

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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SINKING OF THE SEACOR MARINE
LB *ROBERT* NEAR LAKE CHARLES,
LOUISIANA, ON NOVEMBER 20, 2022

Accident No.: DCA23FM007

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Interview of: EDWIN RIVAS, AB
Lift Boat *Robert*

via telephone

Thursday,
December 1, 2022

APPEARANCES:

BART BARNUM, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CHARLES ARNOLD, Investigating Officer
United States Coast Guard

██████████ ██████████ Chief Warrant Officer
United States Coast Guard

MICHAEL CENEC, Designated Person Ashore
Seacor Marine

TIM DEPAULA, ESQ., Outside Counsel
Seacor Marine

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Edwin Rivas	
By Mr. Arnold	4
By Mr. [REDACTED]	7
By Mr. Barnum	8

I N T E R V I E W

(8:33 a.m.)

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3 MR. ARNOLD: Today is December 1st. Thursday, December 1st
4 at 8:33 a.m. My name is Charles Arnold, the marine investigator
5 with the United States Coast Guard. We're here to interview
6 Mr. Edwin Rivas on the incident with the lift boat Robert, on or
7 about November 20, 2022.

8 In the room with me I have Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED] And online, I will do a round robin starting with
10 Mr. Bart Barnum from NTSB on who's on the line.

11 MR. BARNUM: This is Bart Barnum, B-A-R-N-U-M with NTSB's
12 Office of Marine Safety.

13 MR. CENEC: Michael Cenec. Seacor Marine, DPA.

14 MR. DEPAULA: This is Tim DePaula, D-E-P-A-U-L-A, I'm with
15 Murphy, Rogers, counsel for Seacor.

16 MR. ARNOLD: All right, Mr. Rivas. As we discussed before I
17 turned the recorder on, we are going to record this to better
18 understand -- so I can get a full view of what you're saying and I
19 don't misquote you.

20 And this interview is on the phone so, just going to note
21 that as well.

INTERVIEW OF EDWIN RIVAS

22
23 BY MR. ARNOLD:

24 Q. So, Mr. Rivas, just to start out, what is your position on
25 the lift boat *Robert*?

- 1 A. Able bodied Seaman.
- 2 Q. Do you have -- what's your background and qualifications?
- 3 A. So, I've been with the company for about 10 years now. --
- 4 as the -- life boat mate. And my --
- 5 Q. Well, can you repeat that last again?
- 6 A. At CTW.
- 7 Q. Do you hold any crane qualifications as well?
- 8 A. I have a crane card.
- 9 Q. Were you operating any cranes on the *Robert*?
- 10 A. No. I did not.
- 11 Q. So, we understand that you were on the *Robert* when everyone
- 12 was taken off on November 18th. Before that time, how long had
- 13 you been on location?
- 14 A. I was on location since October 12th.
- 15 Q. So, you were on the vessel from October 12th through November
- 16 18th?
- 17 A. That is correct.
- 18 Q. Okay. During that time, when you first got on location, tell
- 19 me about your duties on the *Robert*.
- 20 A. My duties on the *Robert* as an AB is pretty much has projects
- 21 going on as far as -- making sure the vessel -- sometimes I help
- 22 out down in the galley. Make sure that -- that's pretty much it.
- 23 Q. All right. While you were on location from October 12 to
- 24 November 18th, was, was it normal duties? The entire time?
- 25 A. Yes. Yeah. It was normal duty the whole time.

1 Q. So, we'll start off with, I'd say right before the 18th, it
2 was a Friday, the 18th was.

3 A couple days before that, when did you get word that, that,
4 of the possibility of evacuation?

5 A. About a couple days prior.

6 Q. Have you all been having a lot of weather issues out there
7 while you were on South Marsh 137?

8 A. It didn't -- so we had to slack down, you know, until --

9 Q. And how did you receive the notification? Tell me about say
10 a couple of days before November -- so like the Tuesday before.
11 What are your daily duties around that time, when you get the
12 notification that you're about to evacuate?

13 A. Once we get notification, we start having -- deck. You know,
14 tower -- make sure that everything that's you know, kind of, loose
15 around the deck, pick it up. That's pretty much it.

16 Q. You're hitch, I'll say your shift, is it -- do you work days,
17 nights? What are your timeframes that you work?

18 A. Yes. I work days. 0600 to 1800.

19 Q. Does anything change when you get a notification that -- when
20 you received the notification that y'all are possibly evacuating
21 due to weather? Anything change as far as your work requirements
22 or your time?

23 A. Well, the times don't change. The only thing that changed
24 you know, had to stop what we were doing as far our projects, you
25 know. Had to start shutting everything down as far as closing

1 everything up. And like I said, it just continued on, trying to
2 secure everything we can, if possible.

3 Q. In your 10 years in your career, have you ever had to
4 evacuate a vessel before?

5 A. No. I have not.

6 Q. Were you aware of, in your position, any issues with
7 stability? Or any problems with the way the vessel was positioned
8 in any way? Hearing any alarms?

9 A. What's that?

10 Q. Hearing any alarms or anything?

11 A. No. Not at -- I mean, you had alarms going every month
12 and -- nothing, you know, out of the ordinary.

13 Q. Nothing you had to respond to or muster to or anything like
14 that?

15 A. Right. Right.

16 Q. And, I think I asked you this before, but I don't remember.
17 During the time you were out there, did you operate the crane at
18 any time?

19 A. No. I did not.

20 Q. All right. I'm going to pass off to Mr. [REDACTED] to see if
21 he has any additional questions.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]

23 Q. Mr. Rivera -

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. Morning.

1 A. Morning.

2 Q. You mentioned that you've been in, with the industry for 10
3 years. How long of that was on lift boats?

4 A. The whole 10 years.

5 Q. The whole 10 years?

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. And you also mentioned that you've never evacuated before.
8 While you were on --

9 A. No, I've never evacuated.

10 Q. All right. While you were on the lift boats during that
11 timeframe, have you ever experienced weather similar to this?

12 A. Yes. We have. But nothing, no 26 foot seas or whatnot. I
13 didn't witness that before.

14 Q. So the weather was similar, it's just the sea state that was
15 a little bit extreme?

16 A. The whole thing, yeah.

17 MR. ARNOLD: That's all we have right now. Mr. Barnum, do
18 you have any questions?

19 MR. BARNUM: Yes. Just one or two here, Mr. Rivas, thank
20 you.

21 BY MR. BARNUM:

22 Q. Curious how your tower changes during your safety meetings.
23 Who was there from, I know the company man and maybe -- who was
24 there as representative from the vessel's crew?

25 A. The captain and the mate was there.

1 Q. What kind of information on the week, the week prior to the
2 evacuation were they giving -- were they presenting during those
3 safety meetings to the crew?

4 A. They were giving us a heads up on, you know, like, weather --
5 you know weather changes every once in a while, so they was
6 keeping up to date every day.

7 Q. Okay. Earlier in the week, was there talk -- you know, was
8 there talk about liberating and transiting to shallower water?

9 A. Yeah. There was talk about that as well.

10 Q. Can you elaborate on that a little bit? What was the plan?
11 Did they -- up a plan, did, you know, what was the talk? Where
12 they were going to go, or how they were going to do it?

13 A. No. There was actually just waiting on a window -- so that
14 we can stay jack up and -- jack down and go. But, we never got
15 that window.

16 Q. Did they say how much larger of a window they needed?

17 A. No. They did not.

18 Q. Okay. So, the week after that -- what kind of -- I
19 understand you're talking about -- safety meetings they're talking
20 about -- moving. When they get to the point where they're going
21 to evacuate, what were some of the discussions in those safety
22 meetings?

23 A. There some of those safety meetings I never attended to. A
24 lot of those safety meetings were between the captain and the
25 company men.

1 Q. I understand. I'm just curious. What were they telling the
2 crew? What were they telling you and the other Abs on the boat?

3 A. That they would let us know, hey, when it's time to evacuate,
4 we got to stop -- coming out. You know, my duties were -- get
5 everybody's baggage. Make sure everybody bag no more than 10
6 pounds and let's get everybody in the chopper.

7 Q. What kind of talk -- it's my understanding the vessel was
8 operating at its limits as far as water depth and penetration.
9 Was there any talk about that?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No. And then I understand the vessel had to jack down twice
12 prior to the, to evacuation. Were you, are you involved in that
13 practice? What are your duties during the, you know, reducing air
14 gap?

15 A. So, I'll pretty much do the same thing like a full jack down.
16 Make sure everything was secure. You know, -- down and during
17 that time nobody's able to go outside. Everybody stays inside.
18 You know, so -- normal.

19 Q. Its -- the captain or the crew, or even yourself could've
20 done differently? Actually prevent the accident from happening?

21 A. I mean, we did the best to our abilities. And, you know, --
22 can't do anything about it -- you know?

23 Q. Yeah. I hear you. Well, thank you Mr. Edwin, I appreciate
24 it.

25 MR. ARNOLD: Mr. Rivas, this is Charles Arnold again. Just

1 two follow up questions.

2 One, do you recall from the time you were out there October
3 12th to November 18th, was there any stop work authority used due
4 to weather, and discussed during the safety meetings?

5 MR. RIVAS: I honestly cannot recall.

6 MR. ARNOLD: All right. Mr. Tim, did you have any questions?

7 MR. DEPAULA: No, sir. I do not. Thank you.

8 MR. ARNOLD: So, Mr. Rivas, as we talk to you about this
9 incident, is there anything that you wanted to say about this
10 incident that we haven't discussed? Or any questions that we
11 haven't asked you that you wanted to bring up?

12 MR. RIVAS: No. That's really it.

13 MR. ARNOLD: All right. Do you have any recommendations for
14 Seacor, or Coast Guard, on how this you know, evacuation, the
15 weather issue was handled?

16 MR. RIVAS: No. Actually, like I said, I think everything
17 was handles at the best of everyone's ability. And, I wouldn't
18 change one thing.

19 MR. ARNOLD: Okay.

20 Mr. Barnum do you have any alibis? Or anybody has any
21 alibis?

22 MR. BARNUM: None from Mr. Barnum, thank you.

23 MR. ARNOLD: All right, Mr. Rivas. That'll be it. Thank
24 you, again, thank you for your time for talking to us this morning
25 to give us your thoughts and you know, what you were doing at the

1 time. Glad everybody got off okay.

2 You know, this is an unusual interview in that, or incident,
3 where nobody was on location at the time. But we still want to
4 get some type of background on what was occurring before y'all
5 left. So, appreciate it.

6 So we'll go ahead and shut off the -- close off the interview
7 at 8:50. And thank you, Mr. Rivas.

8 MR. RIVAS: Any time.

9 (Whereupon, at 8:50 a.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: SINKING OF THE SEACOR MARINE
 LB *ROBERT* NEAR LAKE CHARLES,
 LOUISIANA, ON NOVEMBER 20, 2022
 Interview of Edwin Rivas

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM007

PLACE: via telephone

DATE: December 1, 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.



Angela Allen
Transcriber