

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: JUNYONG KIM  
First Engineer

Wednesday,  
September 11, 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

LCDR [REDACTED], Investigator  
United States Coast Guard

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DISTRICT 7 Legal  
United States Coast Guard

TOM BREMER, Maritime Administrator  
Republic of the Marshall Islands

COLIN McRAE, Attorney  
(On behalf of slot charterers)

RYAN GILSENAN, Attorney  
(On behalf of the Brunswick Pilots)

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

STEPHANIE AMIOTTE McDONALD, Attorney  
(On behalf of ship's crew and officer)

CHO KIM, Interpreter

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. FLAHERTY: This is David Flaherty with the National  
3 Transportation Safety Board. This is the interview for the  
4 investigation into the Golden Ray marine casualty. Today is 11,  
5 September 2019.

6 Sir, if you could please state your name?

7 MR. KIM: My name is Junyong Kim.

8 MR. FLAHERTY: Could you please spell your last name.

9 MR. KIM: My last name is K-I-M.

10 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you. Do I have your permission to  
11 record this interview for the investigation?

12 MR. KIM: Yes, sir.

13 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you.

14 MS. CHO KIM: Cho Kim, K-I-M, interpreter.

15 MS. AMIOTTE McDONALD: Stephanie Amiotte McDonald, A-M-I-O-T-  
16 T-E, M-C-D-O-N-A-L-D, attorney for first engineer Kim.

17 LCDR [REDACTED]: Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], U.S. Coast  
18 Guard, [REDACTED].

19 MR. WILLETT: Lee Willett, U.S. Coast Guard, W-I-L-L-E-T-T.

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

22 MS. BELL: Carrie Bell, National Transportation Safety Board  
23 Investigator, B-E-L-L.

24 LT [REDACTED] Lieutenant [REDACTED], [REDACTED] U.S. Coast Guard  
25 District 7 Legal.

1 MR. McRAE: Colin McRae, Counsel for Slot Charters, M-C-R-A-  
2 E.

3 MR. BREMER: Tyler Bremer, Republic of Marshall Islands,  
4 Maritime Administrator.

5 MR. OSSICK: John Ossick, O-S-S-I-C-K, attorney for the  
6 officers of the ship.

7 MR. MOSER: Shea Moser, M-O-S-E-R, counsel for vessel owners.

8 MR. GILSENSAN: Ryan Gilsenan, counsel for pilots, G-I-L-S-E-  
9 N-A-N.

10 (Whereupon, CHO KIM, an interpreter, translated the questions  
11 and answers for JUNYONG KIM as needed.)

12 INTERVIEW OF JUNYONG KIM

13 BY MR. WILLET:

14 Q. Mr. Kim?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Before we talk about the incident, we'd like to know a little  
17 bit about your background. How long have you been sailing?

18 A. From the first time on board?

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. It was 2012.

21 Q. 2012?

22 A. Yes. And I was third engineer starting on board.

23 Q. And you graduated from academy in 2012?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. How long have you been a first?

1 A. Oh, it's not the concern because -- so sorry, sir. I just  
2 need to count.

3 Q. Okay. That's no problem. It can just be approximate too.  
4 It doesn't have to be exact.

5 A. I was onboard as first engineer including this time, four  
6 times. So, it's total -- and he started as first engineer 2015,  
7 '16 and he had a break in 2017 and went on back in 2018 until now.

8 Q. Okay. Okay. How many car carriers have you been on?

9 A. Including this time, second time.

10 Q. Second time. Okay. When did you embark the Golden Ray?

11 A. Embark was, I didn't concern. It's not to be concerned.

12 Q. That's okay, just approximate.

13 A. Last December.

14 Q. Last December?

15 A. Yeah. December 17 or 18. Yeah.

16 Q. So, you've been on board a few months?

17 A. No, sir. I've been here with Golden Ray about 9 months.

18 Q. Nine months? Okay. Okay. So, during that 9 months have you  
19 seen, have there been any problems with the machinery?

20 A. Not a big problem because this is new ship. And everything  
21 was going through perfectly. So, I was very satisfied with the  
22 condition of the engine. In my concern, everything was normal.

23 Q. Normal?

24 A. Yes, normal. Not big deal.

25 Q. Did you do any maintenance on any of the machinery, like the

1 main engines, steering gear, generators?

2 A. I had a few maintenance happen but it's not a big one, like a  
3 piston. I didn't do the piston or like big job. Only small work  
4 like a pure injection valve, changed the pure injection valve. Or  
5 starting about like that way.

6 Q. Was there any unscheduled maintenance required?

7 A. No. It's on the schedule.

8 Q. So, everything you did was scheduled?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. Where were you when the vessel departed Brunswick,  
11 physically in the engine room?

12 A. I was in the engine control room.

13 Q. Okay. What does your normal job consist of in the engine  
14 control room?

15 A. Okay. My job, main job was doing stand by engine. I check  
16 the engine condition. Basically, I can, I watch the, on the  
17 screen, the engine and generator, everything going well. And in  
18 the control room, of course I see the monitors, checking the value  
19 of the engine condition and that.

20 Q. So, you see the main engine?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You see the generators?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. You see if the bow thruster's online.

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Is a bow thruster electric, or --

2 A. Electric power.

3 Q. Electrical.

4 A. They are electric motors. They are hydrolley system for  
5 checking or changing the pitch.

6 Q. Okay. And then the steering, can you see if the steering  
7 pumps are running from the engine control room?

8 A. Yeah. Yes.

9 Q. And were they all running?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. Is there two or three?

12 A. Two, sir.

13 Q. Two? And they were both energized?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay. Can you see if the ballast pumps are running?

16 A. I did check the ballast pump.

17 Q. I know you did later. Would there be a light or an indicator  
18 to tell if they were running?

19 A. There are indicators on the monitor. But that time I checked  
20 main engine. So, during stand by time, I didn't check the ballast  
21 pump is running.

22 Q. So, could the ballast pump had been running and you not  
23 notice?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. It could have?



1 A. Correct.

2 Q. Can you monitor the level of your fuel oil tanks and lube oil  
3 tanks from the engine control room?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. And does that information get passed to the Chief Officer?

6 A. Yes. Sometimes because during, in port, chief officer want  
7 to condition of the bunker. Then they check the bunker condition  
8 and adjust the ballast tank before sailing. So, at that time we  
9 can share the condition of the bunker.

10 Q. Who would share that with the Chief Officer?

11 A. I didn't remember. I didn't remember it.

12 Q. Is it written down or and you give it to them? Or is it, he  
13 just looks?

14 A. I'm sorry this is not my job and I don't know how they  
15 process.

16 Q. Okay. So, who should we ask that would know? The chief  
17 officer?

18 A. Maybe we can ask the chief officer

19 Q. Okay. Okay. All right. So, lets go back to departure from  
20 Brunswick. So, from when you were in Brunswick and you went  
21 stand-by, the vessel left the dock, you were in the engine control  
22 room monitoring the engines?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. On the way out was everything normal?

25 A. Yes. Everything was.

1 Q. The temperatures?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. The oil pressure?

4 A. Yes. Everything.

5 Q. Everything? And then when did you realize there was a  
6 problem?

7 A. When vessel tilt. I thought will be back again, because I  
8 thought why we tilt like this? Then I realize it's not coming  
9 back. Then it keeps tilting. Then, yes, it happened.

10 Q. Did you feel a shutter? Like a duh-duh-duh?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Do you think the vessel grounded?

13 A. No. No. So, I also why did it happen. I wondered, why did  
14 it happen? I don't know yet.

15 Q. Okay. Now as it started to tilt, what, did you grab on to  
16 the --

17 A. Yeah. Yeah. I am holding the bar not to fall down because  
18 when tilt, the fall down could be maybe dangerous. So, I try to  
19 protect myself and my mate, the second engineer. So, need to be  
20 protect.

21 I shout at him to holding the bar. That, you know, it only  
22 takes, it takes a little time to tell him. So, we try to protect  
23 for us, by our self. And I concern about the second, third  
24 engineer, third engineer and apprentice engineer as well.

25 They are, they were all in engine control room. So, I try to

1 find to them. I shout really, really loud at second engineer.  
2 So, they are in safe. So, we try to not fall down.

3 Q. Okay. So, as the vessel came over, when did you lose all the  
4 power and engines?

5 A. I didn't check the time. I cannot check the time because,  
6 you know, my situation was very hard. But hardly tilting, engine  
7 shutdown. And then I don't know. First, generator black out.  
8 And same time engine shutdown.

9 Then few times later standby running. Standby generator  
10 running but cannot work and emergency generator running for a few  
11 second. I thought they're running because light coming up again.  
12 But few, I don't know, few seconds later, also gone.

13 Then battery light was on. Then I thought, we are really in  
14 danger. I feel that way.

15 Q. Okay. So, the battery light, you had light in the engine  
16 control room?

17 A. Yeah, the, yeah, the light from the battery pack.

18 Q. Were they battle lanterns or like -- is it like this one?  
19 Like that?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No? It was a --

22 A. Engine, you know, it's sailing light, inside about small.

23 Q. Emergency ballast light.

24 A. Yeah. Emergency ballast tank.

25 Q. So, you were in the engine control room with the --

1 A. Second engineer.

2 Q. Second engineer?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. So, the boat tilted over. What did you do after you made  
5 sure the second engineer was okay?

6 A. He was with me. And I try to keep him not to falling down.  
7 I grabbed him not to fall down to the end of the engine room  
8 because the engine room was about a bit long. And if he falls  
9 down to end, he could be injured.

10 So, I try to grab him to not fall down to the end of this.  
11 Yeah.

12 Q. And after you made sure he was safe and you grabbed him, what  
13 did you guys do after that?

14 A. After that, we tried to check on the third engineer,  
15 apprentice engineer is now okay. Then, yeah, we tried to take a  
16 walkie talkie or telephone. But this one still, we were in the  
17 middle at that one, and the pointer is, distance was so far.

18 So, we couldn't make it that to take phone call. But we  
19 heard the announcement, attention, disembark attention. But we  
20 thought, if we are going down, we are, try to out of. The engine  
21 control will be dangerous.

22 So, we are waiting for, to make sure how we are doing next  
23 then water coming up.

24 Q. The water came in the engine control room?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Could you access the emergency escape jump from the ECC, or  
2 the engine control room?

3 A. Water came from the emergency escape route.

4 Q. Oh, it did?

5 A. Yeah. So, I tried to think, how can we escape from here?

6 Q. Yes?

7 A. There was no way. Then, yeah, then we tried waiting in the  
8 safe area. So, we tried to climb up to the other side of the  
9 engine control room.

10 Q. Yes?

11 A. But suddenly we felt so hot.

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. Then we, I don't even know how long we are, we were there  
14 because we don't have, I had a watch, but it was hot and bothering  
15 me. The watch maybe. So, I take, took it off. And, you know,  
16 watch, cannot see that already.

17 This room already dark. Only fuel monitor has alarm. That  
18 makes some little light so --

19 Q. Yes. How long did the emergency ballast light stay on?

20 A. No. Emergency ballast light, I don't know the time but --

21 Q. It did go out?

22 A. Yeah. It was also go out. So, we felt so hot in there. We  
23 decide to go down again, because water, we thought water is not  
24 coming more.

25 Q. Not rising?

1 A. Yeah. Not, no more rising. So, we hope, please, we are  
2 grounded. If not grounded, we were going to die. So, we pray to  
3 God to ground it. Yes. Yeah, yeah, I thought its grounded. So,  
4 we tried, we all decide to go down.

5 If we all keep in up there, we would die because we have no  
6 water. We thought, I thought I could die there. So, we tried to  
7 go down to the water. Then we are in the, we go down and try to  
8 make our body cool. Not to get sweat. Then, yeah, then I can  
9 survive in there.

10 Q. Did you have a flashlight?

11 A. I have a flashlight. But it won't take a long time. It  
12 won't last a long time.

13 Q. I see. Was there a refrigerator in the engine control room?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Did you, able to get the water from -- no? Okay.

16 A. It's a little better off. We, normally we had water but at  
17 that time, we are out of water. So, we thought the wiper (ph.)  
18 took the water bottle to carry the water from ballast.

19 Q. Oh, okay.

20 A. Yes. It was a really bad drop. So, I keep thinking, why it  
21 happens to me. I think, if I have water, I could survive 2 days  
22 more.

23 Q. Did, when, you were in the engine control room when the  
24 rescue.

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Where did the second go?

2 A. Okay. He has a story. You know, when I was in, up there,  
3 the second engineer and me together up there. And we felt really  
4 hot. And we took, he and me thought, we talked about this, we're  
5 going to die here. So, he tried to go down.

6 He said to me, he needs to go down to, near the water because  
7 too hot there. Too hot there. So, he said to me, he want to go.  
8 He did not, we are out of power. We are really out of power. So,  
9 but, you know, the distance and height is a little bit far.

10 So, I thought, we could die when we go down. If we try to go  
11 down, we could be die, to fall down the step. But, you know,  
12 anyway, we could die up there also. So, he go first. Then he  
13 step in the, on the water, in the water, it's not hot.

14 Not hot. And he asked me, come down. It's, I would die in  
15 there. So, third engineer, he going to water, into the water.  
16 And third engineer, apprentice engineer, they gathering together  
17 in the water.

18 And also, I went down. Yeah. Yeah. I went down but I went  
19 have no power to go down again. So, I was, but it's no more, not  
20 bad, to no more hot. And dehydrated. So, I decide I will, I will  
21 stay here.

22 That water come down, come up and the door, my place and  
23 their place, between have a door. The water buildup and door was  
24 sink. Then we are separated.

25 LCDR [REDACTED]: I see. Okay. That makes sense. Thank you. I

1 think --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no questions.

3 MS. BELL: I don't have any questions. Thank you.

4 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

5 Q. Just so I know, before the vessel heeled over, where were you  
6 standing? What deck were you standing? Where were you in the  
7 engine room?

8 A. I was in the engine control room.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. That is fourth deck. I think fourth deck.

11 Q. Okay. And then the vessel started to heel over. You  
12 departed the engine control room

13 A. Second or third engineer, apprentice engineer go down to  
14 check the back in that time. Then it starts tipping, the gate.  
15 Then they were, tried to come up because they also feel it's  
16 different.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. It's dangerous. So, they come to, try to come to engine  
19 control room. Cannot get into there because its already tipped.  
20 So, we are, we were there between the door of the engine control  
21 room. We -- yeah.

22 Q. Okay. After the vessel heeled over and the water came up,  
23 did it immediately start to get hot? Was it above you or where  
24 would you say the heat was coming from?

25 A. Okay. When the vessel tipped, we are, the water, I saw the



1 water come up, come up from the escape route. Then I think, we'll  
2 be, we going to be sink. So, we tried to go up more height where,  
3 so, we are really trying to go up other side of engine room.

4 Q. Right. So, on the starboard side?

5 A. Yeah. Yeah. Starboard side. Then, we feel the breeze  
6 really hard. So, we tried to, yeah, open the door. You know,  
7 there are two doors. The starboard side, so it has a door other  
8 side of the engine room.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. So, we open the door but it's hot.

11 Q. Okay. So, it was already hot, immediately afterwards?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. We tried to go out to engine room, but it's too hot to go  
15 out. So, yeah. So, I thought, you know, normally engine room was  
16 hot. So, it's going be cool. You need to take time. But it  
17 wasn't like that. It's keep hot.

18 Q. Yeah. In the engine room control room was the escape hatch  
19 in the center of the engine room control room or on the port side?

20 A. Escape to on deck?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. It's normally all in the port side.

23 Q. It's on the port side?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. The starboard is not, don't have.

2 Q. Yeah. And where does the escape hatch exit out on deck?

3 A. Escape hatch, okay. It's one in the stairway of the port  
4 side. Yeah, port side. And one is going through, into engine  
5 room. And one from the two, steering engine room. Then it also  
6 has a stair to deck 3.

7 Q. Okay. The one, you were in the engine room control room?

8 A. Yeah. Yes, sir.

9 Q. The one that, the escape hatch located in the engine room  
10 control room, when you entered it and traveled up it, which deck  
11 would you exit out on?

12 A. It is connected with the stairway, it's connecting decks 5,  
13 6, 7, 8.

14 Q. So, it goes up to deck 8

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Did -- you heard the announcement from the captain?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. After that were there any other additional  
19 announcements?

20 A. I heard. I think I heard announcement for disembark but, and  
21 standby to post station. Then one time from the, I thought that  
22 sound about telephone. They said they tried to ask us something,  
23 but it was not clear.

24 And we, also at that time, we were out of power. You know,  
25 we were up there. We cannot go down to take a phone. And then,

1 yeah, that's it.

2 Q. Okay. And how far did the water come up into the engine room  
3 before you were rescued?

4 A. Okay. The last time also here, no, in the middle of the  
5 engine room have a four, main circuit board, there when it's  
6 tipped, I was here in the middle of the engine control room. Then  
7 when I stand up, water was come down to here at the last.

8 Q. Okay. Is the engine room control room located in the center  
9 of the ship?

10 A. Yeah. I was, I was center of the engine control room. Then  
11 when I stand up, I was here. Then it's more than center, water  
12 filled up.

13 Q. Okay. So, even though the vessel is tilted over, did the,  
14 how, do you think three-quarters of the engine room was filled  
15 with water? Half of it was filled with water. If you can recall.

16 A. I think half.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I think half.

19 Q. Did you hear any additional alarms after the incident?

20 A. There are a lot of alarms come. I can hear, but I couldn't  
21 check that out because, you know, all light gone. And alarm, you  
22 know, at that time alarm wasn't necessary to me because I need to  
23 survive.

24 Q. Exactly. Yeah, that makes sense. Before the vessel, before  
25 the incident, when you were in the engine room, did you feel the

1 vessel heel extensively before the --

2 A. No. No.

3 Q. So --

4 A. I thought everything was really normal. Then I didn't expect  
5 a lot, this situation.

6 Q. It just all of a sudden went over? No warning or anything?

7 Yeah. Did you feel the vessel turn at all when you were down in  
8 the engine room or you just busy focused on the equipment?

9 A. I was busy. I was focused on my equipment and I didn't feel  
10 any difference. It's really like normal. So, I wonder why.

11 Q. Okay. Was there any internal transfers of fuel or any other  
12 liquid within the tanks, within the engine room prior to the  
13 incident?

14 A. No. Not transfer. Just using it. No transfer.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. All right. That's it.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no questions.

17 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer with the Marshall Islands. Do you  
18 remember the main engine speed just prior to the incident?

19 MR. KIM: Sorry, sir, I didn't certainly remember that.

20 MR. BREMER: Okay. Do you remember the last engine speed  
21 that you remember, the last time you looked at the control panel?

22 MR. KIM: Even I only checked only temperature.

23 MR. BREMER: Okay. No problem. Thank you. Nothing further.

24 MR. WILLETTE: Any more questions?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just got one.

1 MR. KIM: Yes, sir.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Fuel tanks on board?

3 MR. KIM: Yes, sir?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where are the vents for those tanks?  
5 Where do they go to?

6 MR. KIM: Fuel tanks? This, okay, our ship was fuel tanks  
7 and this one going to top of the deck, the wheel deck.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All the way to the top?

9 MR. KIM: Yeah. There's gathering, the old tanks gathering  
10 together and it's going to top. Top. And, yeah, on the top deck.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Good. Thank you.

12 MR. WILLETTE: All right. If anybody has, or nobody has  
13 anything else we'll conclude the interview. Its 125.

14 (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 Junyong Kim

ACCIDENT NO.:               DCA19FM048

PLACE:

DATE:                        September 11, 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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Romona Phillips  
Transcriber