

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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CAPSIZING/SINKING OF THE *GOLDEN*
RAY IN THE BRUNSWICK RIVER,
GEORGIA, ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2019

Accident No.: DCA19FM048

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Interview of: GI HAK LEE
Captain

Tuesday,
September 10, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID FLAHERTY, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CARRIE BELL, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LEE WILLETT, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LES LEDET, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

MARC DeJESUS, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LCDR [REDACTED], Investigator
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(On behalf of the Brunswick Pilots)

JOHN OSSICK, Attorney
(On behalf of ship's officers)

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(On behalf of ship's crew and officer)

GRACE MIN, Interpreter

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. FLAHERTY: Hi, my name is David Flaherty. This is the
3 interview with the captain of the *Golden Ray*. Today is 10
4 September 2019.

5 Captain, if you could please state your name, and please
6 spell your last name.

7 MR. LEE: Yeah, the family name is L-E-E. And the given name
8 is G-I, H-A-K. Lee Gi Hak.

9 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you, sir.

10 MR. LEE: You're welcome.

11 MR. FLAHERTY: Do you have my -- permission to tape the
12 interview?

13 MR. LEE: Yeah, I --

14 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you very much. Well, with that, I'll
15 just go around the room. Sir --

16 MR. OSSICK: John Ossick. I'm an attorney for the captain.

17 MR. WILLETT: Lee Willett. I'm an investigator for the Coast
18 Guard. W-I-L-L-E-T-T.

19 MR. LEDET: Les Ledet, U.S. Coast Guard investigator. L-E-D-
20 E-T.

21 MS. BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB investigator.

22 LT [REDACTED]: Lieutenant [REDACTED], Coast Guard District 7,
23 legal.

24 MR. DEJESUS: Marc DeJesus, U.S. Coast Guard. D-E-J-E-S-U-S.

25 MR. McRAE:: Colin McRae. I represent the slot charters or

1 space charters of the vessel. M-C-R-A-E.

2 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer, B-R-E, M as in Mike, E-R. Republic
3 of the Marshall Islands maritime administrator.

4 MS. AMIOTTE MCDONALD: Stephanie Amiotte McDonald. I
5 represent the crew members and one of the officers.

6 MR. MOSELEY: Jim Moseley, Jr. for the vessel interest P&I
7 Club. M-O-S-E-L-E-Y.

8 MS. MIN: Grace Min, M-I-N. I'm an interpreter.

9 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you.

10 MR. GILSENAN: Ryan Gilsenan, G-I-L-S-E-N-A-N. Counsel for
11 the pilots.

12 MR. FLAHERTY: If you could state your name?

13 LCDR [REDACTED]: Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
14 United States Coast Guard.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: All right, very good.

16 (Whereupon, GRACE MIN, an interpreter, translated the
17 questions and answers for GI HAK LEE as needed.)

18 INTERVIEW OF GI HAK LEE

19 BY MR. WILLETT:

20 Q. Okay, Captain. Before we get started with the events on 08
21 September, we'd like to ask you a little bit about your
22 background.

23 A. All right. I graduated (indiscernible) Maritime College in
24 1980 March and worked from that time on the ship from
25 (indiscernible). And then I was a captain from 1995 in the

1 handling/shipping company. And then -- or 2016, maybe December,
2 started to work on car carryover service. G Marin (ph.) is my
3 company. I work in G Marin ship from 2017 December to -- up to
4 date. The vessel is -- first vessel G Marin is Global Chorus
5 (ph.) and *Golden Ray* is second vessel. That's all.

6 Q. Okay. How many different car carriers have you been the
7 master of?

8 A. Yeah. I have car carriers as a captain three vessels. Yeah.

9 Q. And are they similar to the *Golden Ray*?

10 A. Almost similar.

11 Q. Okay. Did you ever have experience as a chief officer on a
12 car carrier?

13 A. Nothing.

14 Q. Nothing?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Okay, so you did chief officer on a container ship?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay. So did you ever sail previous to being a master on any
19 car carriers?

20 A. Sorry, say again?

21 Q. Did you ever sail on a car carrier in any other capacity than
22 a master?

23 A. As a captain, worked the car carriers. Is on it, the rank is
24 captain.

25 Q. Okay. Did you ever work a car carrier as a third or a

1 second?

2 A. No, nothing else.

3 Q. Okay, okay.

4 A. Yeah, first the boating at the car carriers as the captain.

5 Q. Okay. Okay. I understand. In your experience, what kind of
6 condition was the *Golden Ray*? Was it in good condition?

7 A. Yeah, good conditions.

8 Q. Were there anything on the vessel that didn't work properly?

9 A. It worked properly. Yeah.

10 Q. If you needed parts or any other services from the company,
11 were they quickly -- did they get it to you quickly? Like, if you
12 needed a new motor and you put in a request, would they get it to
13 you very quickly? Like electrical motors or something.

14 A. My company supply and support all vessels pretty quick.
15 Promptly supply.

16 Q. Promptly. Okay, okay, good. Good. So this vessel, how long
17 had you been on the *Golden Ray*?

18 A. I had -- I came onboard this vessel at Freeport, Texas of
19 this year, August 28.

20 Q. 2018.

21 A. Just -- yeah, 28.

22 Q. August of 28, 2019.

23 A. Yes, sir. I worked at *Golden Ray* just 10 days.

24 Q. Had you been on the *Golden Ray* before?

25 A. No, nothing. First time here.

1 Q. Okay. So the embarkation at Freeport, Texas.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. On the outbound route, did the vessel react and handle like
4 the other car carriers?

5 A. Almost the same.

6 Q. Almost the same? Okay.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Now whenever you load and unload, do you ever oversee or help
9 and look at -- see what the chief officer is doing for ballast and
10 making sure he makes sure the vessel meets all the cargo, securing
11 and all the ballast requirements?

12 A. Yeah. As a captain on the vessel, the cargo working and the
13 ballasting, shifting is the chief officer's control. And then
14 chief officer report to me. And then I supervise and I
15 monitoring. Is my job. All cargo rushing and cargo condition
16 check is chief officer's job. I got his report before sailing and
17 in the normal working day by day. Just, I supervise and the
18 monitoring, and get the report.

19 Q. Okay. So that report, do you enter it into a computer?

20 A. Yes, sir. Sometimes.

21 Q. Does it get emailed to --

22 A. No, no. Man to man. Voicing.

23 Q. Okay. Do you ever email back to the company to say, here's
24 the report? Here's the loading report?

25 A. Yes. Yes, I -- this is a normal job. After sailing, I send

1 -- normally send the departure report. All data. All data.

2 Q. Did you send the departure report before -- the departure
3 from Brunswick?

4 A. No, not finished yet. Yeah, after -- started normal loading.
5 And then report to departure.

6 Q. Okay. So typically, normally, you would get out of the
7 channel, and then you would finish and send it to --

8 A. No, not yet. At this time, is standby situation. A standby
9 situation is not finished reporting time. Yeah.

10 MS. MIN: So he did not report, because he was in the standby
11 situation.

12 MR. WILLETT: I see.

13 BY MR. WILLETT:

14 Q. Did Hurricane Dorian affect your voyage?

15 A. Yeah. When I board *Golden Ray* on August 28, already I got
16 the Dorian processing route from my company. And every time I
17 check SNS (ph.) and read the news. I ask my company the
18 recommendation over Dorian, Hurricane Dorian, route. I received
19 many times. And then after sailing from Freeport, I took my
20 vessel drifting in the safe area two time. And then after passing
21 the hurricane, we started sailing.

22 Q. Okay. Did it put you behind schedule, the hurricane?

23 A. Sorry, say again?

24 Q. Did it --

25 A. Yeah. Almost 2 days delay of the original schedule.

1 Q. Okay. Did that affect how many cars you discharged or loaded
2 at Jacksonville?

3 A. At Jacksonville?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. That is the chief officer's job.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. No, nothing impact the Jacksonville loading and unloading.
8 Just the delay the time. Just the delay the time.

9 Q. So did you try to make sure the vessel was loaded as quickly
10 as possible to try to make up that time?

11 A. No, no, no. No, nothing.

12 Q. Okay. Do you sign all the work-rest time for the crew?
13 Like, if they're working 6 hours and they're off for 8 hours and
14 work 6 hours, and every week you'll verify they're working --

15 A. Working hour record?

16 Q. Yes, yes.

17 A. Yes, sir. Yeah, yeah. 1:30 check, and the recording, daily
18 recording, and the printout. And I check all and I cut -- I get
19 my signature.

20 Q. Did anybody go over their hours in the last month?

21 A. I'm not sure.

22 Q. Okay. Do you think the hurricane could have affected and
23 made some of the crew members work a little extra?

24 A. I'm not sure. Yeah.

25 Q. So I guess we'll just write that down. We'll need to get the

1 work-rest hours. The work-rest hours, do you submit those to the
2 company weekly or --

3 A. Monthly.

4 Q. Monthly. So was the last time you submitted them September
5 the 1st or August the 30th? Or do you, do you know the last time
6 you emailed them to the company?

7 A. I'm not sure. Yeah. Anyway I send the 1st of September or
8 2nd September.

9 Q. Okay, okay.

10 A. Anyway I sent it.

11 Q. Okay, good, good, good. So I appreciate you telling me some
12 background about the ship. What we'd like to do now is, if you
13 could kind of start with the arrival at Brunswick and kind of tell
14 us, in your words, loading the ship, making sure everything was
15 secure, getting the pilot onboard, and then the outbound transit
16 leading to the capsizing.

17 A. I got the same pilot arrival time. Pilot is the same pilot
18 embarked on the departure time. One pilot. September 8,
19 (indiscernible) sailing, unberthing. You understand?

20 Q. Unberthing, yes.

21 A. Unberthing. And go to the outside following the channel.
22 Like, this is the channel.

23 Q. Yes, yes.

24 A. Yeah. And then I got the one tugboat to take out -- take my
25 vessel out from berth, and they using bows or stern. You

1 understand?

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. You understand bows or stern? And take my vessel out from
4 berth and start --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So no tugs.

6 MR. LEE: One tug.

7 MS. MIN: One --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. One tug?

9 MS. MIN: -- tug.

10 MR. LEE: Yeah. One tug.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

12 MR. LEE: At the stern area, one tug.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But is the tug connected to the
14 vessel?

15 MR. LEE: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Tug arrive, connected
16 my vessels that circumvent. Understand? Circumvent.

17 MR. WILLETT: Yes. Yeah.

18 MR. LEE: Yeah. Yeah, there's a pilot order to make past tug
19 line on my vessels to circumvent. And then started, and
20 increasing the speed, pilot order to tugboat to cast off. And
21 then increasing my speed from the slow to (indiscernible) full
22 ahead. And normally going out, sort of, the channel. At that
23 time, no problem. The speed is something good. In fact, all
24 rudder is good condition. There is no problem.

25 At the sharp (indiscernible), yeah, yeah. The sharp

1 (indiscernible) area is -- I checked, and some entering vessel in
2 the -- at this electronic chart. Yes. So entering vessels. Yes,
3 sharp area is that the -- outside of the channel is some shallow
4 areas. You understand?

5 MR. WILLETT: Yes, yes.

6 BY MR. WILLETT:

7 Q. Talking in here?

8 A. Yes. Some shallow areas. Yeah. First time, I don't know
9 the time. I don't know exact time, yeah? You check
10 (indiscernible) time, but I don't know. First the pilot gave
11 order to quartermaster. First time, starboard 10. But my vessel
12 turn into the right slower than he expected. Understand?

13 Q. Yes, yes.

14 A. And then again, pilot gave order to board, starboard 20. At
15 that time, started list to port. Listed the other side. At same
16 time, the turning ratio is very quickly to starboard side. Yeah.
17 So pilot ordered to rudder midship, but quickly nearly turned to
18 the starboard side and then increasing list like that.

19 Q. To starboard. Or to port.

20 A. Port.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. List to port. And then I gave order to quartermaster
23 directly, port 10. After that or 30 seconds later, pilot order
24 hard port. But the listing is very quickly (indiscernible) to
25 port side. Increasing very quickly. At that time, all power,

1 main engine broke off. Generator broke off. And started to sound
2 alarm.

3 MS. MIN: Alarm sounded.

4 BY MR. WILLETT:

5 Q. So why do you think that happened? Because it's -- sounds
6 like you said the vessel was good, machinery was good, steering
7 was good, ballast was good, loading was good. Why do you think it
8 capsized?

9 A. I don't know.

10 Q. Do you think possibly it grounded?

11 A. I'm not sure. At that time, there -- at list time --
12 grounding, well, I'm not sure. I don't know that. Because the
13 echo sounder is normally -- vessel like this one, normally -- this
14 is echo sound there. But my vessel like this one, like this one,
15 echo sound is like this one.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's on midships. Yeah.

17 MR. LEE: Incorrect. Incorrect. Yeah.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because sometimes the echo sounder
19 looks in that direction, to kind of give you a head's -- but was
20 yours just going right down from midships to down? Straight.

21 MR. LEE: Yeah. The midship condition is correct. List
22 condition is something have error.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

24 MR. WILLETT: Do you hear any alarms prior to the vessel
25 starting to list to port?

1 MR. LEE: Yeah, I heard alarm.

2 MR. WILLETT: What alarm?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, wait a minute. I don't think --

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Prior to.

5 MR. WILLETT: Prior to.

6 MR. LEE: What kind of --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Before.

8 MR. WILLETT: Before. Before.

9 MR. LEE: No, nothing. Nothing.

10 MR. WILLETT: No? Okay. No alarm.

11 MS. MIN: Not before.

12 MR. LEE: No alarm.

13 BY MR. WILLETT:

14 Q. Did you see any fire or smoke when you started to list to
15 port?

16 A. No, nothing.

17 Q. Okay. Are you normally on the bridge?

18 A. On bridge.

19 Q. Inbound and outbound, that's your normal position.

20 A. Normally bridge.

21 Q. Okay. And what would your duties be on the bridge on the
22 outbound transit?

23 A. Well I attend either on the bridge to monitoring the control,
24 pilot control and quartermaster control and the duty officer's
25 control. I monitor that it's correct or not.

1 Q. Okay. After the vessel started to list, what orders were you
2 giving the crew?

3 A. Me or pilot?

4 Q. You.

5 A. After list and lost all power, I made paging, announcing.
6 But I tried many times. Just 22, 30 second connected alarm
7 signal. All crew stand by, all crew stand by. That's all. And
8 announcing power also cut down. And nobody applied. Nobody
9 answer by walkie-talkie.

10 MS. MIN: Okay, so --

11 MR. WILLETT: Hey, we're going to take, if you don't mind, a
12 quick break. And let's come back in about 5 minutes, if you guys
13 don't mind. Is that okay?

14 MR. LEE: Yeah.

15 (Off the record)

16 (On the record)

17 MR. WILLETT: Okay, we're continuing the interview with the
18 master of the *Golden Ray*. It is 10 September 2019. And we have
19 an addition to the group. Jonathan, if you could introduce
20 yourself?

21 MR. TENNANT: Jonathan Tennant, Pilot 6. Brunswick Harbor
22 Pilots.

23 BY MR. WILLETT:

24 Q. All righty. So Captain, just continuing what we were talking
25 about, before -- during the list, you tried -- you said to use the

1 general paging or the alarm or the announcement system. And you
2 got out, you said, two broadcasts or two announcements?

3 A. No, not Korean. English. I spoke directly English. Yeah.

4 Q. And it only worked two times?

5 A. Yeah. Two times. All stand by, all stand by. Like that.
6 Two times.

7 Q. And then it went out, right?

8 A. Yeah. Power out.

9 Q. Okay. Is that normally connected to the battery system, the
10 emergency battery backup? The PA system?

11 A. I'm not sure. Can you tell me again?

12 Q. Well that's part of your emergency equipment, the
13 announcement stuff? And it's normally connected to an emergency
14 battery backup.

15 A. Normally announcing system is -- one is a general alarm. And
16 paging -- announcing system one. And the second one is telephone
17 system. Two kind.

18 MS. MIN: Let me explain to him.

19 MR. WILLETT: Okay.

20 MR. LEE: Yeah. Connected to emergency battery. Yeah.

21 BY MR. WILLETT:

22 Q. Well I'll get back to that one a little later. We need to
23 probably do some research into that, but -- so after you made the
24 announcements, what transpired next?

25 A. Nobody answer. And I cannot -- I couldn't hear any kind of

1 movement. My crew members' movement, I couldn't hear. Nothing.
2 No response.

3 Q. Okay. And that was on the radio, the handheld radio?

4 A. Handheld radio is -- cannot find. At that time, it's
5 nighttime. Sometimes handheld. Sometimes put on the table or
6 other place. At that time, I put on the table. Listed. I
7 couldn't find it. No way to connect anybody. No way to connect
8 my crew member.

9 Q. Okay. How did you get off the ship? Yes.

10 A. Me?

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. All power lost. I ask my pilot to connect U.S. Coast Guard
13 to give assistance and to ask report to my vessel's condition.
14 And I loud. I yelled to crew members, somebody give me answer
15 when somebody heard my voice.

16 Q. Sorry.

17 A. But nobody answer. So at that time, five people on the
18 bridge: pilot, captain, duty officer -- duty officer is the
19 second officer. And deck cadet and duty quartermaster. Five
20 people on the bridge. In front of window, pilot stands. Pilot
21 position. And I stood -- machinery console. Behind the machinery
22 console. Machinery console.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. And duty quartermaster stand on the steering wheel. And
25 second officer is in front of radar and ECDIS. Radar here, ECDIS

1 here. In front of ECDIS. After list, all of them hold handrail.
2 Hold handrail. That's all. No way to move. And the pilot
3 contact U.S. Coast Guard, and then I ask the pilot to assist the
4 tugboat for emergency condition. So pilot talked with U.S. Coast
5 Guard many time, long time.

6 Q. Okay. So thank you for telling us your story. We would like
7 to go back to the pilot exchange, when you pass information to the
8 pilot. What do you typically let the pilot know about your ship
9 before the transit, the inbound or the outbound transit?

10 A. Normally when entering my vessel to port, upon boarding the
11 pilot, my vessel and I provide the ship's particulars and the
12 ship's (indiscernible) data and the ship's present condition for
13 the (indiscernible), draft, like that. (Indiscernible) draft,
14 like that. The important data is draft. And same time,
15 departure. Report departure, upon boarding the pilot, I provide.
16 And then pilot give me the information about his control
17 intention, navigation intentions, navigation plan. Yeah. And
18 then I gave, I gave undersign, and the pilot normally sign same.
19 And tugboat condition and unberthing procedures like that.

20 Q. Okay. Do you remember the draft inbound fore and aft?

21 A. Inbound, I'm not sure. I don't remember.

22 Q. That's fine. That's fine. Do you remember the outbound
23 draft?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Fore and aft?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. What was, what was that?

3 A. The forward is 9.4 meters.

4 Q. Forward's 9.4 meters. Okay.

5 A. Aft 9.45 meters.

6 Q. Okay. 9.45 meters. Aft. All right. So the ship had been
7 to Jacksonville, and you'd been on it for 10 days. Had it
8 acted -- when you were maneuvering, especially in constricted
9 harbors or rivers, did it act any differently at all than your
10 other car carriers that you were on? Was it more tender? Did it
11 move a little more during a turn, or did it come back fast? Or
12 was it any different than any other car carrier you were the
13 master of?

14 A. Almost the same.

15 Q. Okay. Almost the same.

16 MR. WILLETT: I think -- thank you, Captain.

17 MR. LEE: Yeah.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions at this time. I'll pass.

19 MR. FLAHERTY: Carrie?

20 BY MS. BELL:

21 Q. When you came on on August 28, did you do any kind of a
22 turnover with the previous captain?

23 A. Yeah. Turnover the previous captain.

24 Q. Can you describe that?

25 A. Sorry?

1 Q. Can you describe that turnover?

2 MS. MIN: You mean the turnover --

3 MS. BELL: Release --

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What information was passed?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Procedures or --

6 MS. MIN: The procedures.

7 MR. LEE: All conditions -- previous captain. Take over all
8 ship's information and present conditions, like that. All
9 information take -- took over me. I (indiscernible) ship's cache,
10 ship's provision, ship's condition and cargo condition, bunker
11 condition and the present voyage normal condition. Like that.

12 BY MS. BELL:

13 Q. How long does that take?

14 A. The time, the hour? Almost -- wait, wait. Almost 32 -- 35
15 hours. Yeah, 35 hours. Yeah. Including flipping time.
16 Including flipping time.

17 Q. Okay, so you get familiarized with the vessel --

18 A. Sure.

19 Q. -- through all that?

20 A. Sure.

21 Q. Okay. And what about the crew? Did you have the same --
22 have you worked with this crew before?

23 A. Yeah. Eight people same time come onboard -- came onboard at
24 Freeport. Some Philippine crew is 1 day only, disembark. And the
25 Korean people, for 1 day later, disembark because of prior

1 schedules.

2 Q. Okay, so --

3 MS. MIN: So he's just saying that there are eight new
4 members. New members?

5 MR. LEE: No. Disembarking members.

6 MS. MIN: No, no. Eight --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Eight members of the crew change.

8 MR. LEE: Yeah, eight members crew change at Freeport.

9 MS. MIN: Okay, change.

10 MR. LEE: Yeah. Four Philippine crew, four Korean crew. The
11 four Philippine crew left my vessel 1 day early. And the four
12 disembarking Korean crew left my vessel 1 day later.

13 MS. BELL: Okay. So have you worked with the crew who was on
14 this -- who was on watch when you were -- during the accident?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Previous to the -- do you want to ask
16 previous to him coming on onboard?

17 BY MS. BELL:

18 Q. No. At the time of, at the time of the incident, had you
19 worked with this crew, yes, before?

20 A. You mean at other vessel or at this vessel?

21 Q. This vessel. Anywhere. If they had been on the -- a
22 previous vessel with him -- I'm just trying to understand if you
23 were familiar with this crew.

24 A. I also worked this vessel just 10 day. All new face.

25 MS. MIN: New face. He's been only for 10 days on this

1 vessel.

2 MS. BELL: None of them had come from the other vessel where

3 --

4 MR. LEE: No, nothing. Nothing.

5 MS. BELL: Okay. Sorry for the confusion.

6 MS. MIN: They already worked on this vessel when you started
7 working. (Speaking foreign language).

8 MR. LEE: No. No.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's got it clear.

10 MS. MIN: Okay, all right.

11 BY MS. BELL:

12 Q. Had you been in this port before?

13 A. I remember when I was very young. When I was 26, I was a
14 second officer. I've been here, Brunswick, for a carrier.

15 Q. Okay. Wow.

16 A. Almost 40, almost -- yeah, almost 36 years ago.

17 Q. Okay. So you were talking about the loading report and that
18 you had not sent it yet to the company?

19 A. Sorry?

20 Q. The loading report had not been sent to the company yet.

21 A. Loading report?

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Loading (indiscernible) --

24 MS. MIN: Report. Report. The loading -- (speaking foreign
25 language).

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hourly report. The hours worked
2 report had not yet been -- hours.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hours.

4 MS. MIN: No, no --

5 MR. WILLETT: I asked about the loading conditions to --

6 MS. BELL: It was the --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He gets it from the company.

8 MS. BELL: So the report that you send, that you send, you
9 said it was --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Day labor report.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A departure report.

12 BY MS. BELL:

13 Q. It's a standby situation, you called it.

14 A. Yeah, standby situation.

15 Q. It was a departure report. I misspoke.

16 A. Yeah, people sending the departure report, just standby
17 conditions. When my vessel -- or when vessel's standby condition
18 is not finished the normal -- not finished the standby condition,
19 the departure report or work hour report, normally send after all
20 finished the standby condition.

21 Q. So about what -- how long does it take you to get that ready
22 to send out after you depart?

23 A. The time is very -- 1 hour or 1 1/2 hours making the report
24 up. But after finish the standby condition. In the immediate, in
25 the immediate over standby condition, all vessels cannot send the

1 departure report and the (indiscernible) like that.

2 Q. Okay. I was just curious when that is normally sent to the
3 company.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: After they cleared this -- after the
5 pilot's been discharged and cleared the sea buoy.

6 MS. BELL: Okay. Thank you.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay, so it's not -- after the sea
8 buoy. After the --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because then they're finished with the
10 departure.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, maybe a little further than just
12 SDS (ph.). At sea, so to speak.

13 BY MS. BELL:

14 Q. Okay. And when you were describing what happened and the
15 pilot was giving the starboard 20, giving the starboard 10,
16 starboard 20 orders, you said that you gave the port 10 order; is
17 that correct? Why did you do that?

18 A. Sorry? To make my ship upright.

19 Q. So the pilot didn't order that? You ordered that; is that
20 correct?

21 A. First time, pilot order to midship. But vessel turning to
22 the right continually, very quickly, continually. Pilot
23 midship -- the midship is not recovered to starboard. So I gave
24 order to port 10 to more (indiscernible) actions to recovering
25 effect.

1 Q. Okay. I just wanted to understand if you gave the order or
2 if the pilot gave the order and you repeated it.

3 MS. MIN: Pilot gave two orders, right? To the right 10 --

4 MS. BELL: That's okay. I think, I think we understand.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. He gave, he gave the 10.

6 MS. BELL: I think that's all I have for right now. Thank
7 you.

8 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

9 Q. Okay. Were there any -- prior to departing the port, were
10 there any -- did you -- were all the systems operating correctly
11 to your knowledge?

12 A. Working good. Correctly working.

13 Q. All right. Were there any mechanical issues with the
14 steering gear?

15 A. Nothing.

16 Q. Do you know what steering gear mode -- what mode the steering
17 gear was in when you departed? Follow-up or non-follow-up?

18 A. Manual steering.

19 Q. Manual? Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. When you departed with the tug and your bow thrusters or --
22 do you have a stern thruster?

23 A. No have stern thruster.

24 Q. Okay. So you departed the vessel with a bow thruster and the
25 tug. Did you -- was the vessel feeling tender or unstable at that

1 moment? Did you feel that the vessel was unstable at all?

2 A. When?

3 Q. Just after you pulled away from the dock.

4 A. Just the undocking time?

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. No. No have list. Yeah. No, none. Nothing.

7 Q. As you were departing the port, prior to the incident, at any
8 time did you feel the vessel was unstable?

9 A. No, nothing.

10 Q. Did any of the crew members on the bridge mention to you that
11 the vessel felt unstable?

12 A. Nothing.

13 Q. Okay. Did you -- were there any ballast transfers being
14 conducted after the vessel departed the dock?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Were there plans after you departed the port for ballast to
17 be added or removed or transferred within the vessel?

18 A. No.

19 Q. All right. Prior to entering the port, did you have to
20 offload any ballast?

21 A. Which port?

22 Q. The Port of Brunswick.

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Was the, was the helmsman, the quartermaster, was he
25 responding promptly to the rudder commands?

1 A. Good conditions. Promptly respond.

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. Yeah. Promptly responding as ordered.

4 Q. As ordered. Okay. Was there -- did you have any concerns
5 about the way the vessel was progressing out of the harbor?

6 A. Sorry, say again?

7 Q. Did you have any concerns with how the vessel was progressing
8 as it was moving out of the harbor?

9 A. No. I don't worry about that. Yeah.

10 Q. When the pilot ordered 10 degrees to starboard, did the
11 vessel, did the vessel heel to starboard at all, or did it stay
12 stable?

13 MS. MIN: Say it again? Can you say it again?

14 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah, is the vessel --

15 MR. LEE: Yeah, you mean the normal order starboard to 10 and
16 --

17 MR. FLAHERTY: When the, when the pilot asked for starboard
18 10, did the vessel heel over to the starboard side or to the port
19 side?

20 MR. LEE: At the instant of time or normal ordering? Yeah.
21 I ask you, in case over -- keeping the order to -- normally
22 starboard 10 and port 10, and vessel making heeling time. Or
23 it -- in the accident time, make order that heeling. Normal
24 condition or accident condition?

25 MR. FLAHERTY: (Indiscernible) talking about this time or

1 normal time.

2 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

3 Q. This time. This time, when -- at the, at the time of the
4 accident.

5 A. At the time of accident.

6 Q. When the pilot asked for 10 degrees right -- 10 degrees
7 starboard rudder, did the vessel heel to starboard?

8 A. No list.

9 Q. It stayed steady.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. When he ordered starboard 20, did the vessel heel to port or
12 to starboard?

13 A. Port.

14 Q. Okay. And then at amidships, the vessel stayed -- when you
15 ordered midship rudder, the vessel still continued to heel --

16 A. Sure.

17 Q. -- but to port.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. But was still turning starboard.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. All right. And then you ordered port 10 degrees rudder.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. The vessel still continued to heel to port, and it was still
24 turning to starboard.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Was there any slowdown in the vessel that you noticed?

2 A. Yeah. Listing and very heavily listing. And after pilot
3 gave order to hard -- rudder hard port, rudder hard port. And
4 then pilot order to pull us down. At the time, already all power
5 lost.

6 Q. Okay. Did the vessel, prior to any throttle command changes,
7 start slowing down on its own?

8 A. On test. Before departure or --

9 Q. No, no, I'm sorry. At the time of the accident.

10 A. At the time of the accident what?

11 Q. Did the vessel slow down on its own without any throttle
12 command changes?

13 A. You mean the turning time or lower --

14 Q. Turning time at the, at the accident.

15 A. Turning time. Yeah. Degrees the speed.

16 Q. Yeah. Without any change in the throttles.

17 A. Yeah, any -- not change.

18 Q. Okay. Did you -- was the vessel -- as it was turning to
19 starboard -- I know it's getting -- heeling to port and then
20 slowing down, was it shuddering, meaning vibrating, at all?

21 A. No. No apparent vibrating and shuddering.

22 Q. All right. Did you hear any of the cargo shifting? Meaning
23 did you hear any loud noises --

24 A. I'm not sure.

25 Q. Okay. Let's see. So right now, if the vessel -- was the

1 throttle -- was there time to move the throttle back to astern?

2 A. What? What?

3 Q. Was the throttle, was it moved back to astern before the
4 vessel heeled over completely, or there was not time?

5 A. Are you asking me the exact time that the pilot gave the pull
6 astern condition out?

7 Q. Right.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

10 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

11 Q. The pilot said full astern. Was there -- did the person at
12 the helm or at the throttle pull it back, or was there just not
13 enough time?

14 A. After all power is lost, pilot order to pull astern.

15 Q. Okay. All right. I understand now. After pilot -- did the
16 emergency diesel generator turn on after the power went off?

17 A. Yeah. First time, all lost, all lost power. Normal
18 generator and main engine lost -- started emergency generator.
19 But emergency generator, almost 30 second (indiscernible). And
20 then even emergency generator lost.

21 Q. Okay. Stopped. All right.

22 A. Understand?

23 Q. Yes, I understand. Thank you.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Just one final question. In your experience as a captain

1 sailing on other merchant ships, have you encountered a situation
2 where turning like that, where you would continue to turn to
3 starboard and then you started to heel over -- or have you heard
4 of similar circumstances with this type of vessel?

5 A. Like these conditions? Never. Never.

6 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. All right. That's all I have. Thank
7 you. Thank you, Captain.

8 MS. MIN: Can you say one more time your question?

9 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

10 Q. The type of accident that you experienced, have you ever
11 heard of that happening with a similar type (indiscernible)
12 vessel?

13 A. For me or other --

14 Q. Or just in general from your experience and knowledge. Have
15 you ever heard of a similar type accident?

16 A. I heard and I saw some news like that. Some news in SNS.
17 And some of the car carriers listed and sometimes capsized. Like,
18 I saw the pictures and I read the news. But --

19 Q. Not like this one.

20 A. Never experienced it for me.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you, Captain.

22 MR. JORDON: Yeah, my name is Randy Jordon, and I'm here for
23 Liberty Global Logistics. And my partner, Mr. McRae, had to step
24 out to be on the phone here. And he's now returned, so I'm going
25 to give him this seat.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You really did -- this is one of the
2 best I've ever seen you do, Randy.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was very good.

4 MR. JORDON: You know what? I'm going to tell my mom about
5 this.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good to see you, Randy.

7 MR. JORDON: She'll be proud.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good to see you.

9 MR. McRAE:: Have you started asking some questions?

10 MR. JORDON: No, I just told them about you and how cool you
11 were.

12 MR. McRAE:: Thank you, Randy.

13 MR. LEE: Okay, sir? Can I take some break time --

14 MR. FLAHERTY: Sure, of course.

15 MR. LEE: -- for a minute?

16 MR. FLAHERTY: No problem.

17 (Off the record)

18 (On the record)

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Colin (indiscernible). It's your
20 turn.

21 MR. McRAE:: Great. Perfect.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I thought Randy said no questions.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I see if (indiscernible) just real
24 quick --

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are we good?

2 MR. McRAE:: I think so, yeah. I think we're ready. Are we
3 good, Lee?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, yeah. Good.

5 MR. McRAE:: Okay, great.

6 BY MR. McRAE::

7 Q. Master, my name is Colin McRae. As I said earlier, I
8 represent the slot charter or space charter of the vessel Liberty
9 Global Logistics, LGL. Are you familiar with that name, LGL, or
10 Liberty Global Logistics?

11 A. Sorry, I (indiscernible).

12 Q. Okay. Are you familiar with the concept of a slot charter or
13 a space charter?

14 A. Yeah, I know the slot charter and the space charter.

15 Q. Okay, great. That's who we represent, so I just want to ask
16 you a few questions in that capacity. In you experience as a
17 master onboard car carriers, does a slot charter or a space
18 charter typically provide any instructions to the crew on what
19 lashing to use in lashing cars onboard?

20 A. Sorry, say again? You mean the -- okay, I understand the --
21 I ask you. You mean the slot charter or space charter providing
22 the lashing that's sold?

23 Q. Correct. To you. To the master or the chief officer of the
24 vessel.

25 A. In this time, I'm not sure. You'd better ask chief officer.

1 Q. Okay, fine. All right. Do you recall if there was anything
2 unusual about loading operations here in Brunswick?

3 A. Nothing.

4 Q. Was it done in the usual manner that cars are typically
5 loaded and lashed on your ships?

6 A. Usual or unusual?

7 Q. Usual. Was it --

8 A. Normal processing.

9 Q. It proceeded normally?

10 A. Yeah, normally.

11 Q. Okay. All right. Are you aware of any problems with loading
12 or lashing that were communicated to the vessel by anyone, by
13 stevedores or by anyone else?

14 A. You asking me that something problem that we had during the
15 lashing work?

16 Q. Correct.

17 A. Nothing.

18 Q. Okay, all right. In U.S. ports like Brunswick, is the
19 lashing of the cars that have been loaded onto the ship, is that
20 typically carried out by shoreside personnel or by crew?

21 A. Shore side.

22 Q. Okay. And was that the case here in Brunswick for this call
23 of the, of the vessel?

24 A. Sorry?

25 Q. And that's what happened here in Brunswick with the loading

1 of these cars? The lashing was all carried out by shoreside
2 personnel?

3 A. Yes, shoreside labor.

4 Q. Shoreside labor.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. All right. Prior to the vessel developing this
7 portside list, did you hear any load noise or any other sound that
8 would lead you to believe that any cargo had broken loose or
9 shifted?

10 A. After listing or prior to listing?

11 Q. Prior to listing.

12 A. Nothing. Never.

13 Q. All right. After loading operations are completed and the
14 stevedores and longshoremen depart the vessel, does the crew carry
15 out an inspection of the lashing that has been done on the, on the
16 cargo?

17 A. You ask the chief officer. I just received report from chief
18 officer.

19 Q. Okay. But he's responsible for carrying out any post-loading
20 inspection of the lashings?

21 A. Sorry?

22 Q. The chief officer is responsible for --

23 A. Sure.

24 Q. -- carrying out an inspection of the lashings?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Okay. All right. Based on your experience, is there
2 anything that leads you to think that the condition of the cargo
3 or the lashing of the cargo contributed to this incident in any
4 way?

5 A. My experiences or other --

6 Q. Based on your experience.

7 A. Nothing.

8 MR. McRAE:: Okay. All right. That's all I have. Thank
9 you, Captain.

10 MR. LEE: Yeah. You're welcome.

11 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer with the Marshall Islands.

12 BY MR. BREMER:

13 Q. Captain, do you know how many transducers for the echo
14 sounder the vessel has?

15 A. Two point.

16 Q. Fore and aft, or --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay. Do you know, during the outbound transit, was the
19 forward transducer or the aft transducer being monitored?

20 A. Dual time.

21 Q. Okay, so you were all --

22 A. Dual indicating.

23 Q. Okay. Do you remember, just prior to the incident, do you
24 remember what the under keel clearance was? The water depth under
25 keel?

1 A. I'm not sure.

2 Q. Okay. Do you know what the expected minimum under keel
3 clearance was based on the voyage plan?

4 A. I'm not sure. I don't -- I couldn't remember.

5 Q. Okay. And does the company have a minimum under keel
6 clearance requirement?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Do you know what that is off your --

9 A. The company policy has.

10 Q. And what is that clearance? Is it 1 meter, 2 meters?

11 A. No, meters -- I couldn't remember. Anyway, have it.

12 Q. Okay, so the company has a policy and you can't remember
13 right now.

14 A. Yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. BREMER: I think that's it for me right now.

17 MS. BELL: Nothing.

18 MR. FLAHERTY: You guys got anything?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No thanks.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chris?

21 LCDR [REDACTED]: Captain, I have one question.

22 MR. LEE: Yes, sir.

23 LCDR [REDACTED]: On your, on your outbound transit, at any time
24 did you feel like you left the channel?

25 MR. LEE: Any time what?

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Outside of the channel. Were you ever
2 outside of the channel? Was the vessel ever out of the channel?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I ask --

4 MR. LEE: No.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just, do you mean because it's outside
6 the channel now, technically?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When he's --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But you're talking about before the
9 incident.

10 LCDR [REDACTED]: Before the incident.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay, I just --

12 MS. MIN: No.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good. No questions.

14 MR. WILLETT: All right. Well if that's all, we're going to
15 conclude this interview. It's approximately 2:55 in the
16 afternoon.

17 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: CAPSIZING/SINKING OF THE *GOLDEN*
 RAY IN THE BRUNSWICK RIVER,
 GEORGIA, ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2019
 Interview of Gi Hak Lee

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA19FM048

PLACE:

DATE: September 10, 2019

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.


Eileen Gonzalez
Transcriber