



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Interview Summary - DCA23FM008

Interview of: MK3 [REDACTED] - Crewmember of RBM 45630
Date/Time: November 29, 2022, 1444 to 1537 CST
Location: US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Texas City conference room
Interviewed by: CWO [REDACTED] - USCG, Adam Tucker (by phone) - NTSB, [REDACTED]
- USCG, Lt. [REDACTED] - USCG
Attendees: [REDACTED] - USCG
Accident: November 25, 2022, flooding and subsequent sinking of the fishing vessel Captain Alex, about 11 miles south of Jamacia Beach, Texas (NTSB No. DCA23FM008).

This interview summary has been compiled based on NTSB investigator notes taken during the interview of MK3 [REDACTED]

- MK3 [REDACTED] was the engineer on CG 45630 for the response to the Captain Alex casualty.
- Recalling the events related to the call to respond to the fishing vessel Captain Alex, MK3 [REDACTED] said the information passed to him was that the vessel was flooding.
- MK3 [REDACTED] recalled on the way to the last reported position, sector was trying to get an updated position from the boat. It was very hard to hear and understand the communication from the Captain Alex.
- Past the jetty tips, the starboard engine would not come up above 1200 rpms, so they came down and disengaged the engine. They backflushed the engine to make sure the jets were clear. They came up on rpm again and the problem was still there, so he called the MK1, who did not answer the phone. He then called the OOD and said they may need to come back and switch out 45's. The OOD suggested turning the engine off and back on. MK3 [REDACTED] did this and the engine came up in rpm and ran normally, so they continued toward the last reported position of the Captain Alex.
- When they got closer, they got in contact with the Captain Alex on channel 16 and they started discussing how they could get a bearing to them. The Captain Alex said they could see the 45, but the 45 crew couldn't see the Captain Alex.
- The helicopter arrived on scene, and they talked about having the Captain Alex shoot a flare, but sector came back and relayed that the crew of the Captain Alex could either not operate or did not have flares.

- The helicopter found the Captain Alex and they proceeded towards the helicopter which they could see.
- Once on scene, the 45-crew discussed with the coxswain what they were going to do and about the hazards they anticipated. The coxswain did not want them to go to the fishing vessel.
- They rigged up a P6 pump and sent it over to the crew of the Captain Alex using a heaving line and ropes. The crew caught the heaving line, and they pulled the P6 pump to the boat.
- The crew took the P6 pump and put the pump together and then they came and requested for them to help. MK3 [REDACTED] couldn't understand what problem the Captain Alex crew was having with the pump. MK3 [REDACTED] went to the bow of the 45 to try and give the crew some instructions, for example green to green and yellow to yellow for the couplings). MK3 [REDACTED] and BM3 [REDACTED] agreed it would be best to board the Captain Alex given the trouble the crew was having with the pump. They spoke with the coxswain that they were comfortable going over. He agreed to them going over to assist, but they were not to go inside the vessel because of the safety hazards if it were to capsize or sink.
- They were dropped off on the starboard quarter of the Captain Alex from the port bow of the 45.
- Once on the Captain Alex, MK3 [REDACTED] saw that the P6 was running, and the hoses were connected properly, and the choke was completely closed; it was putting.
- MK3 [REDACTED] tried to start priming the pump and opened the choke a little, and the priming handle came out of the back of the pump. The cover came out with the handle. He noted it did not feel loose, and it did not fall out.
- MK3 [REDACTED] went to the door to the engine room and saw that the captain was in there and he told him to get out of there. He could see the water running in "pretty fast" and he could hear water rushing.
- MK3 [REDACTED] said he was told there was a 4-inch hole in the hull, and at that time MK3 [REDACTED] said he felt the P6 pump would have only given them more time even if they were to get it to pump water.
- The coxswain told MK3 [REDACTED] and PO [REDACTED] it was time to go and to pack the pump. They told the Captain Alex crew to rig anchor and grab their stuff.
- They tried to take the suction hose, but it was stuck in the engine room, so they left the hose since they were not in a good situation. They packed the P6 in the can and put the lid on and then got the lines ready to send it back to the 45. They were ready to throw the P6 into the water when the coxswain told them they need to get off the boat "now" and not to worry about the pump.
- MK3 [REDACTED] dropped the lines, and they went to the starboard quarter of the Captain Alex where they threw the crews bags over to the BM3 [REDACTED] on the

45. They helped the captain and crew over to the 45. While that was taking place, the lights started flickering and he and BM3 ██████ realized the generators were about to go down and they knew they shouldn't be on the vessel too much longer.

- MK3 ██████ boarded the 45 with BM3 ██████ being the last one to board the 45. After that, paid no attention to the Captain Alex and went to attending its crew. The Captain Alex crew were trying to take pictures and make phone calls, and MK3 ██████ got them into the pilothouse and down into the survivor's compartment. One of the guys was gagging but never threw up. They brought him onto the back deck for some air and after, he went back into the survivor's compartment and laid there, so they covered him with blankets and kept checking him every few minutes.
- When they got back to the station the crew declined medical services. One of the Captain Alex crew tried to light a cigarette next to the fuel pump, so they had to stop him.
- The then brought them back to GYB with the 45 because that was where their cars were parked.
- The crew were all thankful to the crew of the 45 for helping them and they all shook hands. The 45 then went back to the station.
- When asked if he had ever taken apart the primer mechanism for the P6 pump, MK3 ██████ said no he had not, and he didn't recall that being taught that in A-school.
- When asked if he was a part of any discussion to have the pump from the helicopter sent down, MK3 ██████ said no.
- When asked about towing the Captain Alex to shallow water, MK3 ██████ said they were far away from shallow water. He recalled they were 11 miles and doubted they would have made it to shallow water with the way the Captain Alex was sinking.
- When asked if the coxswain decided to have the Captain Alex abandoned, MK3 ██████ said yes.
- When asked if he noticed any height difference when he boarded the Captain Alex to when he got off, MK3 ██████ said when he arrived on scene he noticed the stern of the boat was very high and it looked like the middle was sinking in but when he got off, he could not recall what it looked like, because he was concerned with getting the crew, himself and BM3 ██████ off the boat safely. Once on the 45, he didn't recall looking back as his attention was to the crew and some were shivering.
- When asked why it was hard to find the Captain Alex when they arrived on scene, MK3 ██████ said there were multiple vessels all around them and a couple of them were fishing vessels that they looked at to find out it was not them. There were rigs out there; there were lights everywhere.

- When asked how long it would have taken to have the pump from the helicopter lowered to them and rigged to pump water once they determined the P6 was inoperable, MK3 ██████ said they would have had to do that in darkness on the Captain Alex as the lights would have been out by then.
- When asked, about a picture of a P6 pump (from a training slide) with a blue arrow pointing at a handle (figure 1), to confirm that was what came off in his hand, MK3 ██████ confirmed that was the handle; it came off with the cap. It is the priming handle which is the only handle on the pump.

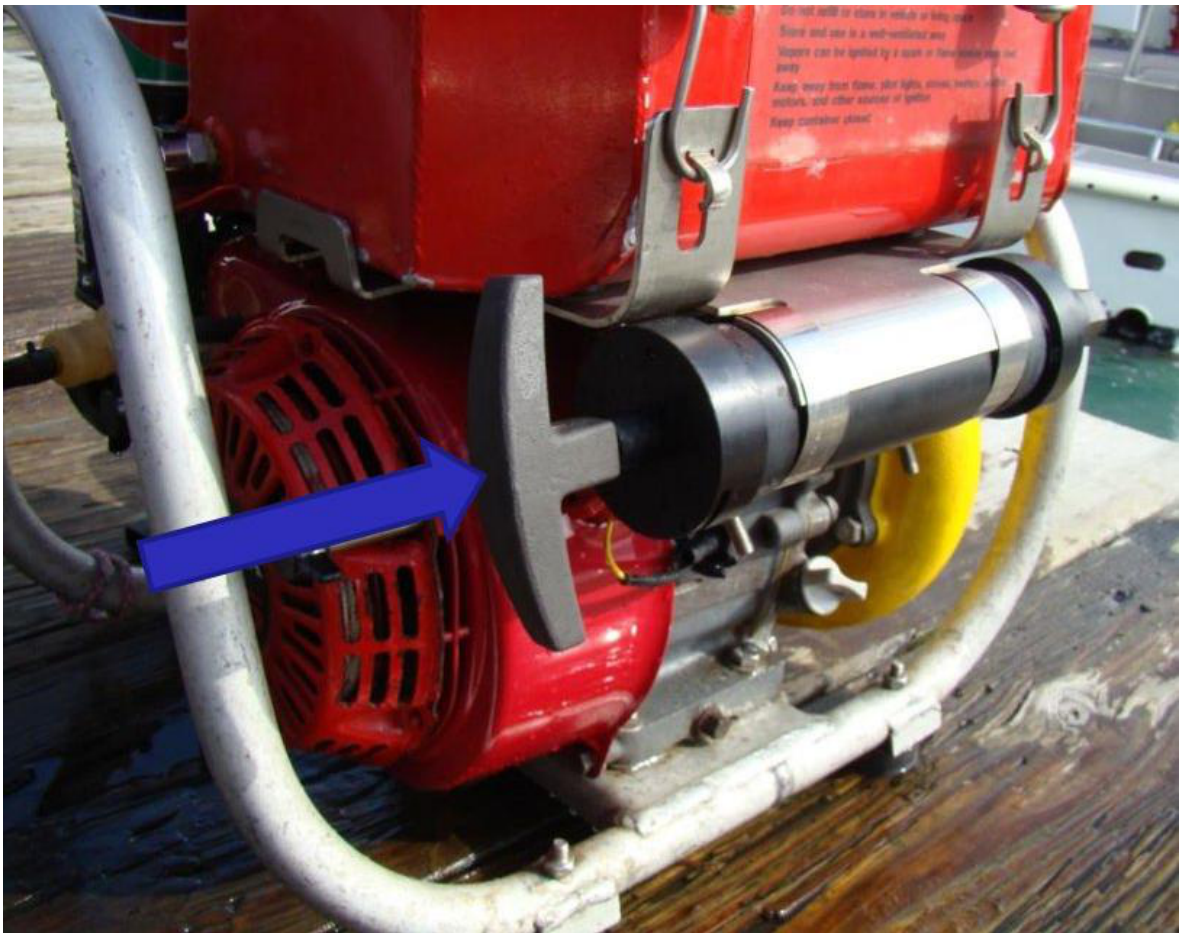


Figure 1

- When asked if it was possible to fix or replace the handle on the deck of the Captain Alex, MK3 ██████ said there might have been a slight possibility but with everything going on, he didn't think it was a good time to try to put the pump back together.
- When asked about a picture the Coast Guard released showing the starboard quarter of the Captain Alex from on scene, showing two Coast Guard personnel on the deck of the Captain Alex (figure 2), when asked

what they were doing in that picture, MK3 [REDACTED] said they were putting the P6 in the can at that point. The crew of the Captain Alex were still on the vessel at that point.



Figure 2

- When asked of a picture showing the port quarter of the Captain Alex (figure 3), if he knew what the water discharging was that was visible in the picture, MK3 [REDACTED] said he noticed that when they pulled up after arriving on scene and he thought it was possibly a pump discharging water from the Captain Alex. He noticed when he was on board that the pump stopped working and it was not pushing any more water out.



Figure 3

- When asked when figure 3 was taken, MK3 [REDACTED] said that it was taken when they arrived on scene. He was the one that took the picture in figure 3 and that was the only one he took.
- When asked of the picture looking down into the engine room with a crewmember in a lifejacket (figure 4), MK3 [REDACTED] said his arm could be seen in the foreground and he was working on the P6 pump at that time. The person in the engine room was the captain of the Captain Alex. MK3 [REDACTED] said he did not know what the captain was doing down there but that was around the time when he told him to get out.
- MK3 [REDACTED] checked the time stamp for figure 3 on his iPhone and said it was taken on Friday at 0317. He noted they were not on scene very long before he took the picture; probably 2 minutes.
- Related to the picture taken looking into the engine room (figure 4), MK3 [REDACTED] looked at the metadata for the picture, sent to him by BM3 [REDACTED] and said the time that picture was taken was 0326.



Figure 4

- When asked if there was anything, besides the flooding of water in the engine room that he noticed, MK3 [REDACTED] said there were 2x4's floating on top of the water, and there was a lot of oil there.
- When asked if the main engines were running at the time figure 4 was taken, MK3 [REDACTED] said he believed they were running at that time.
- When asked if the black hose near his hand in figure 4 was the suction hose for the P6 pump, MK3 [REDACTED] said confirmed the hose was the suction hose for the P6.
- When asked if any of the crew of the Captain Alex resisted being asked to evacuate the vessel or asked to stay to work on saving the boat, MK3 [REDACTED] said no, they seemed excited to leave. Once they told them it was time to go, it felt like 30 seconds, and they had their things and were ready to go.
- When asked if any of the crew of the Captain Alex was able to speak English, MK3 [REDACTED] said there was an older member of the crew that he could understand best, but it was still very hard to communicate with him. He was not conversational, and MK3 [REDACTED] had to use simple words with him.
- When asked about hearing anything related to what happened from the crew of the Captain Alex when they were in the survivor's compartment, MK3 [REDACTED] said he did not. BM3 [REDACTED] was talking to them.

End of summary