, I can't.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I can't recall that. Like again, I was just in the back of  
5 the wheelhouse, everything. You know, I probably heard it. It  
6 didn't faze me because I knew it was probably the correct command,  
7 nothing, nothing out of the ordinary. Nothing out of the  
8 ordinary, so it didn't strike a chord with me.

9 Q. Did you ever feel, you know, did you ever feel the vessel,  
10 you know, kick ahead, as -- you know, did you ever observe that,  
11 if you can recall?

12 A. Kick ahead?

13 Q. You know --

14 A. With?

15 Q. -- could you could you tell if the vessel added, added power  
16 to increase its speed?

17 A. No. No, because frequently we'll increase a bell for turns,  
18 in aiding the vessels to turn, and then, take the bell off, and  
19 bring it back on (indiscernible). I've watched the pilot to it  
20 all the time.

21 Q. Have, Captain, have you ever, you know, as a docking pilot  
22 taken a vessel or barges through that area, that bend by Pier  
23 Bravo?

24 A. Hundreds and hundreds --

25 Q. And --



- 1 A. -- of vessels. Yes, sir, I have.
- 2 Q. -- and what, what are the characteristics that you want to  
3 make sure that you look out for, or that you want to address when  
4 coming down bound during a flood current?
- 5 A. That I don't get pushed over too far into Bravo. Or, that I  
6 don't make the ship turn so shallow that I hit the corner of the  
7 red shot (ph.) of the 72 beacon. My experience mostly lies with  
8 the fleet ballistic missile submarines coming out of Alpha, which  
9 have a rudder at stern, which makes them difficult to make those  
10 turns. Ninety percent of my experience is on those FDNs (ph.).
- 11 Q. Wow, do you, do your tugs have lines on them --
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. -- as they're maneuvering through the river?
- 14 A. No, we would turn the subs and standard bell, take that  
15 rudder down. Trying to get into as deep of water as you can, and  
16 get them moving --
- 17 Q. And where does the --
- 18 A. -- get them going.
- 19 Q. -- and how does a flood current act in that bend?
- 20 A. When water comes around that bend, it sets to right, it  
21 right. And it can be vulnerable as time is going --
- 22 Q. Pardon me?
- 23 A. I say the current can be formidable when it's at its  
24 strength. It's a tough place to work up there.
- 25 Q. Can the current, you know, based on your observations, is the

1 current like the same speed around the, you know, does the current  
2 vary in the bend?

3 A. Yes, sir, it does.

4 Q. And where? Can you describe where it varies?

5 A. On the ebb current?

6 Q. Well, on the flood.

7 A. Okay. On the flood current, first of all, let me explain  
8 something. As the ebb current runs stronger than flood up there.  
9 And on the ebb current, when you get around that corner there,  
10 it's flooding because it around that corner, down towards Bravo,  
11 that you have a flood current eddy.

12 And if you get, if you're holding the reins, Charlie, you'll  
13 get set to the right, before you pick up the ebb current. Down  
14 bound, on a flood current, as I said, flood current runs  
15 differently. You go, it runs through the turn, and, and sets  
16 right constantly, constantly, constantly.

17 Only during maximum flood current do you have an eddy that  
18 runs back on the north end of 72 buoy, on the bank. It's a flood  
19 current eddy, which runs backwards, as an, as an ebb close to the  
20 bank. We didn't have that kind of current running through any  
21 kind of -- it was only, it was only, it was about a knot. So that  
22 was not the case that we had an eddy there.

23 Q. So there were no eddies in the bend during this contact with  
24 Pier Bravo?

25 A. No, not at that stage of the current.

1 Q. Captain, besides the submarines, are there any other vessels  
2 that have tugs standing close by as they go through this bend by  
3 Pier Bravo?

4 A. Years ago, the tug and barges would take tugs because they  
5 handled so poorly. But nowadays, in modern times, tells you how  
6 old I am, we've, the vessels well enough that we don't take, we're  
7 not asked to keep tugs in close proximity. A normal, more than  
8 normal close proximity, should I say. Unless, the pilot requests  
9 it. And then, we're right there doing what we can for them.

10 Q. All right, let me follow up on that. The modern vessels have  
11 handled better, that handle better than they did in the past.  
12 We've also talked about vessels being underpowered. So, what  
13 advantages over the years have you seen in the improvement of  
14 ships being able to maneuver?

15 A. Well, in modern ship construction, I've seen three phases in  
16 my career. It's gone from plum bows, down sterns, lackchaws (ph.)  
17 to part chime (ph.), limited chokes (ph.), and now we have post  
18 (indiscernible) vessels. We're talking, lots of break, built for  
19 economy.

20 And nothing has changed about the amount of power that these  
21 vessels have. They're all built to go from A to B, and at an  
22 economy speed and fuel consumption. They're not built to handle.  
23 They're not built to handle without tugs.

24 And as far as built to maneuver, docking, and undocking  
25 without them. As far as steering, they know how to build a rudder

1 now. And a modern ship steers well. They steer very well. It  
2 just don't have stopping power, but they steer well.

3 Q. With regard to the waterway in the vicinity of pier B, have  
4 there been any changes that you've observed, whether it be manmade  
5 or natural?

6 A. No change, other than I know that without ships going to the  
7 pier, and there being some sort of agitation there. That it has  
8 silted up around a foot around Pier Bravo. But, you know, a tough  
9 place to work, always has been.

10 Q. Any dredging in that area?

11 A. Not at this time.

12 Q. Recall --

13 A. What that --

14 Q. -- the last time?

15 A. Excuse, sir?

16 Q. Well, I was -- please tell me what you were going to tell me.  
17 And then, my question was, do you recall the last time the area  
18 was dredge?

19 A. We had a dredge up there a month, if I recall. But I  
20 believe, I believe the Brunswick, I believe it was the  
21 (indiscernible) Brunswick was up there a month ago. It's  
22 constant, constant dredging process in Charleston, maintenance,  
23 maintenance.

24 Q. And that's looking -- and looking at the meandering portion  
25 of the Cooper River, is that because the silt builds up on the,

1 the point and erodes the bends, or the opposite the point?

2 A. I'm sorry sir. Would you mind repeating?

3 Q. As a pilot, can you tell me how the silt build up in the  
4 bends occurs in this section of the Cooper River?

5 A. Well, you have a constant flow of silt coming down the Cooper  
6 River, every day, 365 days a year. Characteristically that reach  
7 is prone to silting. That (indiscernible) is prone to silting. I  
8 can't tell you exactly what it's like on the bank. But the area  
9 is prone to silting coming off the range Delta on the red side,  
10 making your turn off the pier itself, and vice versa.

11 Q. Well, thank you captain. I have no more questions.

12 A. Thank you, sir. Wow.

13 MR. MCREA: Want to take a break, get some water or  
14 something?

15 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Let's do it.

16 MR. MCREA: You all want to talk about it -- you all want to  
17 take a break?

18 LT. [REDACTED] We're going to take five.

19 COURT REPORTER: Sounds good.

20 LT. [REDACTED] Do you want to pause the recording. Or how to  
21 do you do that?

22 COURT REPORTER: I will pause the recording.

23 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. Roger that.

24 COURT REPORTER: Pausing 12:02.

25 (Off the record)

1 (On the record)

2 COURT REPORTER: Recorder on.

3 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. So, we're continuing the interview with  
4 Mr. Mitchum, September 7th, and 12:21. Okay, so we were going to  
5 open it up to all.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Captain Mitchum, you said Pier Bravo  
7 is about 700 feet from the beacon. Which beacon was that?

8 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Seventy two.

9 December 7 and 21 Okay so we're going to open it up

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Beacon 72. Okay. And the bow of the  
11 ship went 300 past the beacon, beacon 72 when you gave the order,  
12 drop anchor?

13 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's my estimation.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know you've made a statement, but  
15 would you said, given you estimate of about 300 feet that beacon  
16 was 400 feet?

17 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then, one more where you give the  
19 anchor order quickly. So you ask for the anchor, and it's about  
20 now about 450 feet?

21 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: It might have been a little closer. I'd  
22 say it was closer.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So maybe 300 feet?

24 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I would think about it.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. If you're estimating -- well,

1 let me back up. An ask to drop an anchor is kind of a last  
2 resort.

3 (Audio interference)

4 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes, got to do something. Doing nothing is  
5 absolutely, the worst thing you can do is be nothing.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I understand that. Would you say that  
7 dropping the anchor is the last resort? Like what tools are left  
8 in your toolbox at this time?

9 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Well, considering normal behavior and it  
10 takes time to pick up a full head to stop.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

12 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Port over, full becker, nothing's  
13 happening. Resort, drop that anchor.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right. And you're pulling hard over  
15 full becker, and dropped one.

16 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes, dropped one.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. So, you were 300 feet from the  
18 pier, was the collision with the pier, in your estimation  
19 inevitable at that point?

20 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No?

22 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I had (indiscernible).

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

24 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I have had close calls like this before I  
25 my career.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

2 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: There's always a chance. And the crew  
3 onboard did great.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, yes, got it.

5 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's dangerous, dangerous, dangerous work  
6 up there.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. You mentioned that there's  
8 (indiscernible) who would probably use tugs in bad weather  
9 (indiscernible) from doing that. Did you, did the ship encounter  
10 any of those conditions that day?

11 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, were none of conditions, and you  
13 did handling --

14 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Correct.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- or whatever, and you, you're in the  
16 back as a passenger. Did, it seems to me (indiscernible)?

17 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No concerns.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You asked earlier about this, you  
19 know, this problems, on the river and many rivers (indiscernible)  
20 anything other than a great job. My question is, what's  
21 (indiscernible) out of this all together?

22 And (indiscernible) in my your mind, was the full rudder up?  
23 And the engine from head to head before that, it's taking extra  
24 power out the sockets to make the turn. As far as you know, do  
25 you have any opinion based on your forty year's experience why the



1 ship didn't respond to the rudder?

2 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I can't tell you.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Fair enough.

4 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Hydrodynamics, how they were affecting the  
5 ship? Just didn't allow it make the (indiscernible). And can't  
6 comment on what happened. It's, it's, it didn't make the turn.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, that's why we're all here.  
8 (Indiscernible).

9 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I know, everything was a (indiscernible)  
10 down there, the pier is off of. I saw a house come down the river  
11 one day, a house. A house, I repeat.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was floating down the river.

13 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How?

15 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: After a hurricane. But where it went?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What location were you on?

17 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: There was birds still on it.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Well --

19 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I've seen barges in the river. I had a  
20 ship (indiscernible) and there was a barge underneath it. It was  
21 still listed over. This was military supply ship, and the ship  
22 was sitting on top of a barge that sunk. And it mysteriously  
23 wound this way up against the dock. It's crazy down there that we  
24 don't know.

25 (Crosstalk)

1           CAPTAIN MITCHUM:  -- Captain Thomas (indiscernible) he has a  
2 well record, best behavior, doing a great job.

3           (Audio interference)

4           LT. ██████████ One thing we already asked, but what devices,  
5 if any did you have while you were on the ship?  Phone?  Tablet?  
6 Either?

7           CAPTAIN MITCHUM:  I had my phone with me.  (Indiscernible)  
8 but I use the radio as --

9           LT. ██████████ Did you observe Captain Thomas using like his  
10 pilot's computer?  If you see?

11          CAPTAIN MITCHUM:  He had it up there.  To be honest with you,  
12 I can't say that I saw him use it.  But as a pilot, he's looking  
13 out.  He's looking at all his surroundings.  He's looking  
14 (Indiscernible) it's not like he's --

15          LT. ██████████ So you would say (indiscernible)?

16          CAPTAIN MITCHUM:  Absolutely, everything.  (Indiscernible)  
17 see what's happening.  That's, that is what (indiscernible) to  
18 some people to try to get them ready once they're out there on  
19 own.  And those, those lessons, those (indiscernible) out there  
20 that knows what they're doing.  That's all the time in  
21 (indiscernible).  That's how I know that he's checking.  He's  
22 watching everything.  And so am I, the two of us.  I've  
23 (indiscernible) about this.

24          LT. ██████████ Is there anything else you'd like to add?

25          (Crosstalk)

1 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: (Indiscernible) like that.

2 MR. MCRAE: Okay.

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I would like to add that I can't say enough  
4 about that crew up on the bow. That was so (indiscernible)  
5 danger.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have a (indiscernible) anchor to  
7 drop. And then, of course, you've move the brake on --

8 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's what I --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- ship out, right? So you put that  
10 brake on, so the anchor can catch up?

11 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That was a really tough one. On to break  
12 brake that anchor.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

14 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: The chain.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And without that braking of that  
16 starboard anchor, in your mind, that hit a momentum that couldn't  
17 stop.

18 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: That's probably long (indiscernible).  
19 There's no question in my mind that (indiscernible) making a very,  
20 very bad situation catastrophic. They did a great job up there.  
21 And I've been around (indiscernible) but they really did. I wish,  
22 I wish they were my crew.

23 LT. [REDACTED] So to clarify, just before contact was made  
24 with the pier, the engines were, the engine was full stern --

25 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Right.

1 LT. [REDACTED] -- and the anchor had been released. And the  
2 rudder was?

3 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: It was still (indiscernible).

4 LT. [REDACTED] And, I would have to clarify this. But I think  
5 you said, initially, in your first statement, that the vessel  
6 grounded?

7 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Oh, yes. There's not enough water for it  
8 to come alongside Pier Bravo. There's probably about, at that  
9 stage of the current, probably 24 or 25 feet. So, she didn't,  
10 like I never felt the vessel rise up, at all.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She just sloped?

12 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes. And this, and there's no agitation  
13 there. The pier's been idle for years, and years, and years. I  
14 know what it to, to work (indiscernible) and you come down. And  
15 you lose all steering because the hull's at midship. And so, you  
16 get, you get, you get by it, and you don't let her stop.

17 LT. [REDACTED] But you felt the bow was --  
18 (Audio interference)

19 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Yes, I did.

20 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. You didn't feel any grounding?

21 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No, no, no. She was plowing, there's just  
22 not enough water there. And to a drop, you've got 25 alongside  
23 Pier Bravo. So, what she was on the top. Okay?

24 LT. [REDACTED] How do you know?

25 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: How do I know? I know, I know what water

1 is where and what my draft is. Even though that pier hasn't been  
2 utilized in many years. It's a naturally silting area. And they  
3 way they constructed Bravo, they put pilings very close together.  
4 And it catches everything.

5 It catches everything that comes down through the river.  
6 But with the momentum, having not, not gotten the brakes,  
7 irregardless of the anchor job, one side or the other, had they  
8 not see that brake, she'd have gone right through that pier.  
9 She'd have gone right through it. And there's no question in my  
10 mind that we have had a catastrophe. They did a great --

11 LT. [REDACTED] How much further do think (indiscernible) hole  
12 in the ship.

13 (Audio interference)

14 LT. [REDACTED] Just a part of it? Okay. Do you have anything  
15 else?

16 MR. [REDACTED] No.

17 LT. [REDACTED] Mr. Collins, do you have anything else?

18 MR. COLLINS: I, I do not.

19 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. Well, do you have anything else, then  
20 Captain Mitchum?

21 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

23 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. I think that concludes it.

24 MR. COLLINS: Well, you know what? Let me -- I do have a  
25 final question.

1 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

2 MR. COLLINS: Captain Mitchum, after everything was over was,  
3 were you part of any conversation where what happened was  
4 discussed? You know, you know, after, at some point after the  
5 ship backed away, did you, did you participate in, or did you  
6 overhear the captain and the pilot talking about what had occurred  
7 and why?

8 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: No, absolutely not. There was no  
9 conversation that I could recall of what, why, and when, and how  
10 this, how this happened to us. So, no. Or any conversation, that  
11 has taken place. I was fine. John was --

12 Obviously, we were all traumatized to say the least, after  
13 witnessing that kind of collusion and pier collapse. It was --  
14 but as professional pilots, and as professional seamen, as I know  
15 the Captain is, we conducted business.

16 Turned it up and brought the tugs in. Turned the ship to  
17 port. Proceeded down to pier Charlie without incident. And my  
18 recollection, no conversation to speak of. Other than, the normal  
19 orders that the pilot gave the bridge team. And we went to the  
20 dock. We docked at Pancho, as normally.

21 LT. [REDACTED] When you (indiscernible).

22 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: I took the con at the (indiscernible), and  
23 the tugs come alongside. And we (indiscernible) it was just, just  
24 eased in there. I actually eased her in there a lot  
25 (indiscernible) than I normally do. Well, the captain, I think

1 he'd had enough stress. I do that for captains.

2 And that's why I say, I've never handle the new ships the  
3 same. I can go the bridge -- I felt, I felt sorry the man. And I  
4 didn't want to give him any reason to have any more stress. He  
5 might have a heart attack on me, or something there. I mean  
6 (indiscernible). But I just eased her in there, no stress. Do  
7 you have anything else for me, sir?

8 MR. COLLINS: This is Mike Collins, with the NTSB. I do not.

9 CAPTAIN MITCHUM: Well, thank you, sir, for your patience  
10 with me. I hope I answered your question.

11 MR. COLLINS: Well, I thank you for spending time with us.

12 LT. [REDACTED] All right. We'll just sign off.

13 (Whereupon, at 12:39 p.m., the interview was concluded.)  
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

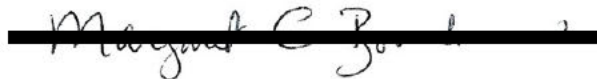
IN THE MATTER OF:            *BOW TRIUMPH* VESSEL CRASH  
   INTO WHARF BRAVO PIER  
   NEAR CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
   ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2022  
   Interview of Craig Mitchum

ACCIDENT NO.:                DCA22FM040

PLACE:                         North Charleston, South Carolina

DATE:                          September 7, 2022

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.



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Margaret C. Boardman  
Transcriber