

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: STEVE FARLEY
SSA Supervisor

Thursday,
September 12, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID FLAHERTY, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LT [REDACTED]
United States Coast Guard
District 7, Legal

LEE WILLETT, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LES LEDET, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

MARC DeJESUS, Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LCDR [REDACTED] Investigator
United States Coast Guard

TOM BREMER, Maritime Administrator
Republic of the Marshall Islands

DERRICK MILES, Operations
SSA

PAUL TECKLENBURG, Attorney
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(On behalf of SSA Atlantic)

SHEA MOSER, Attorney
(On behalf of the Vessel Owner)

RYAN GILSENAN, Attorney
(On behalf of the Pilot)

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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 an interview for the
4 investigation into the *Golden Ray* marine casualty. Today is 12
5 September 2019.

6 Sir, if you could, please state your name.

7 MR. FARLEY: Steve Farley, F-a-r-l-e-y.

8 MR. FLAHERTY: Sir, do I have your permission to record this
9 interview for the investigation?

10 MR. FARLEY: Yes.

11 MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you very much.

12 Lee.

13 MR. WILLETT: So we'll go around the room and introduce
14 everybody.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: Oh, yeah, oh. Might as well start over here
16 with the attorney. Sir, if you could please state your name, and
17 spell your last name.

18 MR. TECKLENBURG: Sure. Paul Tecklenburg, T-e-c-k-l-e-n-b-u-
19 r-g. I'm with Tecklenburg and Jenkins out of Charleston, and I'm
20 counsel for SSA Atlantic.

21 LT [REDACTED] Lieutenant [REDACTED], [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard,
22 District 7, Legal.

23 MR. MOSER: Shea Moser, M-o-s-e-r, counsel for Owners, Vessel
24 Owners.

25 MR. MILES: Derrick Miles, Operations for SSA.

1 MR. FLAHERTY: Spell your last name, please.

2 MR. MILES: Miles, M-i-l-e-s.

3 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer, B-r-e-m-e-r, Republic of the
4 Marshall Islands, Maritime Administrator.

5 Mr. WILLETT: Lee Willett, investigator for the Coast Guard,
6 W-i-l-l-e-t-t.

7 MR. LEDET: Les Ledet, U.S. Coast Guard investigator.
8 L-e-d-e-t. Sorry.

9 MR. GILSENAN: Ryan Gilsenan, counsel for the pilots.

10 LCDR [REDACTED] Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], U.S. Coast
11 Guard, M-a-r-t-i-n.

12 MR. DEJESUS: Mark DeJesus, Coast Guard investigator,
13 D-e-J-e-s-u-s.

14 MR. WILLETT: Okay. I think that's everybody.

15 INTERVIEW OF STEVE FARLEY

16 BY MR. WILLETT:

17 Q. So before we get started, we'll just kind of talk about your
18 experience, how long you've been doing everything. So what's your
19 actual title when you're loading these ships?

20 A. I'm the lead foreman.

21 Q. Lead foreman. And how long have you been the lead foreman
22 overseeing these ships being loaded?

23 A. In my profession I've been doing -- I've been in it 12 years.
24 Lead foreman I've been doing it around 7, 8 years.

25 Q. Seven -- okay. And so describe not the *Golden Ray*, but just

1 describe how you would normally show up, get your gang, start
2 loading the vessel, unload the vessel. What would a typical cargo
3 operation be for you?

4 A. We always show up an hour early, me and whoever I have
5 working with me. Usually it's one or two people. We try to get
6 everything set up, wait for the ILA, the longshoremen, to get
7 there. Go on the ship, look around, make sure everything is okay.
8 And then we have a safety meeting. So we shuttle vans to put the
9 -- to get the longshoremen. Any kind of equipment we might have
10 to get, we do. But we always show up an hour early before
11 everybody.

12 Q. Okay. And who do you normally talk with on the vessel?

13 A. The Chief Office or -- the Chief Officer on the vessel.

14 Q. Okay. You said you're prepping things. What are you doing
15 to prep?

16 A. It depends. Depends on like if I have heavy equipment or
17 something, I might need to get a forklift. I might need to make
18 sure we have the jockey truck ready or --

19 Q. Okay. What --

20 A. -- things like that.

21 Q. -- jockey truck?

22 A. It pulls mofies (ph.).

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. You know, it has --

25 Q. The mofies are those like tractor trailer beds?

- 1 A. They're like, yeah, that have heavy equipment on them.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. Anything. All ships are different. So --
- 4 Q. Are those trailers, the mofie and associated -- what did you
5 call it? Jockey?
- 6 A. Yeah. We call it a jockey truck.
- 7 Q. Are those all on the boat already?
- 8 A. No, no.
- 9 Q. Okay. So they're -- they belong at the port?
- 10 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 11 Q. Okay. Have you ever in your 7, 8 years, have you ever loaded
12 a boat and it's the boat needs to leave, and so the crew would
13 finish up securing --
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. -- transit out?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Okay. That's never happened. All right. So let's go to the
18 *Golden Ray*. Have you ever loaded it before? This is a first time
19 visit?
- 20 A. I've never loaded it before.
- 21 Q. Okay. All right. And then for the *Golden Ray* kind of go
22 through -- I know she came in, I guess, was it on Saturday?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. And what time did you get to the *Golden Ray* on Saturday?
- 25 A. We started at 1900.

1 Q. 1900?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And on this particular event, did you meet with the Chief
4 Officer prior to?

5 A. No. Two of my co-workers went on the ship, went up to the
6 decks for discharging, and I think just to make sure everything's
7 copasetic.

8 Q. Who kind of tells you where you're going to be working?

9 A. Globus.

10 Q. Globus?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So they'll send you, what, like a sheet or a --

13 A. We call it a stow plan.

14 Q. Stow plan?

15 A. Um-hmm.

16 Q. All right. The stow plan will have how many cars you're
17 taking off, and how many you're loading and where?

18 A. Yes. For SSI, which is Brunswick, that's what's on the stow
19 plan, SSI. Stands for Saint Simons Island.

20 Q. Okay. Do you have a copy? Can we get a copy of that stow
21 plan?

22 A. Um-hmm.

23 Q. So you look at the stow plan, and then who determines how
24 many longshoremen are going to be needed?

25 A. I do the day before.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So you get it like a day before?

4 A. Oh, yeah.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Sometimes a few days before. Just depends.

7 Q. Does it have weights of the vehicle, the vehicles or just the
8 amounts?

9 A. On the stow plan?

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. It will have in different holds the amount, and then it will
12 have a total metric tons on it.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So --

15 Q. Okay. And does that -- do you even really concern yourself
16 with the metric tons? You're just kind of going to load and
17 unload according to your stow plan --

18 A. Right, right, exactly.

19 Q. So on this particular vessel, did you off-load first or?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You off-loaded. And do you remember if they were small cars
22 or large cars that you --

23 A. They were small cars.

24 Q. Like Elantras or something?

25 A. Hyundais and Kias is what they were.

1 Q. So --

2 A. Fortes and Accents.

3 Q. Okay. Fortes and Accents. And then loading back on, were
4 they small or large vehicles?

5 A. They were larger.

6 Q. Larger.

7 A. The Telluride Kias. The new Tellurides.

8 Q. Those are really big, aren't they, like the four-doors?

9 A. Yeah. They're four doors, but they're -- they're like 1.9
10 tons, I believe, 1.85.

11 Q. Okay. 1.85 tons?

12 A. Metric tons, yeah.

13 Q. And then do you remember how many the other ones were, each
14 one?

15 A. Oh, I, no, sir.

16 Q. Okay. It doesn't matter. I was just curious. So while you
17 were --

18 MR. FLAHERTY: Colin, if you won't mind introduce yourself.

19 MR. MCRAE: Colin McRae counsel for the Slapped Charters,
20 M-c-R-a-e.

21 BY MR. WILLET:

22 Q. All right, so were loading this vessel, do you use the straps
23 or -- what do you call the straps that tie down the cars?

24 A. The latching straps?

25 Q. Yes. Do you use those from the vessel or --

- 1 A. You're talking about the discharging, right?
- 2 Q. I'm sorry. Yeah. We're still discharging. So when you
3 discharge, who goes around and unlashes?
- 4 A. The longshoremen.
- 5 Q. Okay. And then they also drive it off?
- 6 A. Not the lashers, but the longshoremen do drive it off.
- 7 Q. Okay. So you have a separate group that --
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. -- unlash and --
- 10 A. Right.
- 11 Q. -- separate group to drive?
- 12 A. Right.
- 13 Q. Okay. So after they're unlash, do you do one deck at a
14 time? So you completely off-load, and then you load it back?
- 15 A. We do all the discharge first. So it could be a number of
16 decks.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. And then we load back.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. We try not to do both at the same time.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. So how many decks did you off-load?
- 24 A. Two.
- 25 Q. Two. Okay. And was there anything strange during the off-

1 loading that was out of the ordinary?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. All right. So during the loading, did you load more
4 than the two decks you off-loaded or just you loaded two decks?

5 A. We unloaded 265 cars. We loaded back 359.

6 Q. 359. Okay.

7 A. And some of those went on a different deck.

8 Q. Okay. Okay.

9 A. So we eventually discharged 11 and 12 what was ours.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. And put cars right back on.

12 Q. Okay. And where were those cars going? Just to dealers
13 around here or?

14 A. The ones I loaded or took off?

15 Q. Took off.

16 A. That I couldn't tell you.

17 Q. Yeah. They just go into the yard and --

18 A. They go everywhere, yeah.

19 Q. All right. So during the loading, you had the same crew?

20 A. Oh, yeah.

21 Q. So the guys that take it off put it back on the lashing?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. So the lashing for the SUVs since they're larger do
24 you use a different lashing or is it the same as the --

25 A. It's the same.

1 Q. Okay. So they'll, like, take it off, hang it up, and then
2 they drop them back on, and grab the same lashes and all that. Do
3 you ever inspect the lashings to make sure they're --

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. And what would happen if you find one that's frayed or --

6 A. Wouldn't use it.

7 Q. Do you let anybody know --

8 A. You let a mate know.

9 Q. Okay. And is somebody from the vessel in each hold watching
10 you guys? Have they ever directed you to not load gear or maybe
11 put something else somewhere else?

12 A. No. I mean, the stow plan is the stow plan. So --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I've never had that happen. Not to say it wouldn't.

15 Q. Have you ever seen them check to make sure?

16 A. I take that back. When you're loading high heavy they might
17 do that. Cars, no.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I'm sorry.

20 Q. All right. So, like, just for cars, would they be watching
21 and using their own stow plan to verify that your stow plan --

22 A. They have a stow plan, yes.

23 Q. Okay. And some guy's in there checking it off? Okay. So
24 while you were loading the vessels on this particular day, did you
25 notice anything strange like any unusual lists or corrections?

1 A. No more than any other ship.

2 Q. So it was a normal load to you?

3 A. Yes. To me it was a normal load, yes.

4 Q. Now, working with the crew, did the crew seem like the normal
5 professional crew that you'd always work with?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. After the vessel is loaded, do you go through or does
8 somebody on your crew go through to verify the lashings?

9 A. The header for the gang.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Whoever brought the lashers is usually the one watching them.
12 The stevedore will check. And then, of course, the mates.

13 Q. The mates will go back too?

14 A. They're, well, they're supposed to.

15 Q. So in theory you have at least two eyes --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- looking at all these lashes?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Now, where are you physically usually located during the
20 loading and unloading?

21 A. I could either be on deck. This particular ship I spent a
22 lot of time in the field.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Where the cars were coming from.

25 Q. All right. And then were you there at the dock for departure

1 or did you just --

2 A. No. We're never there when it sails.

3 Q. Okay. So what time did you leave the boat?

4 A. We were done at 2042. I'm sorry, 2242.

5 Q. 2242.

6 A. And I've set sailing for 0100 for that vessel.

7 Q. 0100. And you said set sailing. Are you contacting the
8 pilot or --

9 A. I contact the agent.

10 Q. Agent. In this case it was Peter?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. So you contact Peter, tell him you're done, and you're
13 ready --

14 A. Yeah. We usually text (indiscernible).

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I give him a time or whatever.

17 Q. All right. And throughout this whole loading and unloading,
18 did you hear or see or smell anything out of the ordinary?

19 A. No.

20 Q. So it seemed to you like a typical loading that you've done
21 for the last 6 years?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Or 8 years. I'm sorry.

24 A. Yes.

25 MR. WILLETT: Okay. I think that's all I have.

1 Les.

2 MR. LEDET: Yes, sir.

3 BY MR. LEDET:

4 Q. Good morning. Les Ledet with U.S. Coast Guard. You had
5 mentioned that you all, when you report early to the vessel,
6 there's a safety meeting. That one of the things that you all do
7 is a safety meeting.

8 A. Before every vessel.

9 Q. Okay. What's typically discussed in that safety meeting?

10 A. Now, this is with the longshoremen. So the whole crew will
11 show up. We talk about what decks we're starting on, where's the
12 cars going, safety, seat belts, stay a distance -- one-way
13 traffic, you got two flags. Just anything that, you know, we got
14 to make sure cargo is right. So --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- it's usually a 6-minute -- we go about 6 minutes. It's
17 usually around 6 minutes for a safety meeting. The headers will
18 then talk, talk to their people.

19 Q. And the headers are?

20 A. The ones that bring the gang.

21 Q. The lashers?

22 A. Well, drivers, lashers --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- drivers.

25 Q. So you call those guys headers. They're over the gangs

1 whether they're lashing or --

2 A. They, yeah, will be, like, this particular ship is two
3 headers. They split up. Because you don't want one person having
4 so many people underneath of them basically.

5 Q. Right. Right. Okay. So in that safety meeting do you all
6 ever discuss where certain size vehicles should go or have any
7 concerns as far as distribution of weights? Does that come into
8 any --

9 A. No.

10 Q. That's not your concern?

11 A. We go strictly by the stow plan.

12 Q. Okay. So those calculations you're assuming were made by
13 someone beforehand then?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Is that right? Okay. What about the vehicles that you
16 actually load? Are -- I'm not real familiar with car carriers.

17 A. That's fine.

18 Q. Are these all new vehicles or there are some used vehicles or
19 --

20 A. Oh, this particular ship it's all new.

21 Q. This one is all new?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. But there are some that would carry used?

24 A. Very, very few. Yeah, but you're talking very few used.
25 Like, one or two here or there on a ship.

1 Q. Got you. When these things are loaded -- it is Mr. Farley,
2 right?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Mr. Farley, when these things are loaded, these cars,
5 what's the general condition of them? Do they typically have full
6 tanks of fuel --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- half tanks or what?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Yeah, what do they have typically?

11 A. Under a quarter.

12 Q. Under a quarter tank of fuel?

13 A. Oh, I mean, sometimes they run out. We've got to put --

14 Q. Is that right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. All right. And what about -- what can you tell me about like
19 the condition of the cars as far as any electronics or anything?
20 I mean, they have keys in them? Are the batteries in and
21 everything's connected or anything is disconnected?

22 A. No. It's all connected.

23 Q. Everything is --

24 A. A lot of them -- some are key. It depends on what you're
25 loading. Nowadays everything is push button pretty much.

1 Q. Got you.

2 A. You know.

3 Q. So typically you drive them. Do they get driven like right
4 of the dock onto the ship?

5 A. Oh, yeah.

6 Q. Into position.

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. Okay. And what are the, what are the skids that you were
9 talking about moving heavy loads that you've got to pull by the
10 jockey?

11 A. That's just we call it high heavy cargo. It's just something
12 we would use if you had big heavy crates or some kind --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- of machinery.

15 Q. It's not a -- it's not a --

16 A. Oh, no.

17 (Simultaneous comments.)

18 Q. -- vehicle that can be driven?

19 A. Yeah, yeah. You pull it with, you pull it with a jockey
20 truck.

21 Q. Got you.

22 A. That's all you do.

23 Q. What was that mofie stand for?

24 A. I don't know. We call it mofie.

25 Q. All right. Now your stow plan that you're working off of, it

1 tells you where vehicles are actually going to be placed in the
2 ship?

3 A. Absolutely.

4 Q. Positions? Is it like markings that tells you where it goes?

5 A. Yeah. It will tell me what hole it's supposed to go, hold.
6 There are four holds per deck.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. If it's, you know, you look at it. If it's on the starboard
9 side or port side or --

10 Q. Right. Do you -- is that stow plan, is that presented to the
11 crew by you when it's done? Is that something you would give to
12 one of the officers that would --

13 A. They have, they have it already.

14 Q. They already have it.

15 A. Oh, you mean after we load?

16 Q. Yes, sir.

17 A. Yes, yes, yes.

18 Q. Okay. So that's something you would give to them when you're
19 complete?

20 A. And we e-mail it to the -- we e-mail it to Globus.

21 Q. Got you. Okay. If there is a discrepancy in the stow plan
22 that let's say, and I don't even know if this is possible, but a
23 car is supposed to go into Slot A, but there's already a vehicle
24 in Slot A, or in Position A, what do you guys do? How does that
25 get handled?

1 A. Well, it's really not Slot A. It's -- if I, say if I was
2 loading a ship, and I go, I go -- we go up to Deck 10, and well
3 there's cars already there.

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. We have to get a -- hey, Chief, stow plan is showing there's
6 not supposed to be anything here. We're loading here.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And then where do you want it?

9 Q. Or I might get on the phone, and call the port captain, say,
10 hey, man, there's cargo up here, where do you want me to put these
11 cars?

12 A. Okay. So and is that a decision that gets made like right
13 then? Would they tell you go ahead and put it in another spot or
14 another place?

15 A. Yeah. Usually the Chief Officer will say something. Very
16 rarely does it ever happen but --

17 Q. Right. Sure. Sure. But when that does happen, do you, I
18 mean, you've got your stow plan on --

19 A. Oh, yeah, we --

20 Q. -- paper. Do you change it right there and list it as a
21 difference?

22 A. Well, yes. It will get changed before the ship's done. It
23 will -- if these cars are supposed to go here --

24 Q. Yep.

25 A. -- instead they went over here --

1 Q. Yep.

2 A. -- yes. It would get changed on the -- on a blank one that
3 we write on.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. And then it gets updated prior to sailing?

5 A. Oh, I don't know what they do after that.

6 Q. Okay. All right.

7 A. Once we, once -- I'm sorry. Once I e-mail or give it to them
8 both what they do with it, I don't, I don't know.

9 Q. Right. You had mentioned that when you look at the lashings
10 you inspect the lashings because that's owned by the ship.
11 Maintained by the ship, right?

12 A. Right.

13 Q. But you're going to inspect them prior to using them, I would
14 assume, to lash the vehicles down.

15 A. Well, it's a lot of lashing. I mean, you're talking --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's two per car.

17 MR. FARLEY: Four per car.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Four per car.

19 BY LEDET:

20 Q. Two in the front, two in the back.

21 A. Some six per car.

22 Q. Okay. What are you looking for?

23 A. In?

24 Q. On the lashings?

25 A. Just --

1 Q. When you're looking, when you're doing your inspection of the
2 lashings, what are you looking for?

3 A. I don't. I don't inspect the lashings.

4 Q. Oh, okay.

5 A. But when the cars, you know, we'll go by and kick, put our
6 foot on them, make sure they're tight.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. The mates will look at it, make sure they're criss-crossed
9 right or whatever their specifications are.

10 Q. Yep.

11 A. That kind of thing.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. The lashings themselves are not our supplies. But if I see
14 one, they're not going to use it.

15 Q. Right. Okay. And you would make that call to the Chief
16 Officer, and he would --

17 A. Yeah. The stevedore or tell a mate. Might not be the Chief
18 Officer. Might be just the mate watching them.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Hey, mate, this doesn't look good, you know, here you go.

21 Q. Yep. And they'd swap it out?

22 A. Yeah or no they'd throw it out usually. There's plenty --
23 you've got to remember there's thousands on one deck of lashing.

24 Q. Yeah. Okay. And, finally, the -- I assume you work pretty
25 closely with the crew of the ship when you're loading, right?

1 A. Not really, not as close -- I mean, I -- you have to be more
2 specific than that. They're there. If I have a problem, do I
3 talk to them? Yes. They, if they've got something they've got a
4 problem with, they'll, you know.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But as far as hanging around each other, no.

7 Q. What would you -- how would you compare the climate of that
8 crew, this crew on the *Golden Ray* working together opposed to
9 other vessels that you've worked with?

10 A. I mean, everybody is different, but there was no problem with
11 the *Golden Ray*.

12 Q. Everything was good? Okay.

13 A. I didn't have any problems with the -- you talking about with
14 the crew, right?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. The crew you were working with off the *Golden Ray*.

18 A. Yeah.

19 MR. LEDET: Good. Thank you very much.

20 MR. FLAHERTY: [REDACTED]

21 LCDR [REDACTED]: This is [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard.

22 BY LCDR [REDACTED]:

23 Q. So you said that you guys had discharged Decks 11 and 12?

24 A. Right.

25 Q. And then reloaded back to 11 and 12?

1 A. And Deck 5.

2 Q. Five. Okay.

3 A. Which is the main deck right off the stern --

4 Q. So you said earlier that the loading plan comes to you guys.

5 A. Um-hmm.

6 Q. When you go to the ship, is there any discussion with the
7 ship if the loading plan is the same like the one you have and the
8 one they have?

9 A. No. If it's the same?

10 Q. In other words, is it, I guess, is it possible that you would
11 have one loading plan, and he may have a different loading plan?

12 A. Yeah, it's possible.

13 Q. So there's -- so my question is do you guys -- is there any
14 discussion with the ship to verify it's the same plan?

15 A. Oh, yeah. If that were to happen. I mean, very rarely does
16 that happen.

17 Q. Okay. So you said the Tellurides are 1.8 approximately.

18 A. I think so. I think they're 1.85.

19 Q. What's a Kia? What's a Accent, a Forte?

20 A. Oh, gosh. I wouldn't --

21 MR. LEDET: I asked him that. He --

22 LCDR [REDACTED] Sorry. I missed that one.

23 BY LCDR [REDACTED]:

24 Q. The lashings are they chains or web lashings?

25 A. Web.

1 Q. Web.

2 LCDR [REDACTED]: That's all we have.

3 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

4 Q. You've worked for your -- prior to your current job, what was
5 your previous employment? Kind of give me a, kind of a history of
6 --

7 A. You mean before I --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- on the docks?

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. I was a restaurant general manager.

12 Q. Oh, okay.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. That's a big change.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So how -- what training have you received to do your type of
17 work?

18 A. I started out on container ships, and then -- it's on-hands
19 training in this business. I started with Break Bulk. I mean,
20 and I -- then I started doing Break Bulk, which is not a row-row,
21 but you all know what I'm talking about. Steel, paper, I do a lot
22 of that. And then finally cars. But as far as being the
23 Assistant Manager in Brunswick that's been 4 years, I think now,
24 something like that.

25 Q. Okay. When you became the Assistant Manager in Brunswick,

1 was there any training program that you had to go through for your
2 position?

3 A. No.

4 Q. All right. So it was all on --

5 A. I mean, there's people in our company that's been doing this
6 a lot longer than me that I worked under.

7 Q. Okay. Do you follow, what is it, OSHA standards for safety?

8 A. Oh, yeah.

9 Q. All right. For the vessel that day, you showed up. So
10 what's -- you go up, and you first -- you show up the day, and
11 you're going to do some loading. So what time of the day did you
12 show up for that vessel?

13 A. About 1700.

14 Q. 1700.

15 A. I mean, I'm sorry, 1800.

16 Q. 1800. Prior to that, do you -- was -- obviously, you weren't
17 there -- were you in the office prior to that at the facility or
18 --

19 A. Um-hmm.

20 Q. Okay. So when you show up at the office prior to going down
21 to the vessel, what are you looking over as you're --

22 A. Just making sure I got everything ready for the ship.

23 Q. Could you -- just so I'm aware, could you go over what you're
24 looking at?

25 A. I'm just getting the stow plans together for everybody.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I get the parking maps for discharging to everybody. I get
3 radios for everybody. Everybody's got radio. Just everything I
4 need for the ship.

5 Q. Okay. Is there any type of a safety brief prior to starting
6 the unloading or the loading?

7 A. Yeah, yeah. That's what I said earlier.

8 Q. All right. And what's the detail in that safety brief? What
9 are some of --

10 A. As soon as all the longshoremen show up at the ship, we go
11 over, we go over stowage, where's the cars going, anything that
12 has to do with the operation and its safety. We always preach
13 about speed, seatbelts.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. Whether the ship's one-way traffic up, hey, you got two
16 flaggers, you know.

17 Q. Okay. When you went down to the ship, who was the first
18 person you talked to?

19 A. I drove up on the ship. It's usually -- I don't know who.
20 There's usually a guy at the gang.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. On top of the ramp.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. And Bret, one of my, one of my co -- one of my workers
25 actually went before me.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Because I was checking out the field.

3 Q. Um-hmm.

4 A. Where the cars were. And they're good about -- they -- if
5 we're loading or discharging the very first thing we do is go
6 check cars. The very first thing we do.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Check the decks. We're making sure there's nothing out of
9 the ordinary on a ramp.

10 Q. Right, right.

11 A. Hey, there's been many a times when you come down a ramp
12 there might be a piece of cargo that's not ours or a car. Hey,
13 mate, we're going to move that. We don't like where it's sitting.
14 Put it back when it's done.

15 Q. Okay. All right.

16 A. Things like that.

17 Q. Okay. How is your ability to communicate with the crew
18 during the off-loading?

19 A. During the off-loading?

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. Good. If I need something.

22 Q. Was there any -- did you have any challenges with, I assume
23 speaking English with them, did they seem to understand?

24 A. Sometimes you run into some that it's kind of hard.

25 Q. But the crewmembers you were dealing with that day, were

1 they, were they fine?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. Did any -- are you aware of any of your workers having
4 communication challenges with the crew at the time?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. When you were onboard the vessel, and I know you went
7 through this, might be a little repetitive, but if you could, you
8 went up the stern ramp?

9 A. For?

10 Q. When you entered the vessel.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. Could you describe where you -- where did you go on
13 that vessel during that day? Did you visit all -- just from the
14 time you walked on the stern ramp, could you just kind of describe
15 where you went immediately within maybe the next 45 to 50 minutes
16 after you went onboard?

17 A. Depends on what deck we were working. I'd go up --

18 Q. Well, on that day. So you -- on that day, you just stepped
19 onboard the *Golden Ray*.

20 A. You're talking about before the operation started?

21 Q. Correct.

22 A. Oh, okay. Yeah. Bret, a couple of my people, they went up
23 to Deck 11 and 12 just to check out the cars, the discharge cars,
24 make sure they have a clear path, just like I said.

25 Q. All right. Did you follow them up there or --

1 A. No. I was in the field.

2 Q. Okay. All right. I just wanted to clarify. Did they come
3 back? Did they have any discrepancies?

4 A. Huh-uh.

5 Q. All right. So you off-loaded the 300 or --

6 A. We off-loaded --

7 Q. -- excuse me, the 265 vehicles?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Everything went fine? No issues?

10 A. No issues.

11 Q. All right. Were there any -- how was the weather? Any
12 thunderstorms going through? Anything delay you?

13 A. No.

14 Q. All right.

15 A. Huh-uh.

16 Q. When you were at the facility, was there any other activity
17 going on? Was that the only ship there or were there other ships?

18 A. That was the only, that was the only vessel working that
19 night.

20 Q. Okay. Then so when you're off-loading, you started off-
21 loading the 265 vehicles at what time?

22 A. 1900.

23 Q. 1900. How long did that take?

24 A. We discharged to, 'till, if I remember correctly, 2012.

25 Q. 2012.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Did that seem to be a regular -- that's the normal time it
3 would take to off-load?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. You didn't feel that you were behind?

6 A. No, no.

7 Q. All right. So at 2012 do you -- how much time between -- all
8 right. We've off-loaded the vehicles. We've got these vehicles
9 to load on. What was the time difference between stopping off-
10 loading and then starting on-loading?

11 A. Six minutes, 12 minutes.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. They've got to get in place for the load back.

14 Q. All right. So there was no delay, like, they didn't have to
15 do anything with the ship?

16 A. Oh, no.

17 Q. All right. Did the crew -- were you, being on the field,
18 were you going onboard the vessel during the off-load at all just
19 to see how things were going?

20 A. Um-hmm. I go back and forth.

21 Q. Okay. The crew that was onboard the ship, not your crew, but
22 the *Golden Ray's* crew.

23 A. Right, right.

24 Q. Would you -- and this is just your opinion observing them,
25 did they seem alert on the job, rested or how would you describe

1 them?

2 A. I mean, they were just like the same crews I've worked with
3 before. I didn't see any difference, if that's what you're
4 asking.

5 Q. You didn't see anything that would indicate that maybe
6 they're not focused, not --

7 A. No. I --

8 Q. -- attention?

9 A. -- didn't see that.

10 Q. All right. So roughly 16. So about 2030 you started
11 unloading?

12 A. You mean loading?

13 Q. Excuse me. Loading, yes.

14 A. Yeah, about 2018, probably.

15 Q. 2018.

16 A. Yeah. It didn't take long.

17 Q. All right. And when did the loading stop?

18 A. 2242.

19 Q. And, again, that was normal time, nothing -- there was no,
20 nothing delayed the loading? There were no issues while they were
21 loading? Your crewmember -- your crew never came back to say,
22 hey, we've got an issue we need to resolve or anything like that
23 during --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- that whole time period?

1 A. No.

2 Q. All right. At 2242, could you please describe what is your
3 responsibility after all the cargo is loaded? And if you could
4 kind of just describe your interactions with the crew, and then
5 once you're finally done for your job.

6 A. We make sure the count is right, give them copies of the
7 plan. We always tell them what time sailing is. I'll do that for
8 them. Get load orders signed. And that's really it.

9 Q. Okay. At the time when from 2242 what time did you depart
10 the vessel after conducting that?

11 A. Oh, gosh, it takes 5 minutes.

12 Q. Okay. About 2250?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. All right. At 2250 when you're interacting directly with the
15 crew, do -- would you consider them awake, alert, focused?

16 A. Um-hmm.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. It's usually the Chief Officer. I've got to go through him.

19 Q. All right. But --

20 A. I can't -- it's not a mate. It's the Chief Officer.

21 Q. Okay. So the Chief Officer when you were directly dealing
22 with him, did you have any language barriers with him?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. When you, prior to departure, did you feel that he was
25 alert? He wasn't, like, exhausted or unfocused?

1 A. Seemed fine.

2 Q. Okay. And then after you depart the vessel what -- that's
3 it, you're done?

4 A. I'm done.

5 Q. All right. And then there's no further paperwork you have to
6 do sending things out or anything like that?

7 A. Huh-uh.

8 Q. No. And then the paperwork --

9 A. I mean, I'll e-mail. Like I said, I'll e-mail that plan and
10 the -- to Globus and --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- the port captain.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Go ahead.

14 BY MR. DEJESUS:

15 Q. I have a couple of questions for you. This is Mark DeJesus,
16 Coast Guard. Who approves the final loading plan?

17 A. That would be -- you mean the stow plan itself? That would
18 be Globus or the shipping line. I don't --

19 Q. They make all the calculations, and they send the loading
20 plan to you?

21 A. Oh, yes.

22 Q. Also, once you're done with the whole evolution, everything's
23 loaded up, are the ramps then stowed up into the ship?

24 A. I'm gone by then, but, yeah, they got to wait for the pilot
25 to get on, I take it. If the gangway is not down, sometimes we'll

1 put the little gangway down, and the pilot -- but I'm never around
2 for that.

3 Q. Any time when you were onboard the vessel, did you hear any
4 alarms, anything unusual?

5 A. No.

6 Q. All right. And then when you were at the dock, and I think
7 you kind of talked to this before, but when you were onboard the
8 vessel, did the vessel to you feel trim? It didn't have any
9 heeling to port or starboard?

10 A. A little bit starboard.

11 Q. All right.

12 A. But nothing out of the ordinary.

13 Q. It wasn't like (indiscernible).

14 A. No. We wouldn't go on if it was like that.

15 Q. Yeah, I hope so, yeah. All right.

16 MR. DEJESUS: Sir.

17 MR. MCRAE: Colin McRae. I represent the Slapped Charters
18 vessel.

19 BY MR. MCRAE:

20 Q. Liberty Global Logistics, are you familiar with that name or
21 LGL?

22 A. Yeah. I work their ships.

23 Q. Okay. I just want to follow-up on a few things. And I got
24 here about 5 or 10 minutes late. So I apologize if any of this is
25 duplicative. You mentioned that sometimes you'll interact with

1 the port captain. Was there a port captain here for this vessel?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Who is the port captain typically there on behalf of when
4 there is a port captain?

5 A. He's been on one of the ships once. His name is Sammy. I'm
6 not sure of his last name. But I deal with Mike Mavernak (ph.)
7 with Globus, if I have issues.

8 Q. Do you know who Sammy works for?

9 A. Norton and Lilly.

10 Q. Norton Lilly. Okay. You mentioned that at times if there is
11 some discrepancy you go up to a deck, and you see cars that are
12 there where you're supposed to load cars, and you need to change
13 the stow plan or a stow plan needs to be changed. That didn't
14 happen for this ship did it?

15 A. No, huh-uh.

16 Q. You also mentioned something about specifications for the
17 lashings. Was that -- records of specifications is that the
18 orientation that they're going to be lashed down?

19 A. Um-hmm, right.

20 Q. And is that posted or is that just something that you and
21 your guys or your longshoremen just know?

22 A. No. That would be e-mailed to me.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know if there was some document that was e-
24 mailed about the orientation of the (indiscernible)?

25 A. Well, they'll e-mail me, and they'll say, okay, it's -- make

1 sure you do two and two, which it means two in the front, two in
2 the back. Hey, and that's facing fore-and-aft, hey, anything
3 athwartship ship make sure it's three and three for burden,
4 however you put it, and that's what we do.

5 Q. And all the cars that you guys loaded were loaded fore-and-
6 aft?

7 A. I loaded, I mean, I can't tell you how many. There's some.
8 You always load some athwartship.

9 Q. And, again, pardon if this has already been discussed, but
10 who was it that generated the stow plan for the ship?

11 A. Sammy.

12 Q. Sammy.

13 A. Um-hmm.

14 Q. And he's with Norton Lilly you say?

15 A. Um-hmm. But I --

16 Q. Did he forward it on behalf of somebody else or do you think
17 Sammy actually generated it himself?

18 A. Oh, he generated himself.

19 Q. Go ahead. Sorry.

20 A. I mean that's who e-mailed it to me. That's who I go to when
21 I load back one of Globus' vessels.

22 Q. Okay. The lashings that you guys found onboard, were they
23 normal lashings that you would expect for this type of cargo?

24 A. Um-hmm. Yes.

25 Q. And you guys were satisfied with them?

1 A. Yes, um-hmm.

2 Q. Wasn't any need to deviate from what the lashings were, ask
3 for any additional lashings or different lashings?

4 A. No, sir.

5 Q. You mentioned that sometimes you'll compare the stow plan to
6 make sure that you have the same stow plan as what the ship is
7 working with or the mates are working with.

8 A. I don't go up and say, hey, let me see your stow plan. If
9 there was a problem with a stow plan, say a discharge plan, that's
10 when I would compare.

11 Q. But in this instance, you didn't have to do that?

12 A. Didn't have to do that, no.

13 Q. Everything --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. The decks were clear when you -- well, I guess, actually they
16 weren't clear.

17 A. No, they weren't clear.

18 Q. Discharging those 11 and 12.

19 A. And then loaded back --

20 Q. Right.

21 A. -- 11 and 12 and 5, Deck 5.

22 Q. And so 5 was clear when you guys started to load 5?

23 A. I mean, there was a clear spot for me to put cars.

24 Q. In the hold where you were -- where your stow plan showed you
25 loading these cars.

1 A. Yeah. It was --

2 Q. No need to compare or --

3 A. No. It was basically would have showed.

4 MR. MCRAE: Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.

5 MR. FLAHERTY: Mr. [REDACTED].

6 MR. [REDACTED] No questions.

7 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer with the Marshall Island.

8 BY MR. BREMER:

9 Q. Just one quick question for you.

10 A. Sure.

11 Q. On the Tellurides that you loaded, did you have to install
12 any additional anchor points? Like a, you know, removal spot in
13 the bumper that you had to screw in?

14 A. No. They're already on there.

15 Q. Okay. So it's just the four frame eyes --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- installed?

18 A. Yeah. These were. So it wasn't wheel lashing. They come
19 installed.

20 Q. Okay.

21 MR. BREMER: That's it.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

23 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

24 Q. If I could just do a follow-up. What kind of hooks were
25 those?

1 A. Well, they look like a big U-bolt. Like it goes in -- it
2 screws into your -- to the bumper and to the back.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. And that's where the lashes hook in.

5 Q. Were -- the hooks, do they go like this on the vehicle or are
6 they --

7 A. No. They just go like this.

8 Q. All right. But are they facing out on the vehicle or do they
9 face --

10 A. Out.

11 Q. Out. Okay. Are they -- do you have -- are those provided by
12 the vehicle manufacturer or by your facility?

13 A. The lashing?

14 Q. No, the hooks.

15 A. Oh, that's -- that would be by the vehicle manufacturer.

16 Q. All right. We should probably --

17 A. We don't --

18 Q. -- probably ID what type they're using. Were they kind of
19 like a piece of metal that was bent back or were they something
20 that looked like it was forged, if you can recall?

21 A. It's just a -- screws in. It looks like a -- goes like that.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. And that's where the hook goes in.

24 Q. Yeah. All right.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

1 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

2 Q. Let me ask one last question. Sorry. You mentioned that
3 you've worked LGL ships in the past --

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. -- and that you're familiar with their people. Was there
6 anybody from LGL that contacted you about the loading of this
7 ship?

8 A. No. the only time I hear from them is a liberty ship.

9 Q. Fair enough. Thanks.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chris, you have --

11 BY LCDR [REDACTED]:

12 Q. Vessel moored starboard side to? Starboard side is against
13 the dock?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. When you guys got there, and you had to go up to Deck 11 and
16 12 for the discharge, were the internal ramps already set?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And last question, when you guys loaded 11 and 12, was that
19 deck fully loaded with cars?

20 A. Oh, yes.

21 LCDR [REDACTED]: That's all I got, sir. Thank you.

22 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

23 Q. One more thing.

24 A. Sure.

25 Q. You said you work with Mike sometimes, Mike Mavernak.

1 A. He, I, yes.

2 Q. Did you call him at all during the evolution before or after?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Didn't really need to.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right, that's all I have.

7 MR. FLAHERTY: So if we don't have any more questions, I
8 think they need the room back. So we conclude this interview at
9 9:45.

10 (Whereupon, at 9:45 a.m., on September 12, 2019, the
11 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 Steve Farley

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA19FM048

PLACE:

DATE: September 12, 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.


Katherine Motley
Transcriber