

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

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INCIDENT ABOARD *JOHN J. BOLAND* \*

IN CEDARVILLE, MICHIGAN \*

Accident No.: DCA23FM029

ON APRIL 21, 2023 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: *TREVOR M. SCHICK*, Second Mate  
*John J. Boland*

Lorain, Ohio

Monday,  
April 24, 2023

APPEARANCES:

LT. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigating Officer  
Marine Safety Unit Cleveland  
U.S. Coast Guard

ADAM TUCKER, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

LT. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
U.S. Coast Guard

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I N T E R V I E W

(5:05 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 LT. [REDACTED] All right, my name is Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
4 with the Coast Guard out of Cleveland and it's currently 17:05 on  
5 24 April 2023, interviewing with Trevor Michael Schick with  
6 regards to the *John J. Boland* material failure on 21 April 2023.

7 Mr. Schick, can you please state your name for the record and  
8 what position you were holding on board the *John J. Boland*?

9 MR. SCHICK: My name is Trevor Michael Schick and I currently  
10 hold my second mate position on the *John J. Boland*.

11 LT. [REDACTED] And then going around the table, we'll do  
12 introductions of everybody present for this interview, starting  
13 with --

14 MS. BEAUBIEN: Sarah Beaubien, counsel for Grand River  
15 Navigation.

16 LT. McELHANEY: Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard.

17 MR. TUCKER: Adam Tucker, National Transportation Safety  
18 Board.

19 MR. PETERSON: Brian Petersen, Grand River Navigation.

20 LT. [REDACTED] All right. Thank you, everyone.

## INTERVIEW OF TREVOR MICHAEL SCHICK

21  
22 BY LT. [REDACTED]

23 Q. So Mr. Schick, can you talk to us about your merchant mariner  
24 experience, how long you've worked with Grand River Navigation and  
25 what your experiences are and what roles you're playing here on

1 the *John J. Boland*?

2 A. Yes. This is my third season sailing with Grand River, third  
3 season sailing ever on my license. I started at Grand River as  
4 third mate. On the *John J. Boland*, this is -- I boarded on  
5 April 13th. Before that, I was on the *Sam Laud* and the *Courage*  
6 last year, so this is my first ship of the season, starting  
7 April 13th.

8 Q. Okay. Are you a merchant mariner -- Merchant Marine school  
9 grad?

10 A. Yes, from Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

11 Q. Great, okay. You said that you're filling the role of third  
12 mate?

13 A. When I first started, I started as third mate because I did  
14 not have my pilotage yet.

15 Q. Got you. And you're second mate?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. So you've been operating on -- this will be your first  
18 issue, correct, for your Merchant Mariner Credential?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. What are your roles, then, now as the second mate for the  
21 *John J. Boland*, what are you responsible for?

22 A. Different than the other mates, I guess?

23 Q. Yeah, just what your day-to-day jobs are --

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. -- what you do on board, just to give us kind of a feel, you

1 know --

2 A. Sure, okay.

3 Q. -- of what you do.

4 A. So I fill the -- it's called the four watch, we clock in at  
5 4:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. During that watch I can either have a navigation watch up the  
8 river or across the lake, I could also be loading the boat or  
9 unloading the boat based on a boat plan that I follow.

10 Q. Okay. So do you have any other responsibilities or anything  
11 along those --

12 A. Yes, I'm also responsible for inspections. The second mate  
13 -- usually, it varies boat to boat, but usually it's like  
14 lifesaving equipment --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- for the second mate.

17 Q. Got you. Okay. So you're standing the 12:00 to 4:00 watches  
18 while you're on board?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. So when did you guys moor up and tie up to Cedar?

21 A. I was on watch, I was on my watch, we tied up. I want to say  
22 specifically what time it would be -- it was in the afternoon,  
23 evening is -- between 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., yeah.

24 Q. Okay. On what day?

25 A. That would've been the calendar date before we finished

1 loading, I can't remember specifically, so --

2 Q. So the 20th of April?

3 A. Yes, because if the incident report is for the 21st, then it  
4 was on the 20th is when we got there.

5 Q. And if you have a phone, feel free to look at a calendar just  
6 to make sure, if you want to.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. But -- okay. So you guys pulled in, that was in the  
9 afternoon or --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah, it was in the afternoon.

13 Q. Were you the one driving the boat or who was driving the boat  
14 when you guys were pulling in?

15 A. The captain.

16 Q. The captain was the driver?

17 A. Yeah. Yes.

18 Q. What were you doing then as the second mate?

19 A. As the mate, you're usually standing forward, calling  
20 distances, watching, as he comes in to the dock, if there's a  
21 daylight officer pointing to the dock and basically just talking  
22 about what we see because it's hard to see from up in the  
23 pilothouse when we're 20 feet or 12 feet off the dock.

24 Q. Right. So where on the boat were you --

25 A. Port side. Forward winches.

1 Q. Forward winches?

2 A. There in between midship and forward winches, I kind of walk  
3 between there.

4 Q. Okay, so the forward half of the --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- of the vessel?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. What was the weather like that day, any --

9 A. The weather, it was kind of -- it was rainy and cold and it  
10 was a little windy.

11 Q. Okay. Any issues with visibility?

12 A. No issues with visibility. I think the wind was an off-dock  
13 wind, so we just had to make sure we were on our big dam and  
14 luckily everything went very smooth tying up.

15 Q. Okay. Anything out of the norm with that mooring evolution?

16 A. No, no. Mooring went as it should, we came in at a good  
17 angle, came up against the dock, (indiscernible) went out and that  
18 was it.

19 Q. Where did you guys moor, port side, starboard side 2?

20 A. Port side 2.

21 Q. Port side 2?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. And you guys were going there to on-load or offload?

24 A. To on-load.

25 Q. To on-load.



1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Do you know what your drafts were coming in, did you  
3 have any involvement with checking the drafts on arrival?

4 A. No, I know we were -- you know, when I see lights, we're in  
5 ballast or at ballast drafts.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Unfortunately, I do not know it offhand what our ballast  
8 drafts --

9 Q. That's fine. Who's responsible for checking drafts prior to  
10 entering into port, then?

11 A. Well, I guess there's no way of checking them just coming in  
12 to the port, because we don't have -- we'd have to get off the  
13 boat to look at --

14 Q. Right.

15 A. -- the drafts.

16 Q. So when would've been the last time the drafts were verified  
17 or --

18 A. When we left the unload dock, then, it would be the last time  
19 that we'd be able to see drafts.

20 Q. What was that? Do you know what that previous port was?

21 A. It was -- that's in Detroit. Detroit.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Yeah. Then we just start in-ballast drafts, bringing up  
24 condition.

25 Q. Do you know what, typically, your drafting in-ballast

1 condition --

2 A. No. I know on the -- well, on the *Courage* what they are, but  
3 I'm not familiar with this boat to remember what the in-ballast  
4 drafts are, but we have a table --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- in the pilothouse that we know, all right, we got this  
7 much water in there and at regular ballast, and this is our  
8 forward draft, midship and aft drafts.

9 Q. Got you.

10 A. Because I'd have to go in there to get that.

11 Q. That's fine. How many hitches total have you done, like how  
12 much total -- like how many days have you spent on board the  
13 *Boland*?

14 A. Since April 13th, that's it.

15 Q. That's it?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Okay. So that's --

18 A. About a week and a half.

19 Q. About a week and a half. And that's when you came on board?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Okay. So you guys moored up port side 2, that  
22 evolution went normal?

23 A. Yes. And we didn't come up hard or anything and everything  
24 was nice and easy, fluid.

25 Q. Got you. So for the remainder of your 12:00 to 4:00 watch,

1 you guys moored up at -- I mean, we'll track in the logs. So you  
2 guys moored up, what did you do for the rest of your watch?

3 A. We started loading at Hatch 3 at -- by that time, actually,  
4 it was pretty much the end of my watch. I just started the first  
5 hatch and that was it.

6 Q. Okay. Now, walk me through what a typical loading operation  
7 looks like.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. I'm assuming at this point you guys didn't pull in and they  
10 just started dumping rocks in, into the number 3 hatch, right?

11 A. Right, right.

12 Q. What's the process, kind of? So you guys tie up, you know,  
13 you secure mooring, evolution --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- and then you guys start doing preps or what's going on  
16 for --

17 A. We try to get everything prepped before we get to the dock so  
18 like deckhands, if I'm out getting plants (ph.) off, so that way,  
19 as we're pulling in and the rig's coming over the ship, that as  
20 soon as he gets spotted, because that rig at Cedarville can move.

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. And so he starts kind of halfway up our deck and he moves up  
23 to the number 3 hatch and then as soon as he's there, as long as  
24 we're ready and get the hatch off and all the gates are closed,  
25 then he can start loading and that's what we strive for and we did

1 achieve that this time coming in and so -- so once he started his  
2 belts up, it took him a little while to get going, so usually, as  
3 soon as they start getting heavy cargo in, then we'll start doing  
4 all the ballast operations. But with the rate that he was putting  
5 in cargo, we didn't start the ballast yet, just because the rig is  
6 so low to our deck and if it does come down just a couple feet,  
7 then they start ballasting to keep it around the same height and  
8 that's normal procedure, though, from what I understand the first  
9 mate told me.

10 Q. Got you. So when you guys start taking cargo, is somebody  
11 communicating that to the facility? Somebody's giving the  
12 a-okay to start, you know, running --

13 A. On-loading?

14 Q. -- running the load?

15 A. Yes, yeah. I mean, there are -- there are communications to  
16 the loader and stuff.

17 Q. Okay, got you.

18 A. And yes, actually, I -- our internet was down that day, so  
19 I'd give him -- personally give him the load plan --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- and I wrote down some -- just things to load and I'd give  
22 him a radio, one of our radios, because his doesn't pick up our  
23 channel.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. So you, as the mate on watch, so because you guys were at  
2 Cedarville, you were the mate on that watch, you're the one that's  
3 in charge of observing the on-load?

4 A. Yeah, then making sure he doesn't overfill a hatch and  
5 everything's looking good and everything's at an even keel.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Just, yeah, the main job, yeah.

8 Q. So you mentioned a load plan.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How is that generated? Who's responsible for that?

11 A. The first mate is responsible for the load plan and he  
12 generates it generally from past loads. He'll look at that and  
13 mainly, the sequence of the hatches and holds that he hit and  
14 then, based on what the customer orders, what types of stone, he  
15 can adjust it, the tonnages, he can adjust it. If they want less  
16 tonnages, he'll take that out of some holds. But it's mainly  
17 generated from past loads, there's a pretty good archive of those  
18 for this boat.

19 Q. Got you. Okay. So kind of past experience is kind of  
20 driving the --

21 A. Yeah, yeah.

22 Q. -- the load plans?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. So you pass a load plan that was drafted by the first  
25 mate over to the facility. They, then, have kind of their

1 direction for how to start loading. You're, then, managing or  
2 basically observing that on-load.

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. What are you doing during that on-load?

5 A. So with this dock, they are able to move the rig close to  
6 half of our ship and so as soon as he finishes a hatch, he'll tell  
7 me how many tons he actually got in there because, you know, it's  
8 automatic, a couple tons, usually. They can't hit it exactly  
9 every time because they're dumping like 2,000 tons.

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. So it's usually about within 5 ton, 5 -- 5 tons, usually.  
12 And so as soon as he's finished with that, he'll give you that  
13 number and I'll log it, and then he'll shift to the next hatch, so  
14 I just visually make sure that he's actually going into that hatch  
15 because sometimes, you know, human error, make sure, just double  
16 check that he gets into that hatch. And once he gets to a certain  
17 point, he can't get any further on the ship and so then I have to  
18 get a deckhand on the dock and then I have to get to shift the  
19 boat to get the rest of the cargo in.

20 Q. Got you. So while you're loading, you're kind of directing  
21 ballast?

22 A. Oh, yes, that's true. Yeah. So on this boat, the ballast is  
23 controlled up top in these little boom shacks and I can either  
24 call over to my watch partner, like my AB or my OS, and he can  
25 input what I tell him to put in to each tank. So while we're

1 loading, we always pump them dry, so I can say hello, start  
2 pumping, one's dry. And so then he'll start doing it. Since I am  
3 pretty new to this ship, I go back and verify it, do it myself,  
4 just to make sure I'm getting used to the process, too. But like  
5 I said, on the first, when we tied up and everything, I didn't  
6 even get a chance to do it because I didn't get to (indiscernible)  
7 and the watch changed, so --

8 Q. Was this the first time that you've loaded for the *John J.*  
9 *Boland*?

10 A. No, this is my -- this would be my third load.

11 Q. Third load?

12 A. Yeah, yeah, we had the coal load and then stone out of Port  
13 Inland and this one, yeah.

14 Q. Okay. So who is the person that you were giving the load  
15 commands to, then? You said you were on watch with another --

16 A. Oh, yeah.

17 Q. -- AB or an OS?

18 A. Yeah, so that would've been -- Madison Curan (ph.) is my  
19 watch partner, he's always on watch with me and so that's who I  
20 give the orders to for ballast.

21 Q. Okay. And as far as the loading evolution itself, it's just  
22 the two of you guys while you guys are actually loading?

23 A. It depends on --

24 Q. Is there anybody, other -- is there any other involvement --

25 A. -- if somebody -- there is a -- well, we usually keep -- for

1 Cedarville, we'll maybe keep a deckhand out to help with the  
2 shifts, but generally at Cedarville, as long as their wires are  
3 set up good, for the most part, it's just the AB and the mate  
4 running the load.

5 Q. Okay. So for you, being a relatively newer mate on board  
6 this vessel, is there any documentation or any guidance or written  
7 procedures or anything that kind of tell you how or that kind of  
8 help you out?

9 A. Yeah, when I -- when I first got on, the third mate and the  
10 first mate overlapped my watch on the loading and unloading for --  
11 until I was comfortable and however long that takes, but for me, I  
12 catch on pretty quick and I caught on pretty quick and so I just  
13 needed one load and one unload to get familiar with the process  
14 out here because it does vary ship to ship, but at the end of the  
15 day, it's all pretty similar.

16 Q. Got you.

17 A. Yeah, this one has little quirks, you know, that are  
18 different from other ships and other ships have quirks that are  
19 different from this one and those are the things that they didn't  
20 tell me and that's it.

21 Q. Okay. Now, when you say the ship has quirks for loading, can  
22 you give me an example of what that means?

23 A. So a lot of times when we do ballast, like I know when I was  
24 on the *Courage*, there's a certain way to get the -- pump the tanks  
25 down. If you try to pump them all at the same time or in a



1 certain order, you have a lot of trouble, like stripping at the  
2 very end, getting the last little bit of water out. So with this  
3 one, what I've learned and what they told me (indiscernible) is  
4 that when we're done -- when we pump ones and twos dry, you have  
5 to leave a couple feet in there and then as soon as we're done  
6 pumping everything else, then we strip those and then we're good  
7 on water.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And so that's the only quirk that I found so far.

10 Q. Got you. So when you're loading, how do you know how much --  
11 like is there anything that says, you know, don't load beyond --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- X amount of feet, is there anything that's --

14 A. Generally, the first mate will put in the load book and it  
15 was in this book, I remember seeing it, do not load past a certain  
16 draft. I don't remember offhand exactly what was written in  
17 there, but it's in the load book and you watch for that draft.  
18 And we started up forward in this load and started forward and  
19 loaded aft, so once he started to those aft hatches, that's when  
20 he started looking at that aft draft to make sure they don't go  
21 past it.

22 Q. Got you. How are you verifying your drafts?

23 A. Just by going down on the dock and looking at them.

24 Q. Okay, got you. Now, just to be kind of clear as far as the  
25 order of operations for loading, for -- while you guys were at

1 Cedarville, you guys were loading which hatches and what was the  
2 order?

3 A. So we were loading every hatch except for Hatch 1.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. It was on the plan, I remember that. Our first run was  
6 starting up forward and then -- you can't just load every hatch in  
7 order, like, one, two, three, four, five, you have to --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- skip hatches to keep the stability of the vessel and on  
10 top of that, this was a split cargo and so there's cargo changes,  
11 too, at the same time, and so to minimize the cargo changes, we  
12 might skip a whole hold and go to the next hold and it's common  
13 for loading.

14 Q. So you guys pulled in on the 20th sometime during your 12:00  
15 to 4:00 in the afternoon watch.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You guys started loading during that watch --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- correct?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Do you recall how many hatches you guys went through, was it  
22 just one hatch that you observed?

23 A. Yeah, I think, actually, I didn't even get through my first  
24 hatch.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Do you recall which hatch that was?

3 A. Three.

4 Q. That was Hatch 3? Okay. Your subsequent or your next watch  
5 after, after that afternoon watch, so that would've been the  
6 midnight to 4:00, correct?

7 A. That's correct.

8 Q. On the 22nd?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. When you're awake during that time, are you doing any loading  
11 or --

12 A. Yes. Yeah, we're still loading. I came out 2 hours early  
13 because we have a newer third mate and so I'm overlapping the  
14 third mate's watch right now.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. For that hatch. And so I came out and I'd say -- I can't  
17 remember exactly the hatch we were in, but we were about halfway  
18 back, like halfway through the first run of the shift. They were  
19 loading pretty slow. So at that time everything seemed to be  
20 going normal and smooth. We were just working our way aft. By  
21 the time I got off watch, the first mate was coming out and we  
22 were just getting in to the last hold of the ship, I believe Hatch  
23 20, I want to say.

24 Q. So that was during your midnight to 4:00?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. You guys were starting to kind of wrap things up or that was  
2 just --

3 A. No, that was just like the first run.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So there was still a lot, a lot to go.

6 Q. Got you.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So you guys -- kind of just for my own visual --

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. -- understanding, so if we were to kind of speed up the whole  
11 loading process, you guys start loading evenly or kind of --  
12 what's the dock process? I'm not really familiar.

13 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So if we just had one product --

14 Q. Um-hum.

15 A. -- you'd almost -- like you'd make one run, like -- so if  
16 we're loading coal, like (indiscernible) coal as one product, it's  
17 light and so we just did every other hatch the first one and he'd  
18 come back and fill the valleys on the next run out.

19 Q. Oh, okay.

20 A. And that's a load.

21 Q. So it's almost kind of like you're doing every other, but  
22 kind of loading evenly so you're not filling -- like, the first  
23 hatch that you fill, say it's Number 2 --

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. -- are you filling that hatch all the way completely full?

1 A. Generally, no.

2 Q. Okay. So it's a little bit, skip a hatch --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- fill a little bit.

5 A. And that's mainly to keep us from going down at the head.

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. And when that happens, it's hard to get the ballast water out  
8 and so that's been the big deal with the load plan is to make sure  
9 you don't go down at the head. It's also the mate's  
10 responsibility that's on watch to pay attention to that and if you  
11 do start going down at the head, to make an adjustment to that  
12 load plan and start loading back aft to get us back --

13 Q. Got you.

14 A. -- to the rates to get the ballast water out.

15 Q. Okay. And that's kind of referring to like if you were to  
16 basically kind of like nosedive a vessel?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Okay. Okay, so your midnight to 4:00 watch, you guys are  
19 still loading. Anything of note during that watch, what was the  
20 weather like? Was there any -- were there any issues?

21 A. No. My only concern was there was a better (ph.) storm  
22 coming but it -- somehow, it missed us. That was my only concern  
23 with weather. The wind was decent, I mean, we were having trouble  
24 staying up against the dock. It was blowing on us a little bit,  
25 but not enough to concern me as far as stopping the load.

1 Q. So when you say the wind was blowing, which direction  
2 relative to the vessel were you guys seeing the wind?

3 A. It was coming from like the port bow, I'd say.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. So an off-dock wind --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- that was pushing you guys away from the dock.

9 A. It was trying to, but it wasn't strong enough to actually  
10 push us away from the dock.

11 Q. Got you.

12 A. We had no problem with hanging on to our cables.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And if I do have problems hanging onto the cables, then, as a  
15 mate, I'd stop the load and we get more cables out or put soft  
16 lines out and hunker down for a little while.

17 Q. Did you guys have to make any line adjustments during your  
18 12:00 to 4:00 watch?

19 A. We had to -- we did have to make a shift to get in one of our  
20 aft hatches, so we had to move our Number 3 wire -- I'm sorry. We  
21 took a round turn out to Number 3 wire because we anticipated the  
22 shift, took a round turn out to get a better lead to pull us ahead  
23 a little bit and then we took a round turn on Number 4 to keep a  
24 short lead on it.

25 Q. Okay. So then following that, that 12:00 to 4:00 watch, what

1 did you do after that?

2 A. All right, so after that watch I -- I take my big sleep, I  
3 call it, and that's when I go -- because I can't sleep during the  
4 day, but -- so I went to sleep and then I woke up to check on the  
5 new third mate to make sure she's doing good and so I walked out  
6 and they were in trim, so the first mate was on the dock and I  
7 walked down, they were trying to -- trying to go from a forward  
8 trim hatch to an aft trim hatch. So I walked out and I believe it  
9 was Art told me like hey, get up on the midship winch, do that  
10 winch. So --

11 Q. I'm sorry, who is this?

12 A. Arthur, Art.

13 Q. Art? What position?

14 A. AB or OS.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And so I went over to midship and the forward lead and so  
17 we're trying to shift the boat ahead and so I started heaving on  
18 it and that's when we weren't going to -- we couldn't move. And  
19 so --

20 Q. About what time was this, I'm sorry?

21 A. It was after 10:00 a.m., 11:00. Between 10:00 a.m. and noon.  
22 It was between 10:00 and 11:00, I'd say, actually. Somewhere in  
23 there, I can't remember exactly.

24 Q. What time did you get off watch, the prior, prior watch?

25 A. Four a.m.

- 1 Q. So you were relieved at 4:00 by the -- by who?
- 2 A. First mate.
- 3 Q. The first mate?
- 4 A. Yeah.
- 5 Q. And then you went straight to the rack.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Did you do anything in between that time?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. Okay. So went to the rack, I mean, you wake up and you're
- 10 out on deck by --
- 11 A. By about 10:00.
- 12 Q. By about 10:00?
- 13 A. Yeah.
- 14 Q. Okay.
- 15 A. Yeah. And --
- 16 Q. So then when you got up there, that's when the AB, Art, was
- 17 asking for some assistance while the first mate was down on the
- 18 pier.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. So you went to one -- which --
- 21 A. Midship winch.
- 22 Q. Midship winch.
- 23 A. Yeah.
- 24 Q. And you started heaving around there?
- 25 A. Yes. I'm trying to remember if it was on 1 or 2. I can't



1 remember if it was on 1 or 2.

2 Q. That's fine. I mean, we're more concerned about, kind of,  
3 you know, what your interactions were --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. -- what you did.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. So I mean, if you can't recall who --

8 A. Okay, all right. Okay.

9 Q. -- was where, that's not a key issue.

10 A. Okay. Yeah, midship, I was heaving on that and they weren't  
11 moving and so --

12 Q. Was somebody giving line commands or anything like that?

13 A. So I knew, based on where we were at, I knew that we had to  
14 move the ship astern an amount of feet to get the last trim hatch  
15 inside the rails, we call it, so the loader can load it, and since  
16 we hadn't started moving at all, it wasn't really a concern to me  
17 yet, you know.

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. But as far as like calling commands, the first mate would --  
20 was kind of the one saying like let's get it moving or see if we  
21 can get it going and --

22 Q. And you were trying -- at that point, the goal was to shift  
23 the vessel which direction?

24 A. Forward ahead.

25 Q. Forward ahead?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. And as you were using the winch, what was happening?

3 A. It was not heaving, it wasn't -- we were not shifting.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. So then what happened?

7 A. All right, okay. So then --

8 Q. I just want to make sure that I had the picture.

9 A. Right, right. So once we realized we can't move, I don't  
10 know if the first mate called the captain on like a phone or  
11 something or if the captain had happened to be upstairs, but we  
12 got -- he got thrusters on line to thrust maybe off of the dock a  
13 little bit, if there's a shallow spot or something, because that's  
14 apparently what happens is like, based on my past experience I've  
15 had on other boats, is there's either a shallow spot, too close to  
16 the dock, and so everybody has to slack their wires and then he  
17 uses thrusters to try to go off the dock. In this case, though,  
18 we were trying to thrust off and use our aft forward leading line,  
19 so number 3 --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. -- heave on that, that was the only one that we were heaving  
22 on to try to spring us off while he's thrusting, because that's  
23 what I observed, to get us off. And then it didn't take much and  
24 we started moving. Once we started moving, we just kind of kept  
25 it going with our cables and we got into position and that was

1 that.

2 Q. So by getting it positioned, that was trying to realign the  
3 loading boom with one of the hatches?

4 A. Yeah, one of the aft trim hatches. I believe it was 19.

5 Q. Okay. But you're not a hundred percent certain on which  
6 hatch number that was?

7 A. I'm pretty certain it was 19.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. So you guys readjust, the boom's in the right -- you know,  
11 it's on target.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Did you guys then take tension back to lines or were you  
14 just --

15 A. We didn't want to -- so we're instructed to not heave on the  
16 forward lines, to not pull us, try to pull us back to where we  
17 just got off, you know, because if there's a shallow spot by the  
18 dock, we didn't want to pull ourselves back on to that. So as we  
19 loaded, we kept our lines in forward slack, just -- so that way we  
20 didn't get caught up again.

21 Q. As part of your guys' loading, are the -- are you guys  
22 checking depth soundings, stuff like that?

23 A. Like around the dock, like --

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I know that I've seen docks where they submit depth soundings  
3 or if there's been a survey done recently of a dock, then I've  
4 seen surveys like that. I haven't personally seen one for  
5 Cedarville, I don't know if they got them recently or not.

6 Q. Okay. If you guys were to receive that, who -- who's in  
7 charge of that? Is that going back to the first mate and the  
8 loading?

9 A. Yeah, probably -- yeah, either the captain or the first mate.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. In their possession somewhere.

12 Q. Okay. So was there ever any communication to you, as one of  
13 the mates that's in charge of loading, that there were any  
14 concerns with shallow spots there at Cedar, at Cedarville in  
15 Michigan?

16 A. So once we got off there, the captain got us off there, I  
17 didn't hear him say like yeah, we're going to keep the bow off the  
18 dock up here because it is a little bit shallow there and  
19 that's --

20 Q. Did anybody ever say what that depth actually was?

21 A. No, no. I'm not sure if it's known or not, I just -- yeah, I  
22 don't know.

23 Q. In your past experience on the other Grand River boats that  
24 you've been on, have you guys ever had any issues loading there at  
25 that dock?

1 A. Not at Cedarville, no, no. The only time I've seen us get  
2 hung up before is on -- it was in Marblehead.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah. And that was (indiscernible).

5 Q. Got you. How many times in the past have you been in  
6 Cedarville, you, personally? For loading.

7 A. Six. It's kind of a guess, over the last 3 years,  
8 probably --

9 Q. About six times?

10 A. About six times, yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And I've never gotten stuck any of those times.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. But maybe we didn't load to those drafts those other times.  
15 That's what I'm not sure about.

16 Q. In your own opinion, are you comfortable with the  
17 loading/unloading process for -- just in general?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Is it something that -- this is kind of like part of your  
20 routine duties, correct?

21 A. Correct, yeah.

22 Q. Okay. So going back to the timeline --

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. -- we'll snap back to the -- so you guys end up getting to a  
25 spot where you're trying to keep the bow off while you're loading.

1 Do you know -- so kind of go from there.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. So you guys are kind of back in a parked position.

4 A. Yeah, we're back and we're ready to go again, get things  
5 running, get things moving, and so we're spotted for the hatch and  
6 at that time the first mate, he writes down the drafts, then he  
7 sees after that first trim hatch and goes back aft and he looks at  
8 the aft drafts to see how many tons he needs in that hatch to get  
9 us to our target drafts.

10 And so he does that with the load book, it has a trim table  
11 in it and so he knows how many tons goes in this hatch to get us  
12 to this draft. And so he does that calculation, he asks the  
13 loader, "Hello, loader, I'll take so many tons in this hatch," and  
14 that'll get us to the draft immediately.

15 Q. Okay. So that's kind of like the fine tune at that end?

16 A. The fine tune, yeah, exactly.

17 Q. Okay. At what time did you guys secure loading?

18 A. I would say -- this is all in the load book, but I'd say  
19 roughly 11:00 a.m., somewhere, 11:15, maybe.

20 Q. So that would've been just before your actual watch?

21 A. Right. Because I remember we were departing and that's when  
22 my watch -- the third mate got off watch and they're out of there.

23 Q. Okay. But you had gone up because you guys were needed to do  
24 a little bit of an overlap with the third mate because the -- you  
25 said the third mate is new on board?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. How long has the third mate been on board?

3 A. At Cedarville.

4 Q. So the third mate came on --

5 A. At Cedarville.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So that's why we were definitely and we still are overlapping  
8 the watch.

9 Q. Got you, okay. Okay, so you guys secure loading, then what  
10 happens?

11 A. Well, the part where we're loading the boat in Hatch 19, we  
12 got hung up in 19, too.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Because we started loading and I was still around midship, I  
15 think I was helping maybe to put on -- I was putting on hatch  
16 lids.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because I'm kind of trying to help everybody out on deck and  
19 the first mate was running the show as far as loading goes. And  
20 so I was putting on hatch lids and I noticed we had a green light,  
21 which is a list to starboard, and so I asked -- the third mate was  
22 in the boom shack and I said what's our list at right now, the  
23 little meter that says it and she said 4 inches to starboard. I  
24 said okay. And that's pretty normal.

25 Q. Four inches to starboard is going which direction? Here's

1 your boat.

2 A. All right, here's the boat, that's the back.

3 Q. We'll call this the bow.

4 A. Okay. And here's the dock and we're loading, and so 4 inches  
5 to starboard would be this way.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So we were leaning this way. And then --

8 Q. So the lower part is leaning away from the dock.

9 A. Yes. And so I said okay and the loader was loading the  
10 center and moved to compensate for it, because they do, you know,  
11 they see -- they see the lights and they compensate and so he's  
12 trying to get us back even and, you know, I did a hatch on, or  
13 two, and I called again because I still see the green light and I  
14 said what's our list at now, you know, I was hoping it's less than  
15 4 inches, and I believe she said it's 6 inches, so it was a  
16 getting a little worse.

17 And that's when I called to Brian and I said -- the first  
18 mate -- and I said I think we might be on the bottom again,  
19 because what happens is when you get on the bottom, then it starts  
20 -- because it's usually shallower towards the dock, so we started  
21 leaning away from the dock. And so when I saw the loader loading  
22 inboard and our list getting worse, then I knew that or I had a  
23 feeling, around the dock, we were on the bottom.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So when I informed him of that, we decided to -- he wanted us



1 to just try to wiggle the ship to see if we were actually on the  
2 bottom, because we couldn't confirm it at the time. And so with  
3 this -- loading at Cedarville, you can do that because their rig  
4 can move with us if we ever move.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. And so we did kind of the same thing, moved in the same  
7 direction as we did coming back to that hatch, so pulled on  
8 midship and forward leading lines and didn't move, so we were  
9 definitely on the bottom.

10 Q. And about what time was that?

11 A. That was maybe at 11:00.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Ten forty-five. No, maybe like 10:45. Yeah, somewhere  
14 thereabout.

15 Q. Okay. So you guys heave around on which lines again?

16 A. Our forward leading lines.

17 Q. The forward leading lines?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. So you heave around on those lines, the boat doesn't  
20 move.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Then what was the next step from there?

23 A. The next move.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. The first mate called for the loader to stop cargo.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And that way they're not getting any harder on the bottom  
3 than they already are. And so then, I don't know how, like he  
4 talked to the captain or something, I didn't hear any radio  
5 communications, but the captain got on the air, you know, and  
6 said, you know, what's going on and so Brian explained to him  
7 what's going on and so now we had to get off of the bottom again  
8 and so we kept heaving our forward lines, the forward leading  
9 lines, we made Number 4 -- Number 4 cable up a bit to make it a  
10 forward leading line, too, to try to help spring us off again.

11 Q. And the goal was to go which direction at this point?

12 A. Forward.

13 Q. Forward?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And obviously, away from the dock?

16 A. Forward and away, yeah.

17 Q. Got you, okay.

18 A. And at the same time, the -- I don't know if it was the  
19 captain or Brian, the first mate, has the boom out, too, to help  
20 us lean this way a little bit more, to try to get us up the  
21 bottom.

22 Q. Boom out to which direction?

23 A. To starboard.

24 Q. So you guys took your -- what's typically your loading or  
25 your off-loading boom --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- and you guys swung it off to the starboard side --

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. -- to just get some extra weight to --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- to go that way or --

7 A. Yeah, exactly. Because we swing it out while we're loading  
8 and he listed it to get underneath it and so this is just a strap  
9 in the air -- in the air right now or before and then usually,  
10 when we swing it out we counterbalance, counter-ballast it with  
11 water and so if we swing it out without ballasting, then it'll  
12 list us over and so that's what we were trying to do to get us up  
13 off the bottom.

14 Q. Okay. So you guys were using the boom as an aid to get off  
15 bottom.

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Okay. And who directed that?

18 A. I can't remember if it was the captain who gave the order or  
19 the first mate. I can't remember.

20 Q. Okay. Who was in control of the boom at that point to --

21 A. That was still Art.

22 Q. And Art's the --

23 A. The watchstander for the (indiscernible).

24 Q. That's the -- like, is he AB, OS?

25 A. He might be an OS special, like an OS -- let's see, Arthur --

1 Q. Arthur, okay, AB.

2 A. He is AB, okay.

3 Q. Okay. So Arthur Squire is the one that was controlling the  
4 boom --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- being directed by -- you're not sure, but it would've been  
7 either the first mate or the captain.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Would anybody else have given that command?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. But the captain told him, you know, how far to go and when to  
13 stop at least, like say okay, Art, that's good enough for the  
14 boom --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- stop it there and then -- then after that, we tried the  
17 wires again, still couldn't get it to move and that's when the  
18 captain got thrusters and engines on line to -- further assistance  
19 getting off.

20 Q. Okay. And the mate that was in charge of the loading at this  
21 point would've been the first mate?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, usually -- or when we come into trim, we call the first  
25 mate out to finish the load because this is the fine tuning and

1 | it's the most important part because we're trying to get within an  
2 | inch of our drafts.

3 | Q. Got you. And you guys were at that point, the trim, this  
4 | trim?

5 | A. Yes, yes, yes.

6 | Q. Okay.

7 | A. Yes.

8 | Q. So this would be kind of like the 95 percent done, bring out  
9 | the first mate.

10 | A. Oh, yeah.

11 | Q. Is that --

12 | A. Yeah.

13 | Q. Is there like a technical like percentage or anything that --

14 | A. No, but --

15 | Q. -- it takes when you guys are in trim and they call the first  
16 | mate out?

17 | A. Yes. Well, there is, in the load book, it's usually one or  
18 | two hatches before the trim hatches, there's a note to say call  
19 | the first mate.

20 | Q. Okay.

21 | A. And because --

22 | Q. And that's part of the load plan?

23 | A. The load plan, yeah, exactly.

24 | Q. Okay. But it sounds like that would've happened during --

25 | A. He was there.

1 Q. -- his watch, anyway?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. He was already out, yeah.

5 Q. So you didn't have to call him out.

6 A. Didn't have to call him, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. So the boom gets swung to starboard, thrusters were  
8 being used?

9 A. Thrusters used, engines, at this point, too.

10 Q. And you guys still had all your lines over?

11 A. Correct. And so once he starts using the thrusters and  
12 engines, we slack our lines to let that stuff work because once  
13 the engines start getting involved, then you run the risk of  
14 parting lines and everything like that, so we got to keep them --  
15 make sure they're slack --

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. -- to make sure that doesn't happen.

18 Q. Got you, okay. Then what?

19 A. So after using the engines and thrusters, I believe -- we had  
20 all our lines slacked and I believe, I remember he -- we had our  
21 Number 4 forward still and so he had -- just, he had a -- I think  
22 it was Art back there, started getting on Number 4 again to -- 4  
23 and 3 to try to spring the boat off the dock, but eventually, we  
24 started moving slowly off the dock.

25 Q. Going which direction?

1 A. I believe it was out and forward.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And then once we were free, then we shifted astern a little  
4 bit more and we got off the spot that we were hung up on and then  
5 once we were floating free, the boom got swung over center and  
6 then, so when that happened, since the loader was loading inboard,  
7 we ended up with a very heavy port list because all the cargo was  
8 on the port side of that hatch.

9 Q. And by port list, if you don't mind --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- showing us again, okay. So then you're -- the lower part  
12 of the list is facing towards the dock?

13 A. Yes, yeah.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And so at that point, we secured loading, we weren't going to  
16 load anymore just because we weren't able to get -- you have to --  
17 we didn't want to put any more cargo on the load.

18 Q. Got you.

19 A. And so --

20 Q. Before we get too far away, do you know what that port list  
21 ended up being?

22 A. I believe it was around 20 inches.

23 Q. Twenty. So do you have that in degrees? Because I know  
24 earlier we mentioned it was a 6-degree list.

25 A. A 6-inch, 6-inch list.

1 Q. Oh, a 6-inch list.

2 A. Yeah, we label by inches, yeah.

3 Q. Okay, got you. My misunderstanding, then. So initially,  
4 when you guys were on bottom, you guys were starting to get a  
5 starboard list --

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. -- that was -- that maxed out at around 6 inches --

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. -- to your knowledge.

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Then when you guys were able to free the second time, you  
12 ended up with a portside list --

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. -- so shifting to 22 inches?

15 A. Twenty.

16 Q. Twenty inches.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Sorry. Okay, so you had a 20-inch list. I don't have a good  
19 mental reference for this. Is that --

20 A. It's more -- it's more than what we'd like, for sure.

21 Q. Because ideally, you're at zero, right?

22 A. Exactly, yeah. Yeah.

23 Q. At what inch list are we concerned or are you guys concerned,  
24 because ideally, you guys end up going back to zero, so you  
25 would --



1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- what, take on ballast at that point?

3 A. Well, we didn't want to take on anything because from the  
4 conversations that the captain and the first mate -- you know, the  
5 first mate was getting drafts at this time to figure out what  
6 we're at, I'm not sure exactly, I don't remember what he said the  
7 drafts were, but that's when we decided that we're not going to  
8 put any more cargo in and we didn't want to even put any more  
9 water in to correct the list until --

10 Q. Got you.

11 A. -- we were in deeper water.

12 Q. So you had this 20-inch list to port, the first mate's going  
13 through getting draft readings.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Then what?

16 A. Well, then since everything was done that we could do, the  
17 boat -- the stern was able to get back alongside the dock, no  
18 problem, it's easy.

19 Q. Um-hum.

20 A. Kept the bow off and then we put the ladder down to the first  
21 mate, came back aboard. At this dock, they throw our lines off  
22 for us.

23 Q. Okay. How far off the dock was the bow before you guys ended  
24 up freeing yourselves?

25 A. I think 10, around 10 feet, I'd say.

1 Q. Okay. So you were 10 feet off, you guys then pulled off the  
2 bottom, so --

3 A. It really wasn't much of a difference, which I was surprised,  
4 but it was maybe like, just like 12 to 14.

5 Q. Okay. So you guys maintained that 12 to 14 until you took in  
6 lines and got back under way?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Well, yeah, yeah. So once we threw off, then the captain  
10 kind of pivoted the ship this way, so furthering that distance --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- before we left.

13 Q. So you guys secured loading, saw that you had the 20-degree  
14 list to port.

15 A. Inch.

16 Q. I'm sorry, 20-inch list. Thank you. And then you guys just  
17 got under way. Was there anything in between checking drafts and  
18 then getting under way, was there adjustments, anything done?

19 A. There wasn't any adjustments made that was I was aware of,  
20 I'm not sure if the captain made any phone calls or anything, I  
21 mean, it was -- it definitely, like -- he sat there for a second  
22 and I don't know if he was just thinking about what to do, but no  
23 adjustments were made, though, as far as water or cargo loads.

24 Q. Okay. So you guys got off and then how long between getting  
25 off and then getting under way, like taking in lines, what was

1 that time frame, are we talking like 10 minutes, an hour --

2 A. Oh.

3 Q. -- 2 hours?

4 A. Maybe 10 minutes, yeah. At the most.

5 Q. Okay. So were you guys already in the process of making  
6 preps to get under way?

7 A. Oh, yes. Yeah.

8 Q. Is that normal? Immediately, like secure, on-load and, you  
9 know, pulling away from the dock?

10 A. Yeah, as soon as -- as soon as we get the hatches on and the  
11 boom landed, then we're gone.

12 Q. Okay. And that's normal?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. That's standard ops, okay. So you guys take in lines and  
15 start making your way outbound --

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. -- going back to the lake.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. You still had the 20-inch list. What happened after that  
20 because I assume you guys didn't, you know, just make your way  
21 down to Cleveland --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- with a 20-inch list, right?

24 A. Correct. So after we left, I went to the pilothouse and I  
25 helped the -- I took over wheeling for him and so I started

1 wheeling once we got off the dock and so he was talking to me  
2 about it, he was like this is what I think we're going to do,  
3 we're going to -- once we get out into deeper water, then we're  
4 going to make an adjustment to get us flat again because we don't  
5 want to put water in right now because we don't want to get too  
6 deep.

7 Q. What do you mean by get too deep?

8 A. Just because since whatever drafts we were at when we left,  
9 we don't want to go any deeper than that --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- just for draft concerns because that's -- our restricting  
12 factors are on the dock.

13 Q. So you don't want to get literally deeper off the draft of  
14 the vessel.

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So you guys got under way, secured your mooring positions.

19 A. Correct. And then --

20 Q. Was there anything out of the norm or was this getting under  
21 way evolution standard?

22 A. It was standard. There was -- you know, we had a -- the  
23 *Mariner* was coming in as we were leaving, the *American Mariner*,  
24 but there was plenty of room in that passage, there wasn't -- we  
25 didn't have to change course, really, to go around or anything.

1 And then once we got -- I'm not sure if we were past, Crow Island  
2 or Pomeroy Reef is when we -- the deep water and that's when we  
3 started balancing ourselves out. I believe it was around -- it  
4 was after Pomeroy Reef because that's when we got onto the lake.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And I remember there was a buoy tender sitting there and he  
7 said we had a pretty good list going, "are you guys okay?"

8 Q. One of the Coast Guard buoy tenders or the --

9 A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

10 Q. -- Canadian --

11 A. Coast Guard.

12 Q. Coast Guard?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Got you. He has a good eye, then.

15 A. I know, I know.

16 Q. Or was the list that -- you know, that noticeable?

17 A. Oh, yeah, a 20-inch list is noticeable.

18 Q. It is?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. So in general, what was the weather like during that  
23 portion? So --

24 A. Oh.

25 Q. -- when you went out on deck to freeing the -- you know,

1 getting off bottom to getting under way, what was the weather like  
2 at that --

3 A. It was great weather, it was little to no wind, no swells,  
4 waves, it was pretty calm.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Any issues with the outbound transit?

8 A. No. What we did was once we got into deeper water, we put  
9 water in 6 starboard, I believe, to counterbalance that list and  
10 once we did that, we knew we'd have a deeper draft and so at that  
11 time, we -- it was recommended by the company to launch the  
12 workboat and look at -- just take another round of drafts to make  
13 sure that we're -- just to see where we're at and if we can  
14 transit.

15 Q. So somebody during this time frame was talking with somebody  
16 from the company?

17 A. So the captain, he made some phone calls and I'm not sure to  
18 who, but it was -- kind of talking to him like -- because he's  
19 like what should I do, I've got a 20-inch list and, you know, what  
20 should I do and so somebody told him, you know, we should add  
21 water and then check it out and see if we're -- our drafts are  
22 still okay.

23 Q. Did you overhear this conversation or was this passed to --  
24 I'm just trying to understand how --

25 A. I think it was like a combination, it was like a combination.

1 Because I was wheeling so --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. -- you know, I heard -- I only heard one side and then  
4 afterwards he told me, he was like all right, this is what we're  
5 going to do.

6 Q. Oh, okay. So when you went up to the bridge and you took  
7 over wheeling --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- the captain was on the phone with the company at that  
10 point or --

11 A. I'm not sure, I can't remember if he was already on the phone  
12 or if he was in the process of getting on the phone. I don't  
13 think -- I think --

14 Q. About what time did you get up on the bridge?

15 A. It was after we departed.

16 Q. Do you guys log at all --

17 A. It's all logged.

18 Q. -- when you take over?

19 A. It's all logged.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah, yeah.

22 Q. Who made that entry for the -- for you taking over as the  
23 wheelsman?

24 A. Well --

25 Q. Or taking over the wheel.

1 A. Okay. I'm sorry. So as far as me coming up there and  
2 wheeling --

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. -- that is a pretty -- it's not a rigid thing because we  
5 don't log that, but as far as when we departed and we were under  
6 way, we logged that.

7 Q. Um-hum.

8 A. I just came up to help him and like -- up there wheeling  
9 because usually, when we come out on the dock, he's got control of  
10 the wheel --

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. -- but I came up to see if he needed any assistance and so I  
13 took over for him at the wheel stand itself.

14 Q. Got you.

15 A. So he's still at -- he was still in the window of doing  
16 things and he had thrusters still, but I was doing the rudder, I  
17 was the one just doing the rudder.

18 Q. So were you taking rudder commands at that point or were you  
19 piloting?

20 A. More just courses. He just told me a course to steer and I  
21 just pulled that course.

22 Q. Got you, okay. And he was on the phone during that time?

23 A. I don't know if he already got instructed or not, but they --  
24 they told him like he had to start pumping the sixes once we get  
25 in the heavier water or deeper water.



1 Q. Okay. So you guys head out to deeper water, you're wheeling,  
2 you're taking course commands from the master. Anything out of  
3 the norm between the communications that he was giving you or any  
4 issues there?

5 A. No, no. And in fact, I'm familiar coming out of there, too,  
6 and so I had a good understanding of where I had to go and there  
7 was nothing outstanding about that.

8 Q. Okay. Then what?

9 A. Okay, so we get out to deeper water and pumped 6 starboard to  
10 correct our list, once the list is corrected, pull back engines,  
11 get it stopped in the water and we launched the workboat and a  
12 draft survey was taken. Once the drafts are determined, then --

13 Q. Who was in the workboat? Sorry.

14 A. Myself. And the first mate was upstairs, still driving, and  
15 the captain came down with me.

16 Q. Okay, so you and the captain were in the workboat getting the  
17 drafts?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Okay. Who was reading the drafts, who was driving the  
20 workboat or is this kind of --

21 A. I was driving the workboat and he was reading the drafts.

22 Q. Okay. Were you assisting in that at all or is it just like  
23 I'll let the captain get the draft marks?

24 A. I could see them, too, because --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- it's like this is a small boat.

2 Q. Do you recall what the draft marks were?

3 A. I don't. I was pretty focused on driving. But we did write  
4 them down.

5 Q. Okay. So --

6 A. Or no --

7 Q. Captain got the --

8 A. He would see the draft and call up to the bridge, where they  
9 were logged by the first mate.

10 Q. Okay, so first mate was logging.

11 A. Yes, yes.

12 Q. Okay. Okay. And then --

13 A. Okay. So once we got all of our drafts, we got back to  
14 forward, stowed the workboat --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- and got back under way. And then we took a round of  
17 soundings --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- because, I believe the engine room said that we're -- the  
20 engine room has like a control panel where we can see all of our  
21 ballast levels and I'm not sure if one of them saw that we were  
22 kind of raising level on a couple of tanks, so we took soundings,  
23 as we found that 22 had made a little bit of water, so we pumped  
24 them back dry and then we actually opened the ballast tanks to  
25 look, take a visual inspection up there, that's when it was

1 determined that there are -- there were breaches.

2 Q. Okay. About what time was it that you guys got the draft  
3 readings and then when did you guys start the draft readings or  
4 not the draft readings, I'm sorry --

5 A. The soundings.

6 Q. -- the soundings?

7 A. Okay, when we discovered -- I'd say it was within -- once we  
8 got back forward, within maybe 20, within 20 minutes or so, I  
9 would say. I can't tell you exactly, though.

10 Q. Approximately what time was it that you guys were in the boat  
11 getting the draft readings?

12 A. That is logged for sure in our logbook --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- when we pulled back. I can't remember.

15 Q. That's fine. So then you guys get back on board and within  
16 20 minutes you guys are doing soundings.

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Who was doing the soundings and who directed the soundings?

19 A. So the -- when the engine room told us that we had -- we're  
20 making -- they thought we were making some water, that's when the  
21 captain directed us or directed them to just take readings on our  
22 gauges because our gauges are really accurate, those ballast tanks  
23 -- and so that was pretty much -- the sounding they took was just  
24 take a visual inspection of the gauges --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- and then --

2 Q. Do you guys use like plumb bobs or anything like that or are  
3 you --

4 A. We do when we're unsure, but we usually -- I haven't seen  
5 those used too much except for on these aft tanks soundings but  
6 they're in 15 feet, usually, just to look at that, so I'd say  
7 usually not. But the -- I think we wanted to get into those tanks  
8 quick to see what was going on.

9 Q. Okay. So you guys popped the hatches open to look inside?

10 A. To do a visual inspection, yeah.

11 Q. Okay. Were you part of that?

12 A. I was not, I was up on the bridge.

13 Q. Okay. Then I won't ask what was down --

14 A. Okay, yeah.

15 Q. Was anything reported up --

16 A. Not until the captain came back up and he said we got a  
17 couple holes and one in the port side.

18 Q. Okay, so the captain gave you the lowdown on --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- what was found?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. Okay. And then at some point you guys ended up at  
23 anchor?

24 A. Yes. So I finished up my watch, as normal, and then when I  
25 woke up for my next watch, we were at anchor. So the rest of my

1 watch was just we got under way again --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. -- obviously, and --

4 Q. You went up to the bridge, that would've been during your  
5 actual watch time --

6 A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

7 Q. -- for the navigational watch?

8 A. Exactly, yeah.

9 Q. So you were up there from 12:00 to 4:00.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. At some point you swapped out with the first mate to go  
12 down --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- with the captain and then after you were done on the  
15 workboat, went back up to watch --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- took back over for the first mate.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. Finish out your watch.

20 A. Okay, yeah. So I don't even think I had to change course,  
21 this was a nice straight line, a lake watch. Because of the known  
22 breach we did, for the watch ABs to do a round of soundings, two  
23 per watch.

24 Q. So every 2 hours they were doing soundings?

25 A. Yes. So what we do is at the beginning of the watch, we do a

1 full round, full boat, and then 2 hours later, we would sound the  
2 problem tanks only.

3 Q. Okay. So after you were told that there was water ingress in  
4 the 1 and 2 portside ballast tank --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- were you given any special instructions, do you guys have  
7 any typical procedures for this?

8 A. I don't think there is any specific instructions other than  
9 just taking the soundings.

10 Q. Were you guys pumping out the water?

11 A. Oh.

12 Q. What were you guys --

13 A. Yes. The engine room was in charge of pumping out the water,  
14 they -- they'd let it come to about 2 feet and then pump it down.  
15 If they were to keep on pumping, it would burn up their pumps if  
16 it was less than that, so you let it come up a little bit and then  
17 pump it out. And from my understanding, this information came  
18 later on, but they were pumping out every about 4 hours.

19 Q. Okay. How big are those tanks, do you know?

20 A. Gallons?

21 Q. It's okay if you don't. That's probably a pretty --

22 A. I think they're about --

23 Q. -- pretty serious ship's knowledge question.

24 A. I definitely got it written down, seriously, but yeah.

25 Q. If you had to give me a rough guesstimate on pumping out 2

1 feet of water in one of those ballast tanks, how much water are we  
2 talking about?

3 A. I would say -- I honestly don't --

4 Q. Okay, that's fine.

5 A. Yeah, yeah. I could go get the sheet and come back.

6 Q. Yeah, I mean, with that, knowing that you guys are pumping  
7 out 2 feet of water every 4 hours, I mean, I'm sure we can, you  
8 know, find somebody that can do the math for us --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- that will -- that can tell us, you know, what that ended  
11 up being --

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. -- for both of those tanks. I don't remember my math courses  
14 all that well.

15 A. I'm on my pilotage (indiscernible).

16 Q. That's okay. Okay.

17 A. Yeah, so that was the rest of my watch. And yeah, like I  
18 said, I handed it over to the first mate and then when I woke the  
19 next morning, we were at anchor.

20 Q. Got you. So you didn't have any steering issues, any issues  
21 with propulsion or --

22 A. No, no. Everything was normal.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know if or when the Coast Guard was notified  
24 that you guys were taking on water?

25 A. That I do not.

1 Q. Okay. But you didn't call the Coast Guard yourself?

2 A. No.

3 LT. [REDACTED] Okay, that's fine. I know I went through a  
4 lot, I don't want to get into a recap just yet.

5 Maria, did you have any questions?

6 LT. McELHANEY: I do not, but I do not (indiscernible).

7 LT. [REDACTED] Understood. So you don't have any questions at  
8 this point?

9 (No audible response.)

10 LT. [REDACTED] Then I will pass the microphone over to the  
11 NTSB for additional questions.

12 MR. TUCKER: Do you want to take a pause for a minute?

13 LT. [REDACTED] Yeah, we can pause.

14 MR. TUCKER: While she is going to go -- yeah. All right.

15 LT. [REDACTED] All right.

16 MR. TUCKER: We'll take a pause and the time is 6:12 p.m.

17 (Off the record at 6:12 p.m.)

18 (On the record at 6:50 p.m.)

19 LT. [REDACTED] It is 18:50, 24 April 2023. Continue interview  
20 with second mate Trevor Schick. To continue the interview, I will  
21 pass the floor over to NTSB.

22 MR. TUCKER: Okay, thank you. We should note that [REDACTED] has  
23 left.

24 LT. [REDACTED] Yeah, sorry. So Lieutenant [REDACTED] has  
25 departed. All other members remain for the interview.



1 MR. TUCKER: Thank you.

2 BY MR. TUCKER:

3 Q. All right, Trevor, thanks for -- thanks for your time, thanks  
4 for talking with us and I do have a couple follow-up questions, as  
5 I always do. Some of these are going to be really basic, just  
6 because of my level of knowledge in the Great Lakes area and all  
7 that stuff and you may even laugh at me with some of them, so --

8 A. I'll try not to.

9 Q. You'll try not to, yeah. And laughable, I'm a blue water  
10 guy, but I have to ask the question, so is there any type of tidal  
11 activity that is in that area?

12 A. Not so much tides, but we do watch what's called the water  
13 gauge and that has a lot to do with wind and precipitation  
14 changes.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And how we look at that is through the -- through the  
17 National Weather Service or NOAA and you can go on their website  
18 and look at local stations that have water gauges on them and see  
19 what the water gauge is above or below (indiscernible).

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And that is a good question, actually, to consider for this  
22 area, too, because that's one of the things you have to look at.  
23 As a first mate, when you're going to the trim hatches at the end  
24 of the load, you want to make sure that water gauge hasn't changed  
25 because we set up the load in our loading drafts around that water

1 gauge to make sure that we don't go too deep, load too deep to be  
2 restricted by that water gauge and the water gauges are a  
3 restricting factor, usually, for loading.

4 Q. Okay. So thanks for making that easy, so understood, the  
5 water gauge. So for Cedarville, is there a water gauge in there  
6 or is it somewhere nearby or how do you apply that to basically  
7 the chart data is what I'm wondering.

8 A. I'd have to look at the map, I didn't look at them in  
9 Cedarville, the first mate looked at it, but I know that  
10 Cedarville is our restricting draft, so the water gauge nearest to  
11 Cedarville is the one that was looked at for that load.

12 Q. Okay. And staying on the subject of the first mate and that  
13 restricted, that restricting draft or the draft that you can load  
14 to, what do you remember were the instructions or were you given  
15 any instructions for what that draft would be?

16 A. The only instructions that I have are just the standing  
17 orders in the load book, not to go past that draft while loading,  
18 and that's written down in the book of what that draft is.

19 Q. Okay. Do you remember for Cedarville what that draft was or  
20 is it --

21 A. I do not, but it is in the load book.

22 Q. Okay. So back to a layperson like myself, so you've got the  
23 NOAA chart, which is below low water. Again, I'm flying blue  
24 water, I guess.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Well, I know the Lakes are blue water, too. And so if you  
2 got the water gauge, X feet, that's applied plus or minus the --

3 A. Yes. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay, so I understand that. And is that something that  
5 changes a lot or --

6 A. It does, it really does, especially with wind. Wind changes  
7 it probably like most drastically and the most.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And it's called a seiche.

10 Q. A saysh (ph.)?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. S-a --

13 A. C-h-e (sic)?

14 Q. All right, I heard that before. Yes, that's right, yeah.

15 A. So take Lake Erie, if it's got a hard west wind for a long  
16 time, then at Marblehead, which is in the western part of Lake  
17 Erie, it's going to drop that water level a lot because all the  
18 water's going to Buffalo in the wind and it makes a huge  
19 difference.

20 Q. Okay. So when we were asking earlier, I guess, about the  
21 wind, did that have any effect in that area which you were for  
22 that, for the loading, for the -- for the loading?

23 A. I know it wasn't a concern that was passed on to me, and the  
24 way the wind was changing, I know it wasn't blowing that way for a  
25 long time and due to the direction of the wind, too, and where the

1 dock's at, it was coming off the dock, so I wasn't too worried  
2 about water coming from the south up.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. All right. While we're staying at drafts at the dock, did  
6 you happen to notice what or know what the depths were at the  
7 dock, what the soundings were at the dock?

8 A. Of the water, like the water depth itself at the dock?

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. I do not know.

11 Q. Okay. And I guess it rolls in, but I'm going to ask the  
12 question, anyway. Was there any under-keel clearance guidelines  
13 or anything established for that dock?

14 A. No, not that I'm aware of. I have not -- that hasn't been  
15 anything that's been discussed with me before.

16 Q. Understood. Okay. And so this is in the load book?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. All right. Is this a book -- this is a book that's unique to  
19 the ship?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Assuming you'd like to ask for standing orders or something  
22 like that or that's --

23 A. There are standing orders in it, but it's really -- it's for  
24 loading the boat, we put in -- we'll paste in pages for that  
25 specific load and then follow them, and the next load, flip the

1 page and we'll paste in new pages, so it's sort of like a log of  
2 all our loads in there, too. We also keep track of them  
3 digitally, as well, but --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- that's what they have on deck, so while you're on deck,  
6 you know what you're doing.

7 Q. Got it, okay. Let me go back, so earlier -- and I apologize  
8 for bouncing around here. It was mentioned, 20 inches of list to  
9 port, so any idea -- is there an inclinometer on board, is there  
10 any idea how many degrees that is? I can't really apply mentally  
11 inches right now, but --

12 A. Right. I have not seen one, there might be one in the engine  
13 room, in the control room --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- but I have not seen like a percentage of an inclinometer.

16 Q. All right. And it's just hard to visualize 20. It's  
17 noticeable, is it? It's a noticeable list.

18 A. Yes, yeah. Like if you're standing on deck, you can feel it.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And was there any trim or just -- it was just list?

22 A. As far as like fore and aft?

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. I'm sure there was -- well, we'd have to look at our -- I  
25 know our drafts weren't the same for forward and aft.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. So there was some trim and I can't remember exactly what they  
3 were when we were off the dock, but they are logged.

4 Q. Okay. In this, the 20 inches of list to port, you said that  
5 is read from a gauge in the boom room, is that right?

6 A. The boom shack.

7 Q. Boom shack.

8 A. Yeah. We keep them on both sides, that's where you control  
9 the boom from, the conveyer system from.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And it can also be read from the engine room, as well,  
12 they've got a screen, it's a computer screen.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yeah, it's got everything on it.

15 Q. So it's a computer screen and it's got that level of  
16 sensitivity, it can tell you how many inches of list you have?

17 A. There must be a sensor somewhere else and it gets fed to that  
18 screen.

19 Q. I wonder if it has any memory.

20 A. Memory?

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. I'm not sure.

23 Q. Okay. And you mentioned, as well -- again, I apologize for  
24 the dumb questions. You said earlier it was a green light --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- and the green light, green starboard, that -- so what does  
2 that green light mean, again?

3 A. The green light, the lights themselves are up in the house  
4 and they're for -- they're mainly for the motor, to look at, and  
5 the mate can also look at them to -- it's kind of a general idea  
6 of which way the boat's leaning.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So a white light is in the middle and that means that it's  
9 perfectly centered within a couple inches.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then after like 3 inches, after about 3 inches, then the  
12 green light turns on or the red light, whichever side's going, and  
13 then three more inches another green light will turn on or a red  
14 light.

15 Q. Okay. So if I'm the loader and I'm seeing a green light,  
16 that means that the ship is listing to starboard?

17 A. That's correct.

18 Q. And that means I need to adjust to put a little more weight  
19 on the port side --

20 A. Yeah, yeah.

21 Q. -- so to bring her back up.

22 A. Exactly, exactly.

23 Q. Got it, all right. Glad I asked that question.

24 A. Yeah, there's a lot of little things, I agree, yeah.

25 Q. So this is -- you're probably going to tell me it's in the

1 log and that's fine, but what do you remember of your midnight to  
2 4:00 watch, you're on watch from midnight to 4:00, so you're  
3 alongside the dock --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. -- port side alongside the dock, and I understand you were  
6 loading at that time --

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. -- actively loading. Was there any ballast discharged, any  
9 discharge of ballast that you remember?

10 A. Yes. So --

11 Q. Only what you remember. I'm sure --

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. -- this is documented, but --

14 A. Yeah. It would've been when I got into Vault 5, I would've  
15 started pumping those ballast tanks dry.

16 Q. And you say those ballast tanks, meaning --

17 A. Five port and 5 starboard.

18 Q. Five port and 5 starboard, okay. And since we're on the  
19 subject of holds, how many holds does the ship have?

20 A. Six.

21 Q. Six holds. So it's not that dumb of a question. So you have  
22 22 hatches.

23 A. That's very good, yeah.

24 Q. I only saw 22, that's why I said that.

25 A. I was like how did you figure that out from six holds.



1 Q. So each hold has, what, three hatches? No.

2 A. Well --

3 Q. I think --

4 A. -- they're not all even, there's some holds that are bigger  
5 than others.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Yeah. The end holds are slightly smaller.

8 Q. All right. And that was going to be -- my other question is  
9 you mentioned trimming holds, what are they?

10 A. Oh, okay, yeah. So we call them -- so we go by hatches for  
11 trim and so we select those hatches based on the characteristics  
12 on what they do to the vessel when we put cargo in them.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So say we're trimming up forward, we will select a hatch and  
15 that's in the load plan, which hatch to select, that will take  
16 down the forward draft without changing the aft drafts and vice  
17 versa, if they -- because when you start putting cargo forward, it  
18 will tip up the aft.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. So depending on the load plan, sometimes you trim aft first  
21 and finish up forward, but the trim hatches are carefully selected  
22 to do that.

23 Q. Right. So for your trimming moments, I guess.

24 A. Yeah, yeah. Exactly.

25 Q. Okay, all right. There's something in there? Okay, thank

1 you. All right, now I'm going to go back to some other notes  
2 here. So you mentioned, as well, there was a Coast Guard boat out  
3 there that day that called you guys on the radio --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- and said hey, you're listing.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Do you remember the name of that Coast Guard boat?

8 A. Oh, boy.

9 Q. If you don't, this is only on memory.

10 A. I don't. I know it was a tender, a buoy tender.

11 Q. Okay. And for any questions I ask, it's just all fact, I'll  
12 not ask you to speculate or anything like that, it's just for the  
13 boots on deck, you know, what you saw, what you witnessed, what  
14 you remember.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. I don't remember what I had for breakfast this morning, so --

17 A. The times are what's getting me, I have trouble with the  
18 times.

19 Q. Times are tough, yeah, yeah. And maybe I'm mixing it up, but  
20 was there one point where there was a starboard list or am I  
21 mixing --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. Yes, there was.

25 Q. All right. Yes, I did see it here. So take me back to

1 that --

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. -- starboard list. And then there was mentioned, as well,  
4 the boom went to starboard.

5 A. Yes. So the starboard list, seeing that starboard list, when  
6 the loader saw it, he took his load rig opposite that to correct  
7 it and then when I found out that the starboard list was not  
8 changing by asking the third mate in the boom shack what the  
9 number was, the inches to starboard still, and that had not gotten  
10 any better. That's what was kind of an indication of hey, we're  
11 on the bottom.

12 Q. Any times -- we just talked about times being difficult to  
13 remember, any time period that jumped in your head on that?

14 A. Unfortunately, no. Just because I was doing other things.

15 Q. But then it was mentioned, and maybe this is confusion in my  
16 bad notes, but was the -- when you say -- it sounded like the boom  
17 went to starboard, the boom was taken up and then went to  
18 starboard.

19 A. That's correct.

20 Q. But I'm thinking take it up and move it to starboard is going  
21 to increase the starboard list.

22 A. At that time we were -- we knew we were stuck and so we were  
23 trying to get it off the bottom and so going to starboard would  
24 help lighten the ship on this side to get us off the bottom,  
25 possibly.

1 Q. Lighten the ship on the --

2 A. On the port side.

3 Q. Port side, okay.

4 A. Putting the weight on the starboard side.

5 Q. All right, okay.

6 A. Trying to tip it up.

7 Q. Got you, okay. Speaking of the bottom, is there any  
8 knowledge -- do you know what the bottom composition is in that  
9 dock or --

10 A. I do not.

11 Q. Okay, that's fine. I understand. If you don't know the  
12 answer, that's fine, but any -- any issues or any -- anything that  
13 you've learned with this vessel with respect to hogging and  
14 sagging?

15 A. I have not. I have not noticed the repetitiveness as far as  
16 the hogs or sags, this is only my third load. I have not been  
17 aware of if it has consistent hog or consistent sag.

18 Q. Okay. I've got some questions here, a lot of these have been  
19 answered or asked already, so -- let's see. Before coming in --  
20 so I think I understand now that this -- the load book is  
21 important --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and -- but I understood you had a changeover of mates.

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. So the off-going mate got off in this port --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- and the oncoming mate came on in this port.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So the instructions left, were they by the off-going mate or  
5 when the -- or when the ongoing -- oncoming first mate came on,  
6 did he make those instructions?

7 A. The mate that got off the boat created a load plan and  
8 instructions.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. The only changes I'm aware of that the oncoming first mate  
11 made was to switch the last two trim hatches from Hatch 17 to  
12 Hatch 19, so we loaded 19 first instead of 17 and we obviously  
13 didn't make it to Hatch 17.

14 LT. [REDACTED] Before you get too much further, what was the  
15 name of the first mate that departed?

16 MR. SCHICK: Jacob Henley (ph.).

17 LT. [REDACTED] Jacob Henley?

18 MR. SCHICK: Yes.

19 BY MR. TUCKER:

20 Q. Just kind of -- and I just want to make sure I captured that  
21 correctly in my notes, so the change was that they loaded 19 and  
22 obviously, they didn't get to 17.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. And it was supposed to be 17 and then 19.

25 A. Yes. I'm pretty certain that's -- again, it's in the load

1 book to confirm that.

2 Q. Yeah. Got it, okay. So now what I'm going to ask you to do  
3 is take me back to that watch in the day. You got up, I'm  
4 assuming you started watching around 11:45, something like that.

5 A. Usually, but since --

6 Q. Oh, right, you had the third mate.

7 A. Yes, so around 10 o'clock.

8 Q. You started around 10 o'clock, okay. And if you were to give  
9 me the story without me saying a word and asking you a question,  
10 take me through when you started that watch, hit all the high  
11 points --

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. -- what you did, what you remember, and then slow it down  
14 just before you started going, noticing something's not right.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. And then run slow through it and then take me through the  
17 high points again to the end of your watch.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. Here we go. I walked out on deck, I walked by the AB, which  
21 is Art, just to get the scope from him and he said you should go  
22 to midship winch and help us shift. So I went to the midship  
23 winch and once I was in place, he started trying to shift the boat  
24 ahead in order to shift to go to our last trim hatch, 19, or trim  
25 Hatch 19, after trying to heave on our forward leading lines and

1 the ship would not move. I'm not sure of the communications, as  
2 far as how the captain got involved, but he came on the radio and  
3 he was going to try to help us with bow thrusters to get us  
4 unstuck. He had us slack wires while he thrust the bow away and  
5 at the same time heaving with the aftermost forward-leading wires  
6 to try to spring us off the dock at the same time. It didn't take  
7 much to get moving, we started moving and then got into position  
8 to get to our trim hatch and once in position, started loading.

9 I was, at this time, putting on hatch lids and I noticed we  
10 had a green light, so this is starboard. And then I called -- the  
11 third mate was in the boom shack on the radio and asked where our  
12 list was and she said 4 inches to starboard and I said okay and  
13 that's -- because that's not unusual to get a little out of whack  
14 with that. And then I continued to put on lids and then I asked  
15 her again what the -- because the loader had then moved inboard to  
16 compensate for that list.

17 And so after he was loading for a little bit, I asked her  
18 again what the list is, she said six to starboard and so at that  
19 time, I knew something wasn't right and so I called the first mate  
20 on the dock and said that I think we might be on the bottom again.  
21 And then -- oh. And then he had us try to move the boat wires  
22 from the rear on the bottom and we were not able to move the ship  
23 and so that confirmed that we were stuck. I'm not sure exactly  
24 how long we tried the wires to move, but then at some point the  
25 captain got on the radio, I'm not sure if the first mate called

1 him or how he knew that we were stuck again and he ordered up  
2 thrusters on line and engines, like maybe thrusters first to try  
3 to get us off again and that didn't work, so then he ordered up  
4 engines to help us. And I'm not sure exactly how long it took,  
5 but this one took a little bit longer to get off of the stuck part  
6 than the previous one did. And then once free and off the bottom,  
7 that's when we developed the hard port list. And -- oh, he did  
8 shut off the loader, the load. Once he found out we were stuck,  
9 he shut off the loader. Sorry.

10 And then once we got unstuck and floating free, it developed  
11 the list and the first mate did a round of drafts and based on  
12 that determination, no more cargo was to be added. Yeah, I  
13 forgot, we swung the boom out, too, to try to get out the first  
14 time, I'm sorry. That was when we were still trying to get  
15 unstuck (indiscernible) starboard. Okay, so then -- okay, so once  
16 we got -- we're not loading any more, we got the first mate back  
17 aboard and prepared for departure.

18 And then once the dock crew threw our lines off the dock, we  
19 came away from the dock and proceeded towards the lake and then --  
20 we proceeded towards the lake and then once we got to past Pomeroy  
21 Reef, that's when we had 6, water in 6 starboard to correct the  
22 list and once we did that, we wanted to know our final, final  
23 drafts after that, so we launched the workboat and confirmed  
24 drafts and once that was complete, that's when I noticed and the  
25 engine room noticed that we were making some water in the forward



1 ballast tanks and so they got opened up and made sure they were  
2 stripped and opened them up and found breaches in the portside 1  
3 and 2. So then once that was determined that we got breaches, I  
4 know phone calls were made on what we should do as far as stay  
5 there or keep going, but I wasn't part of that, but they set up a  
6 sounding watch and proceeded down the lake. And then until the  
7 end of my watch, yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Clarification, I know you told the four guys, so  
9 you're the -- it sounds like, from my understanding, you're more  
10 working six on and six off because --

11 A. Right now, yeah.

12 Q. -- of the new third mate, okay.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Does that mean you got to get up at 2 o'clock in the morning?  
15 No, no.

16 A. No, roughly --

17 Q. No. You're on 12:00 to 4:00, anyway.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So yeah.

21 Q. Let's see. I heard reference of draft guide notes, do you  
22 know what they are, is that -- or is --

23 A. Oh, the draft guide.

24 Q. -- that the same draft guide? Okay.

25 A. Yeah. That is a guide that's been developed over many trips,

1 many captains, and everybody -- or first mates, and the captains,  
2 I think -- and I think this is like a guide to what to load to in  
3 different -- it will tell us different things about each dock, it  
4 gives us phone numbers and e-mails and it will say like what  
5 captains have gone in there and loaded to and had success or they  
6 got hung up or things like that.

7 LT. [REDACTED] If we wanted a copy of the one for Cedarville,  
8 how would we go about looking at that?

9 MR. SCHICK: That would be on our desktop. There's an icon  
10 on our desktop, it says -- I think it's the port guide, draft  
11 guide or port guide.

12 LT. [REDACTED] Okay.

13 BY MR. TUCKER:

14 Q. Okay. And that's specific to this vessel, right, or --

15 A. No, no. That's --

16 Q. It's shared companywide.

17 A. Yeah, yeah.

18 Q. Got it, okay. Is it just companywide or like -- because I  
19 know this is -- for as many ships as there are, it's still a small  
20 community, but --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- is it shared amongst other fleets or --

23 A. I don't think so.

24 Q. Okay. Let's see. Like I said, a lot of these question I've  
25 asked already, so -- oh, 6 starboard was ballasted with water and

1 I'm going to get the tank plan later, but how much water was  
2 ballasted, was it filled up, was it half?

3 A. I believe it was 10 feet. Ten feet.

4 Q. Ten feet.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. I apologize, a lot of these you've answered already,  
7 so -- and thank you for walking me through that again, that  
8 clarified even a lot more questions that I had, so --

9 A. Okay, good.

10 Q. Any previous problems in this port?

11 A. No. And I say that, though, because I don't think I've --  
12 whenever I've loaded this boat on -- port on other boats that were  
13 shorter, and I don't know if that's a factor, we don't load very  
14 deep because we're going, usually, to just like Saginaw, the  
15 Saginaw River, and so we're always loading pretty light from when  
16 I've loaded here previous to this.

17 Q. Okay.

18 LT. ████████ Sorry to clarify, this boat's a little bit  
19 longer than some of the other boats that you've worked on or this  
20 boat's shorter than --

21 MR. SCHICK: This one's a little bit longer.

22 LT. ████████ This one's a little bit longer.

23 MR. SCHICK: Yeah.

24 LT. ████████ Thank you.

25 BY MR. TUCKER:

1 Q. I asked you about ballast. One question I didn't ask, you  
2 did cover it, so I think I know the answer, but just to clarify,  
3 so when you got on watch at that -- you know, at 10 o'clock in the  
4 morning and -- was there any de-ballasting, did you de-ballast  
5 anything, then?

6 A. No, when you go to trim, all the water's out of the boat  
7 because we're only looking at cargo at this point. If there's any  
8 water in the boat, then it messes up our calculations and so it's  
9 -- what would happen is, if you put cargo in while you're  
10 trimming, or I'm sorry, if you put cargo in while you have water  
11 in still, while you're trimming, once you're done trimming and  
12 that water's out because it -- you're still -- if you're still  
13 pumping it out, then you end up lighter on your final drafts and  
14 you could've taken more cargo --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- at that point. So going in to trim, we have a dry boat.

17 Q. Okay. And that's -- you were going in to trim at that point.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. That's why the first mate was up and --

20 A. Yes.

21 MR. TUCKER: Okay. Now I understand.

22 Lieutenant, do you want any follow-ups? While I catch up?

23 LT. [REDACTED] Yeah. I'm trying to think. I think I've got  
24 just about everything that I need at this stage. Obviously, this  
25 has been a great help.

1 MR. TUCKER: I do have one while you're looking at that  
2 thing.

3 LT. [REDACTED] Yeah, okay.

4 MR. TUCKER: This is a simple one.

5 BY MR. TUCKER:

6 Q. I circled here you got to the trim hatch and so that was Trim  
7 Hatch Number 19.

8 A. Yes, because -- I'm not sure where in the narrative you're  
9 at, but that was the one they were trying to shift into when I  
10 came out.

11 MR. TUCKER: Okay, loaded Number 19. Okay. All right, got  
12 it. Sorry.

13 BY LT. [REDACTED]

14 Q. The first mate on board, how long have you been working with  
15 the first mate?

16 A. This is my first time, very first time, yeah.

17 Q. Okay, that's right. I know the third mate had only -- had  
18 just come on board.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. The first mate also had just come on board and this was the  
21 first time that you ever worked with the first mate?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Okay. Your interactions with the first mate, have they been  
24 positive or are they easy to work with?

25 A. I'd say generally he's easy to work with. He doesn't rub you

1 the wrong way and I don't rub him the wrong way as far as  
2 personality goes. He's been doing this a long time, so I do trust  
3 his judgment.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah. He seems like a quality mate, yeah.

6 Q. Okay. And then your directions, your interactions with the  
7 master, how often have you been working with him, is it pretty  
8 much since you've been on board he's been the captain?

9 A. So when I boarded April 13th, he was still captain in  
10 training under Jason, Captain Jason, and so that went on for a  
11 week and then Captain Jeff took over as full-time captain then.

12 Q. Okay. So is Captain Jeff, this is his first hitch as a solo  
13 captain, then?

14 A. Yeah, I think so. Yeah, I think that to be correct.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And I don't know, but Captain Jeff was the first mate on here  
17 for a long time, too, so he does know this vessel very well.

18 Q. Okay. So he's loaded, you know, here in -- or there in  
19 Cedarville --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- before, to your knowledge?

22 A. To my knowledge, yes.

23 Q. Okay. So then I guess, just in general, from a deck watch  
24 standpoint, third mate just came on board, to your knowledge, this  
25 is the first time that she's been on board the *John J. Boland*?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. And then you first got on board 13 April for your first hitch  
3 on board the *John J. Boland*?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. First mate has had experience on board this vessel?

6 A. I don't think on this vessel, no.

7 Q. Do you know -- so he just came on board on the 10th, or I'm  
8 sorry, the 21st, or 20th.

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. Sorry. The crew change was on the -- on 20 April, correct?

11 A. Yes, yes, yes, yes.

12 Q. Okay. So this is the first mate's first hitch on board --

13 A. On this vessel.

14 Q. -- this vessel? First time hitch for the captain.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Am I piecing it together right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. It sounds like a relatively green crew for the deck watch.

19 A. To a lot of the people, yeah.

20 LT. [REDACTED] Do you have any questions off of that?

21 MR. TUCKER: Just on that -- I know that I asked --

22 LT. [REDACTED] Well, we'll get into everybody else's, you  
23 know, experience, as well, but --

24 BY MR. TUCKER:

25 Q. I'm just curious, if you're new, a new hire or just new to a

1 vessel, is there any type of handover, like orientation or a  
2 checklist that you have to go -- that someone has to go through in  
3 order to assume the position of a mate or anything, I guess, as  
4 well?

5 A. Not so much like mate specific, but there are specific, like,  
6 orientations to the vessel but it's mainly just like lifesaving  
7 things, muster stations, stuff like that. As far as operations  
8 go, there's a mate-to-mate turnover, turn over notes and as far as  
9 like anything vessel specific that the mate should know, he's  
10 reading those turnover notes. If there's anything going on with  
11 the winches or anything broken, stuff like that, that's the main  
12 thing.

13 Q. Okay. So mostly turnover notes, there's not a checklist, per  
14 se.

15 A. It's mostly turnover notes, that's the important thing.

16 Q. As I understand, it is -- you got safety orientation and  
17 muster stations, all that?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. Yeah, all of the safety required stuff, okay. Okay, so do  
20 you know -- and if you don't know, it's fine -- during handover,  
21 so you relieve somebody, somebody relieves you. Is there a  
22 handover process if that person's new to the boat or anything like  
23 that? Do they have X amount of hours that they have to spend with  
24 you or a handshake on the gangway or you don't even see them?

25 A. It's -- there is -- it's not a -- there's no formal form, no



1 format, I guess, to it. Like you say, there's -- it is a case-by-  
2 case basis when somebody is new to the vessel like this, that  
3 there should be a lot more time spent with the oncoming mate, but  
4 if it's a mate that has been relieving me all season, then I'll  
5 say hey, turnover notes on the desktop, give me a call if you have  
6 any questions.

7 Q. Handshake and hangover -- or handover, yeah. But then  
8 they're familiar with -- yeah.

9 A. But they've been here before, yeah.

10 MR. TUCKER: Yeah.

11 BY LT. [REDACTED]

12 Q. Is there policy driving that pass-down, that -- saying what  
13 needs to be in the turnover notes or anything like that, anything  
14 guiding that?

15 A. Not that I've seen. I'd have to look for sure in our SMS  
16 manual, but as far as like a turnover note sheet, it's just all  
17 typed up, handwritten, there's no -- I haven't seen any  
18 instruction points taken on it.

19 Q. So let's play a little bit of role play, if you don't mind  
20 that I interject here at this point. So if I'm the one that's  
21 coming on to relieve you, what would -- what would you write to me  
22 in this turnover, just as kind of a generic example.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. What's kind of going into that turnover?

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. Turnover notes.

2 A. Yeah, turnover notes, yeah. So first, I'd say all the duties  
3 that you're expected to have on this vessel, paperwork-wise and  
4 inspection-wise; who your watchstander is and how they're doing  
5 experience-wise and if you need to keep a closer eye on them, and  
6 if they can be doing ballasting by themselves. I would tell them  
7 if I'm having any issues with the winches because sometimes  
8 winches, they either -- they have a short wire on them or they'll  
9 walk sometimes. Just things that might just -- and then I would  
10 also tell them, for this vessel, because I explained earlier, the  
11 ballasting system, because that was new to me as far as leaving a  
12 little bit of water in certain tanks before we can strip the whole  
13 system. That's all I can think of right now.

14 Q. I just wanted a little bit of a better understanding of what  
15 that -- these turnover notes were.

16 A. Okay, yes.

17 BY MR. TUCKER:

18 Q. If you don't know, we'll know the people that will know, but  
19 the first mate had a changeover. Do you know if there was any  
20 changeover of time between the two people or --

21 A. I do not know because I was sleeping when he came on.

22 Q. Right, okay.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Understood. I ask this question of a lot of people and it's  
25 interesting, the answers you get. Because you noticed something

1 abnormal, being that port list, 20 inches, any pictures, any  
2 video, anything on your phone?

3 A. No, I did not, I -- yeah, because I was just up there  
4 wheeling and then I felt like we were in kind of a little bit of a  
5 stressful situation and I just wanted to have my focus on what we  
6 were doing.

7 Q. Got you, okay. Still got to ask.

8 A. Yeah, yeah.

9 Q. Tick in the box. Any deficiencies that you are aware of with  
10 either your mooring gear, any of the ballast pumps, ballast  
11 system, loading equipment for any of the times you were on watch?

12 A. No. No, everything worked as it should.

13 Q. Okay. And I always have one last question.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. It can lead into another last question, but is there anything  
16 that I or we have failed to ask you that you might feel is  
17 important or relevant to us to kind of put all of this together?

18 A. I do not. I feel like this was very thorough. I don't have  
19 anything to add.

20 LT. [REDACTED] Very well. With that, do you have any  
21 questions?

22 MS. BEAUBIEN: I do not.

23 LT. [REDACTED] Brian?

24 MR. PETERSON: No, sir.

25 LT. [REDACTED] Okay. So then at this stage, I always end up

1 asking kind of a last series of questions any time that there's a  
2 company rep here in the room, so I'll ask Brian to please kindly  
3 leave our meeting. Sarah is going to stay, just as legal  
4 representation for the company to make sure I'm not asking  
5 anything crazy, but -- there's a giant hole in the door.

6 BY LT. [REDACTED]

7 Q. Have you had any issues, concerns, relating to your own --  
8 feeling unsafe on board, feeling like the company's bottom dollar  
9 is outweighed by the safety of the crew?

10 A. So on that, I've always heard about Grand River, this company  
11 being the bottom of the barrel and always is trying to get the  
12 load done, load on and off, but when I started here, they had just  
13 taken over another ASC fleet, so they got a lot more ships and it  
14 seems like at that time there were a lot of policy changes and a  
15 lot more safety things and I don't know what it was like before I  
16 came, but I know when I came here it seemed like they're upping  
17 the ante on a lot of safety oriented things.

18 Q. Got you. So improvements.

19 A. Improvements, a lot of improvements.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And it seems every year they're adding things and, you know,  
22 it makes more work for me to keep me up on things, like they have  
23 a new thing called Ops Log (ph.), which is logging safety things  
24 and if you see something, you can log it and it gets dealt with  
25 better. There is --

1 Q. Would this be one of those situations that you could go into  
2 this Ops Log and log -- was -- did you do anything with this?

3 A. I did not do anything with it. This probably would be  
4 something that we could log. I'm still figuring out the system as  
5 far as what exactly to log, like if I get hit by a cable, then I  
6 would definitely put that in there.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But I do, going back to your question, I do feel safe here  
9 and I feel that as long as I take my own personal safety measures  
10 to ensure that, that I will be safe.

11 Q. Okay. Do you feel like if you were to bring up maybe  
12 concerns or issues to the captain, do you have full confidence  
13 that he'd be able to address any safety concerns or issues that  
14 you would have on board?

15 A. Absolutely, yeah. He's very easy to talk to as far as  
16 bringing up things, ideas, that just comes from him. He's been on  
17 this boat for a long time and I'm comfortable around him and I  
18 feel like he would do something about it if I said something. And  
19 I would say anybody, anybody, they could be the lowest person on  
20 the ship and they'd say something.

21 Q. Work/rest hours, are you keeping to those, to your work/rest  
22 hours?

23 A. Yes, those are kept on ComConnect and that's a new thing that  
24 was added in the last year or so, too, it makes it easier for  
25 everybody to keep track of their own hours and those get confirmed

1 by the first mate.

2 Q. Okay, so the first mate's in control of managing the  
3 work/rest hours for everyone?

4 A. Yeah, making sure that people are putting them in. And so  
5 you put in your work/rest hours and then you confirm it and then  
6 he logs into his and he'll look at it and make sure it's correct  
7 and then confirm it.

8 Q. Okay. And throughout, you know, the couple of days that you  
9 guys were there in Cedarville between the time that you took your  
10 first watch on the 20th to when you guys set anchor, any issues  
11 with being tired or having, you know, a lack of sleep or downtime?

12 A. No, no. Everything was good.

13 LT. [REDACTED] Any final questions?

14 MR. TUCKER: No.

15 LT. [REDACTED] Very well. All right, well, thank you very  
16 much for your time. It is now 19:38 on 24 April, that concludes  
17 our interview.

18 (Whereupon, at 7:38 p.m., the interview concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           INCIDENT ABOARD *JOHN J. BOLAND*  
                                  IN CEDARVILLE, MICHIGAN  
                                  ON APRIL 21, 2023  
                                  Interview of Trevor M. Schick

ACCIDENT NO.:               DCA23FM029

PLACE:                       Lorain, Ohio

DATE:                        April 24, 2023

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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen D. Martini  
Transcriber