

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: MIKE MAVRINAC, Local Operations Manager
Hyundai Glovis

Military Safety Unit
Savannah, Georgia

Thursday,
September 19, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID M. FLAHERTY, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CAPT BLAKE WELBORN
U.S. Coast Guard

LT [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

LEE WILLETT
U.S. Coast Guard

LT [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard

TOM BREMER
Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator

CHOERLAG JOENG, Investigator
Korean Maritime Safety Tribunal

HEEDONG CHOI, Investigator
Korean Maritime Safety Tribunal

JEONG IL HWANG, Investigator
Korean Maritime Safety Tribunal

JIM MOSELEY
Vessel PPI

RYAN GILSENAN, Attorney
(On behalf of Pilot)

COLIN McRAE
Liberty Global Logistics

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:00 a.m.)

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3 MR. WILLETT: My name is Lee Willett. I'm an investigator
4 for the Coast Guard. We're conducting an interview regarding the
5 incident at St. Simons Sound. Today is September the 19th,
6 11 o'clock. We are interviewing a representative of Hyundai
7 Glovis, Mike Mavrinac. Could you please state your name and spell
8 your last?

9 MR. MAVRINAC: Mike Mavrinac, M-a-v-r-i-n-a-c.

10 MR. WILLETT: Sorry about that.

11 MR. MAVRINAC: Don't worry about it. Everybody butchers it.

12 MR. WILLETT: We are recording this interview. Do you mind
13 if we record the interview?

14 MR. MAVRINAC: I do not mind if you record the interview.

15 MR. WILLETT: Okay. With that, I'd like to, if we could, go
16 around the room and state who's here. At least spell your last
17 name.

18 MR. BREMER: Tom Bremer, B-r-e-m-e-r, Republic of Marshall
19 Islands, Maritime Administrator.

20 LT [REDACTED] Lieutenant [REDACTED], legal advisor.

21 LT [REDACTED]: Lieutenant [REDACTED] recorder for the
22 formal board, [REDACTED].

23 MR. WELBORN: Captain Blake Welborn, W-e-l-b-o-r-n, lead
24 investigator for the Coast Guard.

25 MR. JOENG: My name is Joeng Choerlag from Republic of Korea,

1 KMST investigator, last name J-o-e-n-g.

2 MR. CHOI: I am Heedong Choi from KMST, last name C-h-o-i.

3 MR. HWANG: Jeong il Hwang, last name H-w-a-n-g, investigator
4 from KMST, Korean Maritime Safety Tribunal.

5 MR. MOSELEY: Jim Moseley, Jr., attorney for vessel,
6 M-o-s-e-l-e-y.

7 MR. McRAE: Colin McRae, counsel for charters in the Vessel,
8 M-c-R-a-e.

9 LT [REDACTED]: And for the folks on the phone, can you please
10 state your name and titles for the record?

11 MR. GILSENAN: Yes. This is Ryan Gilsenan, G-i-l-s-e-n-a-n,
12 counsel for Brunswick pilots.

13 MR. FLAHERTY: This is David Flaherty with the National
14 Transportation Safety Board, last name spelled F-l-a-h-e-r-t-y.

15 MR. WILLETT: Okay, back to Lee Willett with the Coast Guard
16 Marine Investigation.

17 INTERVIEW OF MIKE MAVRINAC

18 BY MR. WILLETT:

19 Q. I'd like to -- before we start, I'd like to know a little bit
20 about your background and what you do on a day-to-day -- a normal
21 day, not just with the *Golden Ray*, but what would you normally do
22 for Hyundai Glovis on a normal day interacting with vessels.

23 A. Okay. So I'm the local operations manager for East Coast and
24 Gulf. Basically, my day-to-day is I manage the vessel schedules,
25 I oversee some of the load and discharge operations through my

1 stevedores. I am, on a daily, checking terminal inventories to
2 see what we have on ground, what's available to load, what's
3 customs cleared, what's not. And I do a lot of vessel tracking, a
4 lot of updating the vessel schedules. I liaise with my agents and
5 also with the gentlemen that load my vessels, Samy. And that's
6 kind of my day-to-day, bouncing around doing 90 percent of the
7 operations working for the company.

8 Q. All right. So who do you directly report to for Hyundai
9 Glovis?

10 A. JJ King, James J. King.

11 Q. Is he local?

12 A. He's in New Jersey.

13 Q. In New Jersey?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And you also were in New Jersey?

16 A. Yes, I am.

17 Q. So what would his position be? Does he give you like
18 directions every day?

19 A. Not really. He's more on the commercial side. He used to
20 sit in the operations role, but since I got there he's moved up,
21 so he deals with most of the OEMs, commercial side, that aspect of
22 it. He does assist when I need it, but I'm mostly kind of doing
23 the ops side of it.

24 Q. So you mentioned you did some of the scheduling in the
25 vessels; is that correct?

1 A. Yeah, I do all the local schedules.

2 Q. So for the *Golden Ray*, we understand she left Freeport,
3 Texas?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And in route there was a weather system, Hurricane Dorian.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So what did you do to help them?

8 A. Well, as we know, this hurricane got pretty bad pretty quick
9 and then stopped moving. So rather than try to push her before
10 the storm, we took an extra day in Freeport to kind of work the
11 cargo and make sure everything was proper as to lashing, loading,
12 everything else.

13 I slow-steamed the vessel, left around pretty much the
14 western side of the straits of Florida to keep her out of the
15 system that was there. And obviously, with the way the system was
16 tracking north, decided we'll call Jacksonville first to alleviate
17 some of the pressure in the terminals, because when this happens,
18 obviously, there's a backup.

19 Q. So how do you communicate with the vessel?

20 A. Usually through phone call or email. Most of it's email
21 through, you know, this is your updated schedule, this is why,
22 this is how. Obviously, this one was some phone calls, because
23 there was a lot of uncertainty with weather.

24 The other way I do a lot of my communications is my local
25 agents here. They send messages back and forth, pre-arrivals,

1 pilot times, everything else. So I kind of assist in setting that
2 up, letting them know when they're coming, and they will liaise
3 the captain locally.

4 Q. Did you discuss at all with the ship about taking any ballast
5 for heavy weather?

6 A. I did not because that's his vessel. So if he feels the need
7 to, he knows that he can, and we told him to prepare for the
8 incoming weather.

9 Q. And could we get a copy of the email correspondence to and
10 from the *Golden Ray*?

11 A. As long as --

12 MR. MAVRINAC: Jim, are we okay with that?

13 MR. MOSELEY: Yeah. Well, as -- just make sure we're on the
14 record here on these things. Any documents you would like after
15 we conclude here today, I've already told [REDACTED] that I'm happy to
16 meet with you all. Give me a list.

17 MR. WILLETT: Excellent.

18 MR. MOSELEY: If you don't need a subpoena, yeah, I'll try to
19 get it to you and do that. If you want to give me a formal
20 subpoena, I will work with you in that regard. But I want you all
21 to know that we're here to cooperate and provide you what you
22 need.

23 MR. WILLETT: Okay.

24 MR. MOSELEY: But I'd like to do it like we would -- normal
25 course of things. So I'm making a note, but I don't rely on my

1 notes, so if we could meet at some point and confirm, and we'll
2 respond. If that's acceptable.

3 MR. MAVRINAC: And I'll move as quickly as I can, but you
4 know --

5 MR. WILLETT: Perfect.

6 MR. MAVRINAC: -- I'm a little busy down here, so I'll get --

7 MR. WILLETT: I understand.

8 MR. MAVRINAC: -- to it as fast as I can.

9 MR. WILLETT: Totally understand.

10 BY MR. WILLETT:

11 Q. So for the *Golden Ray*, how many times have you worked with
12 that vessel before?

13 A. Once, but not with the company I'm with now. I've had some
14 correspondence with the vessel through another agent when I was
15 with my prior company, to kind of see where she was and everything
16 else, for timing in Newark with one of the ports.

17 Q. What was your (indiscernible)?

18 A. So prior to this -- I'll take it two steps back -- I worked
19 for Höegh Autoliners as a port captain planner, a little bit of
20 sales. And it was on the break bulk team there loading high heavy
21 ships. And I then moved to Wallenius Wilhelmsen Ship Services,
22 where I was a -- the local port captain and ops manager for Port
23 of Newark.

24 Q. And are those -- I know Wilhelmsen usually has a lot of ro-ro
25 ships --

1 A. They're all -- I only kind of deal with ro-ro vessels; I
2 don't deal with anything else.

3 Q. Have you been -- what's your experience with that, like 10
4 years, 5 years?

5 A. Probably about 11-ish, 12-ish now.

6 Q. And this -- you've done the whole gamut, you've helped --
7 have you ever done like the cargo loading --

8 A. That's my specialty is kind of loading and discharging the
9 vessels and understanding that. The cars, yes, and then break
10 bulk as well, you know. We do a lot of break bulk parts.

11 Q. So on a vessel like a ro-ro, you are dealing with cargo
12 that's going to be loaded onto the ro-ro. Do you have to work
13 with the chief mate or somebody from the office to verify, or --
14 we need to stow 1,000 parts here or 500 parts here?

15 A. So the way that works -- do you want me to explain it in
16 general or how we do it with Hyundai Glovis?

17 Q. In general first.

18 A. All right. So in general, the way that works is I will get
19 a, what I call a cleared list or a preload list from whatever
20 terminal it'll be, be it -- here in Brunswick, it's IAP that we
21 load the Kias with or any of the other terminal processors.

22 They'll give me a list of what's cleared, staged, and ready
23 to load. And then I'll look at my space availability, and kind of
24 check the GM roughly, to make sure that I can load it here, I can
25 maximize my space efficiency, and also the GM is proper. From

1 there, it goes to the captain and the chief mate. Their
2 responsibility is to make sure it's safe for the vessel.

3 I'd say probably 70 percent to 80 percent of the time, they
4 come back no problem. But we do have every once-in-a-while a few
5 that'll say, you know, because of my bunkering or because of this,
6 can we adjust to make it not so tender or stabilize the GM. And
7 then I'll go back and readjust. So really, the end-all/be-all
8 there is whoever's on the ship makes that call.

9 Q. When you say tender, what does that mean for --

10 A. So basically, when I say tender, it's that the GM on the
11 vessel isn't where he needs it, so he doesn't feel comfortable in
12 open sea. So we'll either -- there's a couple different options.
13 There may be too much cargo downstairs, so she's top-heavy, but
14 there's also, if there's some cargo downstairs and not enough
15 upstairs, he may not be comfortable with that. So it really
16 depends on what the chief mate and captain want.

17 Q. So you kind of do a preliminary loading plan? You said you
18 look at the GM and make sure it's good briefly, and then you send
19 it over to the ship?

20 A. Yes. So I'm -- whoever's loading the ship is responsible for
21 the preload and then the postload plan.

22 Q. So what kind of software do you use to do the preload?

23 A. Generally, everybody has their kind of own software. It's a
24 basic Excel doc usually. But some of the other companies have a
25 loading program that kind of assists in building it, because it's

1 a virtual ship rather than Excel. But the Excel works very well.

2 Q. Does Hyundai Glovis use a virtual alert still?

3 A. We use Excel-based, because it actually makes it easier. You
4 can do all the calculations right within it.

5 Q. Do you know the tank levels when you do that, or do you just
6 base it on the cargo?

7 A. I just base it off cargo. That's the captain and the chief
8 mate to base it off their tank levels and everything else. G
9 Marine keeps all those tank levels.

10 Q. Do you recall what would be a good GM for this vessel
11 (indiscernible)?

12 A. Off the top of my head, for this one, no. But again, I
13 didn't -- I'm not stowing vessels anymore. So for this one, no,
14 but you know.

15 Q. Will something scream at you? Like what would be a limit
16 that you'd see (indiscernible)?

17 A. Like .6, something like that, I -- it would scream at me.
18 But like I said, usually, before that even gets there when I see
19 that, the chief mate or captain says, I can't do this. And it's
20 his vessel.

21 So I may be doing the stow -- whoever is doing the stow
22 plans, or I might be doing the vessel operation side of it.
23 Captain, chief, maybe chief engineer, it's their vessel. So if
24 they have an issue, and they feel unsafe, we will adjust to make
25 sure they feel comfortable.

1 Q. All right. So it seems like the *Golden Ray* came from Africa
2 or from that way. When do you physically take over?

3 A. So the way I works, Hyundai Glovis, now, I'm going to drill
4 it down to Hyundai Glovis --

5 Q. That's fine.

6 A. -- because everybody does this a little bit differently.
7 About a week out from -- especially with this vessel -- in Mexico,
8 I get a, what I call either a discharge plan or an open vessel
9 plan. So he sends me a plan of what's on the ship or what's not
10 on the ship.

11 And then we have a gentleman locally in Fort Lee that will do
12 your pre-stowage calculations, what we can fit, what size,
13 everything else. And then he will do the stowage plan for Mexico,
14 Altamira, Veracruz, whatever; this one is Altamira, Veracruz. And
15 then it gets handed over to Riss who does the coastal side of the
16 stowage.

17 Q. You said who? Riss?

18 A. So Samy Maatki --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- is technically umbrellaed by Norton Lilly. But their
21 group is called Riss, R-i-s-s, Cargo Management. So they do -- I
22 guess the gentleman that works in our office does the major
23 overview space calcs, and then does the preload and postload for
24 Mexico, which is Veracruz, Altamira. Then that gets handed over
25 to myself and Samy from Riss. And Samy does the local load plans,

1 preload.

2 Q. So you're kind of giving Samy, here's how much space we have
3 open, let's see what we can fit in it?

4 A. Yeah. So we give them -- basically like every ship, it'll be
5 rough estimate. This ship can fit 5,000 units. And then in
6 Altamira in Mexico, that port captain/planner that sits in my
7 office will say, I have 2,500 units, of that 2,500 units -- again,
8 these are all rough numbers; these aren't exactly this ship -- of
9 those 2,500 units, we have 1,000 going to U.S. East Coast, and the
10 rest are going to the Middle East. So then Samy will take those
11 numbers and work what we can fit available, and I will then take
12 those and kind of break it down by port, to make sure that we have
13 enough to load and discharge and suffice all the customers.

14 Q. So if you have some open spaces, what would happen then? You
15 try to fill them in some other --

16 A. When you say open space, do you mean up the coast or when we
17 leave to go deep to cross the pond?

18 Q. Let's say for you're leaving Freeport, and you know you had
19 120 spaces that were open, would you bid that out and say --

20 A. No.

21 Q. You don't?

22 A. So the way I would do that is -- first of all, we don't
23 really bid much out; we're mostly contractual. So I'm going to
24 look at the big picture. I don't really care, from Freeport to
25 Jacksonville, if I have 100 spaces open. My priority is when I

1 leave that last POL, port of load, in the U.S. going to the Middle
2 East that, that vessel is full.

3 Q. Okay. What would've been the last port of -- POL here for
4 the *Golden Ray*?

5 A. We would look to probably Wilmington.

6 Q. Wilmington?

7 A. Wilmington, Delaware.

8 Q. Okay. So it would've been Brunswick, Baltimore --

9 A. So the way it works is, when we do these -- when I do my
10 first, I call it a working program, which is a schedule, I look at
11 what the discharges we have in the U.S. and where our load ports
12 are.

13 And then I'll put out one large program; right? So his one
14 started in Veracruz, Altamira, which I'm not really worried about
15 because that's more Mexico than U.S.. And then we'll go Freeport,
16 Brunswick, Jacksonville, either/or, whichever way the discharge
17 works out more efficiently, and then up the coast.

18 This vessel was originally supposed to call Newark and
19 Providence. But before I even really dug into it, I realized that
20 there wasn't enough cargo in Providence to justify a call.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Cost didn't work out there. So we left it to Wilmington,
23 because that's where most of the GM cargo loads, and they're our
24 biggest volume.

25 Q. So they kind of work it out; they'll say we were going to

1 take it to Providence, but now we can't because of --

2 A. Well, in this situation, I looked at it and said, my volume
3 for loading on the vessel, I will max out in Wilmington. So
4 rather than leaving 100 spaces open to deviate the vessel all the
5 way up to Providence, with the fuel costs, and port costs, and
6 everything else, let's just fill in Providence and send her out.
7 It shortens the time of the vessel, shortens cost every way
8 around.

9 Q. Did the Hurricane Dorian -- did you get any pressure from the
10 company to -- since they had to slow-steam a certain period?

11 A. I wouldn't say I got pressure. It was more understanding,
12 because obviously, they're halfway across the globe, they
13 understand that we have to do what we have to do to keep the
14 vessel safe. So once I explained to them that I'm not in the
15 position to put a vessel through a storm or anything like that,
16 they saw what the storm was actually doing, then they kind of
17 realized that this is a necessity.

18 Q. Did they have limits in -- say if it's a tropical depression,
19 would they -- if you told them, hey, I want to slow-steam because
20 of the tropical depression -- I know this is hypothetical -- but
21 would they give you any more pushback if it wasn't a large store;
22 or has that ever occurred before?

23 A. I wouldn't let it occur.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. That's just a no. And then they can deal with me directly

1 after the fact.

2 Q. All right.

3 A. My job in the operations side of it, yes, it's to load ships;
4 yes, it's to make sure the ships get there in time to fill them.
5 But my job is to make sure that crew stays as safe as possible.

6 Q. Do you feel like you have the complete backing of the
7 company? Can you make that decision?

8 A. The definition of complete is a little difficult. I think I
9 have enough backing locally to justify what I do.

10 Q. Okay. So all your load plans, you do what you do, you give
11 it to anybody to review like higher up than you are, or do they
12 just let you do this on the East Coast?

13 A. We kind of -- we, me and Samy, kind of do what we do.

14 Q. Okay. There's nobody to like check in, oh, yeah, I see what
15 you're doing today, that kind of thing?

16 A. I mean we send it out to Korea. But the way they load things
17 and do things there is a little different than the way we do it
18 here. So they kind of -- that's one of the reasons they brought
19 me and Samy in, is because we've done this for a long time, and we
20 know how to stow ships.

21 It's not -- for me, it's a little different, because when we
22 get our preload numbers here, sometimes it could be 3 days before
23 the vessel. But if GM or somebody else is having some issues, it
24 could be day of the vessel.

25 In Korea, they have that preload listed a month beforehand,

1 so they have plenty of time to understand and everything else. We
2 have the general parameters of the ship, so they know what's going
3 on.

4 Q. Why is it so much different in Korea than it is here?

5 A. To be honest, the terminals are much more efficient.

6 Q. In Korea?

7 A. Yeah. Here we have to deal with unions, we have to deal with
8 rail, we have to deal with truck. It's a lot -- there's a lot
9 more dynamic that goes into it. And this is with every line, not
10 just us.

11 Q. Right. So did Hyundai Glovis give you any specific training
12 prior to you starting the job?

13 A. I mean yes, they obviously gave me the basic training on
14 entering the vessel, and how they load and stow when they have --
15 if you're docking it there. It wasn't too in depth because
16 obviously I had a pretty decent background.

17 Q. Did they ever discuss with you, hey, this particular vessel,
18 we know she's a little tender, or be careful with this one, or
19 verify loads on this one?

20 A. We -- I mean verify loads, we verify every single load. So
21 it may take 2 days, it may take 4 days, but my terminals are going
22 to verify every load. So I think understanding the verification
23 of the load is a different conversation that probably after this
24 that we can have.

25 But when it comes to pushback, tender, everything like that,

1 no, because most of our vessels, especially railroad vessels, are
2 built to spec to where we know what's going on with them, and we
3 get them pretty empty. So other than the chief mate or captain
4 while we're loading it saying there's an issue, we usually start
5 out with a pretty clean slate.

6 Q. Okay. And after -- we talked with the chief mate, and he
7 mentioned that whenever he does his calculations, after the vessel
8 has departed, he would send --

9 A. That goes to G Marine.

10 Q. G Marine?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And do you know, is it before they leave or is it while
13 they're at sea?

14 A. I don't know exactly because I'm not privy to that
15 information. Like I said, I only get it when there's an uh-oh and
16 like we need to work on something or anything like that. But it
17 should be normally 2 hours after the vessel sails.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But that's -- again, that would be G Marine's side to talk
20 about. The only time I get a GM issue or a stability issue is
21 prior to when he looks at the plan and say, this is an issue. And
22 then if there's an issue on vessel while loading, he would either
23 call me or he'll call the stevedore, who will call me and Samy.
24 And we'll work out a way to fix that before he leaves, because
25 we're never going to let a vessel leave, like I said, if the chief

1 mate or the captain has any type of issue.

2 Q. So whenever you're doing your preload, you said you take the
3 weights and do your Excel Spreadsheet. The one I looked at said
4 like 120 GMC terrains. And where do you get the actual vehicle
5 weights?

6 A. Provided mostly by the terminal. So they use an average
7 weight of -- yeah, figuratively speaking, let's just use a
8 Suburban; right.

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. It could be anywhere from 2.25 tons to 2.32 tons. So they
11 take a weighted average, and that's how we get that.

12 Q. So they don't really look at it, oh, this is a four-wheel-
13 drive, and this has a limited -- this is going to weigh the max?

14 A. I mean I would love to do that, but from the terminal side,
15 it's hard for them to get that information to us. So we can get
16 it detailed, but when we're loading the ship, the 200, 300 pounds
17 is different in the cargo is not -- compared to how many vehicles
18 there are and the weight of the actual vehicle, it suffices.

19 Q. Okay. Are your other companies that you work for, did
20 they --

21 A. Same way.

22 Q. Same thing?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Would they do that in Korea too, do you think, or is that
25 speculation?

1 A. I don't know.

2 Q. Okay. Do you know where we can get the actual makes and
3 models and --

4 A. I can get you a VIN list, maybe a few VINs that aren't on
5 there yet, because with all the confusion --

6 Q. Right.

7 A. -- craziness, without our documentation team working on it.
8 But we've obviously had to pull some resources out of everywhere.

9 Q. Do you -- have you ever been to this terminal before?

10 A. A lot.

11 Q. So how often do you go?

12 A. Prior to Glovis, I was probably here once every 3 -- I'm
13 going to say once every 2 months.

14 Q. So while working for Glovis, how often do you come?

15 A. Being the operations manager, I'm not boots on ground.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. So Riss Cargo Management also has some port captains that we
18 use. So they can be there if we're doing a large load or
19 discharge. But here in Brunswick, the stevedores are really good,
20 their checkers are really good, and our crews are pretty reliable.
21 So the load numbers here aren't very large, so we usually just use
22 the stevedores and the chief mate or whoever's on board.

23 Q. So when that's completed, do they call you like the
24 stevedores?

25 A. Yes. So we kind of have a -- there's a long-term system

1 obviously, but if you want to know just the completion side of it,
2 he'll usually call me that morning and let me know how many people
3 we have and what we're thinking on a finish time. And that way,
4 we can set up the pilots.

5 And then he'll let me know 2 to 3 hours before when he thinks
6 he's going to be done. We'll go through the numbers. And if I
7 say, you're kind of stretching it here, let's give it some more
8 time, I will. We'll set the pilots, and then he'll give me a
9 finish time.

10 Q. And then you call an agent for him to call the pilots, or
11 you --

12 A. Yeah. I'd have the agent liaise through all that. If I had
13 to call every pilot and talk for every report, I would never be
14 off the phone. So --

15 Q. Okay. So in this case, the person that was overseeing the
16 loading, approximately what time did he call you and tell you it
17 was completed?

18 A. It was right around 10 o'clock, if I remember correctly.

19 Q. And he -- did he say everything was all well and no problems?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And has he ever told you before that there was an issue here?

22 A. Oh, yeah. The gentleman here who runs stevedores likes to
23 make sure everybody knows when there's anything wrong or he's not
24 happy with it.

25 Q. Okay. And in this case he said, we're done, let's move?

1 A. There was no issues here. The quick all done, all good,
2 everything is lashed, good to go.

3 Q. Okay. And how long are those phone calls; is it like a
4 minute or two?

5 A. Usually a minute or two, unless he's got a problem or just
6 wants to talk.

7 Q. All right. Do you ever authorize or get into the ballast?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Have they ever called to say, hey, do you -- can we go on
10 ballast here, is that okay?

11 A. Well, to that side of it, obviously, they know where they can
12 and can't dump ballast. You can't do it at the port, you can't
13 dump ballast at the port, you can't do that, as you guys well
14 know. So if they need to change ballast or anything else, the
15 only time they'll call me is if there's something they want to do
16 and it doesn't fit in the timeline of the working program.
17 They'll say, hey, I need to do this to the vessel, can I have an
18 extra hour at sea? No problem, I'll make that work for you.

19 But no, they don't ever come to me and say, I need to take
20 200 more metric tons on this side than this side. That's -- like
21 I said, that is purely up to -- G Marine is the technical side and
22 the captain and chief because they -- that's their vessel.

23 Q. So if they needed to discharge the ballast for safety
24 concerns, you would have to offload cargo because he can't
25 discharge?

1 A. Well, if he needs to discharge it here for immediate safety
2 concerns, then we'll reach out to the Coast Guard and everything
3 else and get that verification.

4 Q. Has that ever happened before?

5 A. Not in my tenure.

6 Q. Do you remember hearing about that happening before?

7 A. Not -- I mean overseas a few times, in Africa or something
8 like that, but never locally.

9 MR. WILLETT: Okay.

10 BY MR. BREMER:

11 Q. Tom Bremer of the Marshall Islands. Just to confirm, I know
12 you mentioned it, but so G Marine is the technical manager of the
13 vessel?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. They also handle crewing as well?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. So the Safety Management System, everything on board the
18 vessel is through the chief Marine?

19 A. Solely.

20 Q. Okay. As far as your position, you have contact directly
21 with the chief marine on a routine basis?

22 A. I do not, simply for the fact that sit in Korea. And we have
23 what we call a global PIC, person in charge, for each vessel. So
24 in this vessel, it was a woman that kind of liaises with them on
25 that side. It's much easier than being 12 hours apart, and it

1 doesn't work really well. So she feeds that information with them
2 together, and if there's any issues, concerns, it usually comes to
3 me that way.

4 Q. Okay, so the owner's -- the manager or best mate of that ship
5 is in Korea?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And the G Marine representative of that, she deals with it in
8 Korea as well?

9 A. Right. And she's looking at bigger picture; right? She's
10 not looking at the East Coast, she's looking at how long it's
11 going to take to get to the East Coast, to get to the Middle East,
12 Africa, or wherever.

13 Q. Okay. And as far as bunker delivery and everything else,
14 that's all chief Marine who handles that?

15 A. So what happens there is we get an email saying, there is
16 this much bunkers and this is where they need it. And then I will
17 liaise with the local agent to say, call Colonial or whoever
18 the -- Vane Brothers, and let me know how much time they need and
19 when they can be there. Because as we all know here, if you've
20 been in the industry, bunker barges are never on time, so we have
21 to make sure that we get them what they need.

22 MR. BREMER: Okay. No other questions.

23 BY MR. WELBORN:

24 Q. Just a couple questions. So the only -- who -- so I guess
25 the last line of defense, if you will, is the captain and chief

1 mate --

2 A. Of course.

3 Q. -- in regards to stability, calculations?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And are they the only ones or is G Marine also checking --
6 are they the ones that are doing cargo along with the tank
7 calculations and everything else?

8 A. I mean the captain is truly the last line of defense. It's
9 his vessel.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Right? It's just like your house; you're always the last
12 line of defense on your house.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. So he is truly the last line of defense. And what he says,
15 if there's an issue, we work around that.

16 Q. Okay. And he's -- so he's the only one factoring, basically,
17 the entire ship into his calculations to go?

18 A. Him and the chief mate should be doing it together.

19 Q. Okay. And then just one other question. I know you kind of
20 briefly explained it. What's your interrelation with R-i-s-s?

21 A. Riss?

22 Q. Yeah, Riss.

23 A. So like I said, we contract Riss to do our load planning and
24 local port captaining.

25 Q. Okay. Okay.

1 A. They're a third party.

2 Q. Got you.

3 A. And when you guys talk about stability -- not to get off
4 course here a little bit -- but with these cars, stability is
5 usually fairly simple. Where it gets real tricky and difficult is
6 when you start loading big high, heavy pieces, dump trucks, tanks,
7 trailers, that kind of stuff. The cars usually, for these -- for
8 the captains is pretty kind of standard for the line.

9 MR. WELBORN: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

10 LT [REDACTED]: [REDACTED]?

11 BY LT [REDACTED]:

12 Q. Lieutenant [REDACTED]. Just a couple things to follow up on stuff
13 you mentioned. So you say you make weather-based decisions on the
14 route of the vessel.

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. Is there any guidelines to help you with that?

17 A. There are. The company does have a few guidelines. But I
18 usually take them above and beyond that, because I've been out
19 there before, and I don't want to put anybody in a precarious
20 situation.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. So I'm monitoring the weather. I look at NOAA. I always can
23 make a phone call to NOAA if we have to and all the trackers we
24 have, to make sure that we're in a good situation.

25 Q. And then also, you mentioned the couple-hundred pounds here

1 or there. Is it a big deal doing your calculation?

2 A. Not that it's not a big deal, but it's -- there's a bigger --
3 the volumes are that much larger, so --

4 Q. That spreadsheet you use, does it have like a factor built
5 into it when you're doing that calculation, since your vehicle
6 weights are --

7 A. We use an average, like I said, from whatever the terminals
8 of the OEMs provide us. And then once we get the actual load list
9 or the final load list, we'll send that to the captain. And there
10 usually is a -- it breaks down to usually one more digit.

11 LT [REDACTED]: Okay. Thank you.

12 LT [REDACTED] Ryan, did you have anything? Ryan?

13 MR. GILSENAN: Sorry about that; I had my phone muted. No, I
14 don't have any further questions. Thank you.

15 LT [REDACTED]: Roger that. Dave Flaherty, NTSB?

16 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah. This is Dave Flaherty with NTSB.

17 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

18 Q. Sir, could you just go over the information that is provided
19 to you on the document that the captain -- and I -- and if I heard
20 correctly, the chief officer signed, prior to departure?

21 A. So when you say the document, I mean there's no real document
22 that they signed to give to me. Again, I'm not on the vessel most
23 of the time. But --

24 Q. Then could you explain what they provide to you, please?

25 A. What they provide to me is, prior to vessel, I give them a

1 preload plan. They say, all is well, this is fine, we can load
2 the ship this way.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. Once the stevedore gives me the, we've finished, we've
5 loaded, then he will give some documents to the agent saying, sell
6 time, last line, ramp up. And if there's any issues at that time,
7 he will either call me or call the agent. But he doesn't provide
8 any documentation to me directly saying, we're fine, we're good,
9 or what this is. That all goes through the agent or myself.

10 The only thing I truly get would be if there's any issues
11 that need to be fixed immediately or there's some drastic changes
12 that he was unaware of. Then he will call me or email me
13 directly, and I will handle that for him.

14 Q. All right. So there's no email from the captain or the agent
15 concerning the vessel that night?

16 A. There's -- I don't -- honestly, to be honest, I don't
17 remember off the top of my head if there was, because we -- I went
18 into immediate fix mode and got everything kind of rolling. But
19 there was -- I know that the pilot does have, and the agent would
20 have, vessel completion time, last line, all that information that
21 would've been given to them.

22 Q. Okay. Was there anything -- I'm -- I know you said that the
23 loading of vehicles is very standard procedure. Was there
24 anything unusual about loading or unloading that occurred that
25 you're aware of when the vessel was in Brunswick?

1 A. Not that I am aware of. Obviously, there's been rumors
2 flying everywhere, but directly to me, and nothing that was out of
3 the ordinary.

4 Q. Okay. And the placement of the vehicles that -- the -- they
5 took off the one set of vehicles and they put on a second set.
6 Was -- did you have any indication on the preliminary loading plan
7 or the stability, was there any indication that there be any
8 issue?

9 A. Not that we were made aware of. Everything -- the stability
10 looked okay from when she arrived. And again, it was pretty much
11 a direct replacement of cargo on board.

12 Q. Do you happen to know what -- or do you have with you -- what
13 was the GM when the vehicle -- excuse me -- when the vessel
14 arrived?

15 A. Again, I don't stow the ship, so no, I don't have that.

16 Q. All right. All right. So can a vessel take on bunkers in
17 Brunswick?

18 A. By truck only.

19 Q. Okay. And that would be a very long process, so --

20 A. We do it but minimally. It's only if necessary.

21 Q. All right. And is it -- do vessels transfer sewage or
22 anything out to shore, slops?

23 A. Not -- I mean they can if necessary, but not in this
24 situation.

25 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. All right. Thank you very much. I

1 have no further questions.

2 MR. GILSENAN: [REDACTED], Lieutenant [REDACTED] I do have a couple
3 questions. This is Ryan Gilsenan.

4 LT [REDACTED]: Go ahead, Ryan.

5 BY MR. GILSENAN:

6 Q. Mr. Mavrinac, I know you answered this, but I just didn't
7 hear it or get it exactly. Would you just say again where you --
8 where the vehicle weights -- the source of the vehicle weights
9 that are ultimately listed in the stow plan? Where do those
10 weights come from again?

11 A. Those are usually from the terminal processor.

12 Q. And --

13 A. So the people providing me the cleared cargo list.

14 Q. Okay. Now, I know that there's auto manufacturers from
15 various plants here in the southeast that are making cars. What
16 entity is the terminal processor?

17 A. Terminal processor has a direct contract with the OEM to
18 provide space unloading and loading on trucks, upfitting, and
19 anything else necessary. So they have a direct contract with
20 whatever OEM they work with.

21 Q. Okay. So if the OEM needs cars exported, they would contract
22 with the terminal processor, and the terminal processor would
23 arrange trucks, rail, ships?

24 A. They don't arrange the rail and the ships. So that's done
25 directly through the OEM most of the time.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. They are just a subcontractor to hold the cargo, hold the
3 space, upfit, whatever is necessary on that side, and clear and
4 process. So when the trucks come in, most of the vehicles go to a
5 parking lot, where they will sit until they're ready to go. And
6 then they'll stage the cargo as it's ready for the vessel.

7 Q. Okay. So then the terminal processor provides a list of
8 clear vehicles and their weights to Glovis, and then you would --
9 if I have it right, you would turn that over to Riss, who would
10 create a stow plan; is that accurate?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Okay. And when Riss creates a stow plan, they do a stability
13 calculation as part of that plan, correct?

14 A. Like I said, it's not a true stability calculation. We look
15 at it, and from our perspective, we make sure that it would be
16 something that we would be comfortable to send out. And then the
17 captain does the true stability counts, or chief mate.

18 Q. That's what I wondered. Because you mentioned using Excel
19 Spreadsheets. I guess Riss would do that, not you, because you
20 don't stow ships yourself anymore, correct?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. All right. So and the spreadsheets are general; is that --
23 but they're not tailored to a specific hull form; is that
24 accurate?

25 A. I mean they're tailored by deck. So the hull form, no. But

1 space on deck, every -- we need the square meters to allow for
2 loading. So they're done by -- they'll give you the square meters
3 or a space calculation so you could work off of it, because you
4 need the square to know how many cargo you can put on each deck
5 and each hatch.

6 Q. Sure. It's like a floor plan.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I know these car ships are very similar in appearance, but
9 they may internally have different characteristics from class to
10 class, such as ballast tank, location, and capacities, correct?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. And some might have 12 decks, others might have 13, and some
13 decks may have higher overhead clearance than others. Would the
14 spreadsheet account for any of that?

15 A. Not for ballast tanks, but yes, we have to talk about
16 clearance and decks, because obviously, if you're stowing a
17 vessel, having 13 decks or 10 decks, that's going to change how
18 many cars you can put on deck.

19 Additionally, with overhead heights with the adjustable
20 panels, I have to know where my panels are and which ones I can
21 adjust, because that'll affect how many cars, SUVs, vans, trucks,
22 whatever I can put on it, so I can -- I have to adjust those decks
23 accordingly.

24 Q. Sure. That's like when you're going in a parking garage, if
25 you're driving a van, you need to know if it's going to fit or cut

1 the roof off.

2 A. Well, I wouldn't cut the roof off, I would just lift the
3 panels to make the deck higher.

4 Q. Yeah. No; I understand. But it's -- again, we're back to
5 the floor plan description. You need to know if your vehicles can
6 fit on a particular day.

7 A. Exactly.

8 Q. And I -- the question, I guess, could've been clearer. I was
9 wondering if you have, say on a particular class of ship, some
10 high-clearance decks, then the 12th deck, for example, might be a
11 greater height above the baseline of the ship than on a similar
12 ship where the deck clearance is not quite so high between decks,
13 the 12th deck could be maybe 2 meters lower --

14 A. So yeah, basically some of the larger ships have a higher
15 freeboard, yes.

16 Q. Sure. And -- so and that is part of -- with stability,
17 you're not so concerned only about weights, but also the location
18 of those weights, vertically and transversely. So does the
19 spreadsheet account for the differing heights and weights
20 between -- among different classes of ships?

21 A. Well, each deck is going to have your weight on it. So once
22 we stow the vessel out, that deck will have a total weight. And
23 then it won't really account -- I mean the question you're asking,
24 I'm not really understanding what you want as an answer, because I
25 can tell you each deck has a weight, each deck --

1 Q. Sure.

2 A. -- will then have the set height on it. So I can tell the
3 chief -- I can use an example of the ship I just worked here in
4 Brunswick a couple days ago. I had one piece of high-heavy that
5 needed to go on the main deck. The main deck was set in car
6 position, which would mean main deck at 3.5, deck 6 at 2 meters.
7 But the piece I had was actually 3.6, so I had them lift two
8 panels, so I could accompany -- accommodate for that height. So
9 yes, it will tell you deck heights and deck positions. It will
10 also tell you volume of cargo, amount, and the weight of that
11 cargo per hatch or per hold deck.

12 Q. Okay. And when the spreadsheet -- when the operator, the
13 user of the spreadsheet does a rough stability check for an
14 approximate GM, does that program as they use it, does it account
15 for the vertical position or the height of these weights when
16 run --

17 A. There's -- in that Excel sheet, there's no accounting for GM.
18 Like I said, that's all done by the captain. We just stow the
19 vessel out, we look at it, we make sure from our experience that
20 there's no glaring issues that we see. And then it goes to the
21 chief mate and the captain, who will really look that over. We
22 just simply look at it and say, from our thought process and our
23 knowledge of how we stowed vessels in the past, there should be no
24 issues with this.

25 Then it goes to the captain, and the chief mate will put it

1 through an actual stability count. We don't like having any kind
2 of questions or concerns on stability, so we're not going to run
3 any actual calculations to kind of vary off the vessel.

4 What their GM is, is what their GM is. We're just looking at
5 it saying to us -- when I say we're running a rough, I'm looking
6 at it saying, I didn't put all the cargo upstairs and not put
7 anything downstairs, or I didn't put all the heavy stuff
8 downstairs and nothing upstairs. We try to make it so that we
9 know where the vessel needs to be, and then it's confirmed by the
10 captain.

11 Q. All right, got it. That's helpful. So you've been stowing
12 car ships for a very long time. You don't want the stiff -- the
13 ship too stiff or too tender. So you're going on experience.

14 A. Exactly.

15 Q. When you say with -- we provide this, you mean you and R-i-s-
16 s, or Riss, just so I'm clear, right? That's we?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Samey -- Riss sends it out, and they take care of that part of
20 it. But obviously I'm still looking at it, and if I see anything
21 when that email comes out, I will jump -- I'm the first one to
22 jump up and say, let's check this one more time, and let's get
23 with the captain and make sure, because we have to make sure it's
24 all the way it needs to be and that the captain's comfortable with
25 it.

1 Q. Okay. And -- so then the stability check itself is done by
2 the mate and the captain using the ship's software specific to
3 that vessel, right?

4 A. Exactly. Yes.

5 Q. And let's just take the port of Brunswick for example; it
6 really doesn't matter. I'm wondering when -- at what point in the
7 timeline does the mate run the stability program for the ships
8 sailing outbound? Does he do that before he even gets to that
9 port because he knows what he's going to discharge and load, or is
10 it during the process?

11 A. He should do it twice. He should -- he will get the load
12 plan prior to the vessel coming into port. He has to, simply
13 because my load order goes in the day before. So I have to send
14 the load plan to the stevedore usually within 12 hours.

15 So he's going to have that within 12 hours of being at the
16 port, maybe 8, somewhere in there. So he should run is calc prior
17 to the load operation, so that we know exactly what's going on.
18 And if I have to shift my load plan, I can -- I don't have to do
19 that on the fly. And then he should do it once all cargo's on
20 board.

21 Q. Okay. Now --

22 A. And again that's up to the -- that's not up to me, that's not
23 up to Samy or Riss, that's up to the captain and the chief officer
24 and G Marine to make sure that gets done. As long as he says --
25 he doesn't give me the, we have a problem or we need to change

1 something, then we go with the plan as is.

2 Q. Right. Okay. So at some point during the cargo operation or
3 possibly even after it's concluded but before the pilot's on board
4 to sail, presumably, the mate will run a stability calculation to
5 satisfy himself that the GM is appropriate?

6 A. I would surely hope so.

7 Q. Okay. And I think you touched on this before, but while
8 we're on this line of thought. Does he say the results of his
9 stability, his final stability calculation, to anyone as far as
10 you know?

11 A. Like I spoke -- we spoke about with Lee, he does not send
12 that to me, so I can't give you an -- a hundred percent. But he
13 should be sending that or at least speaking to G Marine about it.
14 They are the technical superintendents.

15 Q. Okay. We'll ask them. Now, in your years of doing this,
16 have you ever had a call or communication of any kind from the
17 ship before sailing that says the GM is unacceptable and we have
18 to make changes before we can sail?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. And how has that worked, and what type of ship was it,
21 nationality and so forth?

22 A. I don't remember the nationality of the ship. But I can tell
23 you that they said the GM was, he was a little uncomfortable
24 because he was a little stiff. So we talked about what he needed,
25 and we adjusted some cargo.

1 I mean I can tell you when I first started, these ships were
2 a lot smaller and a lot more difficult to load. And I could give
3 you -- it was the -- I think it was the *Trotter*, was the name of
4 the vessel, but it was that class of vessel. We were loading D8
5 and D9 dozers. They're 80 tons a piece. And loading the vessel,
6 you'd feel a heave one way or the other when we were loading them,
7 so we'd have to load one to one side and one to the other, to keep
8 it safe and workable for both cargo ops and the captain.

9 So like I said, I'm loading the vessel, and I'm responsible
10 for the cargo. The chief mate and the captain are responsible for
11 that vessel, so if they have an issue, we are going to sit down
12 and talk about it. There is never a time where I'm just going to
13 say, deal with it. So we will work that, and we work out
14 together, what's going to happen.

15 Q. I have no doubt that you would listen to their concerns, and
16 I don't mean to imply otherwise. We're just wondering if you've
17 ever had a call from the captain that says, everything we just
18 loaded on number 12 we're -- is a little too top-heavy now, so our
19 GM is too small, we need to discharge some of the cars from -- or
20 SUVs or whatever from deck 12 that we just loaded, we take a
21 hundred of them off before we sail.

22 A. I mean I've never had it where it's, can we take a hundred of
23 them off, but I have had it where it's, we need to move some down.
24 So if I'm in a port where I'm -- let's just use a port, I'm the
25 third port into the six-port rotation. And I'm trying to keep

1 space on the middle decks from four and nine because those are my
2 highest decks.

3 And the captain has come up to me before and says, listen, I
4 thought I was okay, but after actual load, I see it's not really
5 comfortable. So I'll shift some cargo to the middle decks to make
6 sure that he's comfortable on the voyage up. And then we can
7 adjust as necessary when we go from there.

8 Q. Okay. All right. I think that's all the questions I have.
9 I appreciate your answers; they're very clear.

10 A. Not a problem, sir.

11 LT [REDACTED]: Roger that. Colin, do you have anything?

12 MR. McRAE: Sure. Just a few things.

13 BY MR. McRAE:

14 Q. I'm Colin McRae. I represent LGL, Liberty Global Logistics,
15 Charter of --

16 A. Yup.

17 Q. -- the ship. Are you familiar with LGL?

18 A. Very familiar.

19 Q. Okay. So as you are determining which vehicles to load on
20 the vessel here in Brunswick, you've already gotten LGL cargo on
21 board; is that right?

22 A. Yeah, we had LGL cargo on board the vessel.

23 Q. Do you recall how much LGL cargo there was?

24 A. Ballparking, probably about 600 units, I would say.

25 Q. Tell me about the line of communication you had with LGL with

1 their representatives to receive information for -- from them for
2 the purpose of loading the ship.

3 A. So the way that works is, we will give them a schedule. I
4 give Rob Greco the schedule. And I tell Rob that this is the
5 schedule we have. One of the other guys in my office also sends
6 out a schedule so they know where to vessels are.

7 Hopefully, 72 hours prior, they're giving me the information
8 of what they want to load, and then 24 hours, I get the exact.
9 With LGL, it's a little more difficult, because they're always
10 trying to add, change, mix, because it's not OEM cargo. So
11 they're always trying to change things.

12 We have told them that 24 hours prior to the vessel, I need
13 to know what's going on the ship. And then they'll give me a load
14 list. I send that load list to my stevedores and to Riss. And we
15 go from stowing the vessel that way.

16 Q. So it sounds like perhaps there have been times when you have
17 not gotten 72 hours' notice from LGL about what --

18 A. Without a doubt, not. I'm not going to lie about that at
19 all. It's been -- sometimes it's a challenge with them.

20 Q. Okay. Was there any challenge in that regard with respect to
21 the *Golden Ray* and cargo that was on board?

22 A. No, because the only challenge that would've been somewhat
23 close to that is when their terminal put the cargo on ground in
24 Jacksonville, there was four extras. If they're not on the list,
25 they're not going, so they stayed.

1 Q. And that was this Jacksonville call, right prior to --

2 A. If I remember correctly, yes, it was two or three units.

3 Q. Okay. Two or three units that were --

4 A. Yeah, not --

5 Q. -- at the terminal but were not loaded?

6 A. They were not on the loaded list. So in my opinion, I don't
7 know if they're cleared or not, and I am not going to load
8 anything that it does not have a cleared/accepted to it.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So if it's not on the list, it doesn't go.

11 Q. All right. So those two, three, four units, however many it
12 were, they were not loaded onto the *Golden Ray*?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And it may have only been one or two, now that I'm thinking
16 about it, but I know it was -- I remember having a conversation
17 with them about not having the list. And they update their list
18 quite frequently, so sometimes you could have two or three
19 revisions.

20 Q. Two or three revisions you say?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. And do you recall that being the case here, revisions?

23 A. I -- honestly, I don't 100 percent recall with this one.

24 It's been a long couple weeks, so I can go back through my emails
25 and check.

1 Q. Okay. And you said --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry; just for clarification --

3 MR. McRAE: Yeah.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- a unit is some kind of motor
5 vehicle?

6 MR. MAVRINAC: Yeah. It's -- with -- not to get into great
7 detail and bore you guys, but with LGL space, we load some of the
8 SCA units, which should be Dodge, Chrysler, those things. But
9 they also hold most of my space for high-heavy and POVs, which are
10 used units. So I don't load any Glovis used cargo; it's all LGL's
11 cargo.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Sorry.

13 MR. McRAE: Sure.

14 BY MR. McRAE:

15 Q. Do you recall if there was any L -- any high-heavy cargo
16 booked on this vessel through LGL?

17 A. Yes. Freeport had, I want to say it's -- again, off the top
18 of my head, I couldn't give you guys the exact list -- I think
19 it's 9 static boxes, 1 truck, a trailer, and an RV, if I remember.

20 Q. So the information that you receive with respect to the LGL
21 booked cargo, that's factored into your load plan in --

22 A. Of course.

23 Q. -- the same way? And --

24 A. It doesn't matter if it's OEM, who it is, LGL, POVs, it's all
25 going to factor into the stow plan and the manifest.

1 Q. And for my purposes, OEM, is that like an original equipment
2 manufacturer or --

3 A. Exactly, yeah. It's new cargo.

4 Q. All right. In terms of receiving accurate information from
5 LGL with respect to the weights of the cargo that they are putting
6 or having you put onto the *Golden Ray* or other vessels, have you
7 ever experienced any difficulties with the information that's been
8 communicated to you?

9 A. Not hugely. But if there is, I have a really good
10 relationship with all my stevedores. I know them well; I've
11 worked with them for years. So the first thing I have them do is
12 go check all the used cargo. And if something does not look
13 right, say something. And then I will go back to LGL and make
14 sure.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I don't like to mess around with weights, I don't like to
17 mess around with dims, I don't like to mess around with manifests
18 being incorrect, because that's all issues. So all my guys know
19 the first thing you do when you walk on that ship when I get that
20 list, if it's the day before, if it's that day, I don't care if
21 it's a week before, you check all that cargo. I mean we're not
22 checking by the ounce. But if I see a motor grader that's booked
23 to 14 tons, I have never seen a motor grader that's tracked to 14
24 tons, so go out there and tell me what it is, and then we can go
25 from there.

1 Q. Okay. The POVs that LGL had booked were all loaded in
2 Freeport; is that right?

3 A. No, there's some in Jacksonville too if I remember.

4 Q. Okay. Did you -- do you recall if you asked your stevedore
5 to go out and double-check if they used vehicle --

6 A. Any -- I just have them keep it -- my term is eyeball it. In
7 Freeport it's Red Hook, and Jacksonville and here it's SSA. So
8 it's got -- just eyeball it and make sure.

9 Q. Okay. And do you recall getting any report back from either
10 Red Hook -- Red Hook is a Seaborne company?

11 A. Yeah. Nothing crazy, so they -- there was no alarming issues
12 that I remember.

13 Q. Okay. Going back to this -- the schedule of the vessel. You
14 mentioned that obviously it altered the schedule of the vessel by
15 the vessel being put in the same area, I guess to drift for a
16 while.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Did it actually change the intended progression of the
19 ports --

20 A. The only switch we had was -- like I said, because the storm
21 was going south/north, I wasn't going to go up to Brunswick to
22 come back down to Jacksonville. So we discharged the Jacksonville
23 cargo, loaded the minimal amount of cargo we had here -- I think
24 it was like 100-odd units -- and then went to Brunswick.

25 Q. Okay. So prior to encountering Dorian, the plan had been --

1 the loose plan that's subject to change had been to call Brunswick
2 first and then Jacksonville after that?

3 A. Yes. The reason for that was we had OEM Kias coming off, and
4 we wanted to try to meet a timeline to have a frequency for them.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But again, storms change that.

7 Q. You've mentioned some additional ports after
8 Brunswick/Jacksonville as you had gone up the port -- up the
9 coast, excuse me -- Newark and Providence, Wilmington, Delaware,
10 Baltimore. Were there any other ports that may have been
11 considered?

12 A. Well, when we're loading out of Mexico, we always consider
13 Philly, because Philly's a big discharge port for some of our
14 OEMs. But at this one, I don't -- no, there was no further cargo
15 on the ship.

16 Q. Okay. So after Brunswick, how many ports was the *Golden Ray*
17 at least intended to call?

18 A. Baltimore, Wilmington.

19 Q. Baltimore and Wilmington were the only two U.S. East Coast
20 ports left?

21 A. As per right now. That could've changed obviously. It
22 depends on volume slippage and everything else. OEMs can change
23 their mind on what they're going to load. So if I need to call an
24 initial port to get the additional cargo, we can do that. We stay
25 very liquid in our schedules, because obviously, there's a lot of

1 factors that go into it.

2 Q. Those two ports, are they predominantly discharge ports?

3 A. Wilmington is a load-only port.

4 Q. Load-only; okay.

5 A. Yeah. And Baltimore is both. I mean we will do some
6 discharge, but for this, it was Wilmington was load-only.

7 Q. Roughly speaking, how many units would have been loaded had
8 they called Wilmington and Baltimore, would have been loaded in
9 those two ports?

10 A. Probably 700-ish. I would've loaded the vessel out.

11 Q. Is that each port or total between the two ports?

12 A. Total between the two.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I can't give you a total off the top of my head on what we
15 loaded in Baltimore because I hadn't seen that list yet. That
16 would've been from LGL, so they would know that better.

17 Q. Okay. So it was LGL cargo that was going to be loaded in
18 those two ports?

19 A. Baltimore. But we would have your cargo in both. GM loads
20 Wilmington only.

21 Q. Okay. You mentioned earlier that sometimes, some particular
22 decks might be kept cleared in order to accommodate later ports.
23 Were there any decks that had been intentionally --

24 A. This ship was chock-a-block already, so she was full. All we
25 had was roadways and some turnarounds.

1 Q. All right. The 700 or so vehicles that were going to be
2 loaded in Brunswick -- excuse me -- Baltimore and Wilmington,
3 where were they going to be?

4 A. They were -- we had discharge cargo for Baltimore. So that
5 would come off, 588 units. Load that and then load your roadways
6 all the way up gives you another about 170 units on top of that.

7 Q. Okay. So it's going to be about a wash between the
8 discharge --

9 A. Exactly.

10 Q. Okay. So when she sailed from Brunswick, she was, you say,
11 chock-full, or what did you say?

12 A. Other than roadways. I mean the term I always use is
13 chock-a-block, which --

14 Q. Chock-a-block?

15 A. -- she is full other than roadways, obviously. Because I'm
16 not going to start loading roadways to have to shift all that
17 cargo out to then discharge, because that's just inefficient and
18 costly.

19 Q. What do you mean by roadways?

20 A. So driveways, roadways, from -- you enter on deck 5. You
21 have to drive up ramps to get to the discharge cargo that was
22 upstairs.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Now, if I load those roadways in an earlier port, I obviously
25 have to then move and shift all that cargo to get the discharge

1 cargo out. And with the cost with using labor, it's just not
2 efficient. So we're spending as much as -- to shift the cargo as
3 we are to get it to load the cargo. So we would rather leave that
4 open, let the cargo flow in and out, and then load that at the end
5 of the vessel.

6 LT [REDACTED]: Does anyone need a break or anything? We've done
7 an hour.

8 MR. McRAE: I'm almost done.

9 LT [REDACTED]: Okay.

10 MR. McRAE: That's all I got. Thank you.

11 MR. MAVRINAC: Cool.

12 LT [REDACTED]: Jim?

13 MR. MOSELEY: Nothing.

14 LT [REDACTED]: KMST?

15 MR. JEONG: My name is Jeong Choerlag from KMST,
16 investigator.

17 According to statements of the 2nd mate or your mate (ph.),
18 you mentioned after cover work (ph.), he crossed storm land
19 because of the weight of storm land (indiscernible) use a list to
20 starboard a little bit to adjust that list, chief officer ordered
21 to crew member, usually 3rd mate to upright (indiscernible). But
22 as long as I remember, Brunswick port, this size (indiscernible)
23 is prohibited. So do you know crew member adjust --

24 MR. MAVRINAC: Like I said to these guys here, when they
25 adjust, that's up to the captain, chief mate, third, second. I

1 don't go into any details about that. That's up to the vessel and
2 their crew to understand to do.

3 MR. JEONG: Okay.

4 LT [REDACTED] Captain?

5 MR. WELBORN: Yes, a couple things.

6 BY MR. WELBORN:

7 Q. Mr. Mavrinac, thank you very much for coming in today.

8 A. No problem.

9 Q. So I appreciate what you're bringing to the table. So a
10 couple of questions. Regarding this Excel Spreadsheet, who -- is
11 that something that the company is generated, is that something a
12 third party generated; what's the origination of that?

13 A. From my understanding, it was built by the tech guys in the
14 company.

15 Q. Okay. So some folks that know more algebra than I do and
16 very -- they understand those pieces --

17 A. And they're better at Excel than me and you.

18 Q. Okay, good. So really, what that spreadsheet then is, the
19 way I understand it, is it's -- it is that floorplan type --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- situation. So 10 across, 30 deep, something like that,
22 it's not really a spreadsheet that does a lot of math as far as
23 the stability of the vessel; is that correct?

24 A. Not really. I mean I don't know --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- if you guys can put it up. I can show it to you. I know
2 you have a copy of it if you wanted to see it.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. It's just a basic floorplan. And it kind of breaks down deck
5 1, deck 2, deck 3, deck 4, deck 5, and then your hatches of 1, 2,
6 3, 4. And then it gives you your square meters or whatever you're
7 using for your cargo factors, so you can stow out per hatch.

8 Q. Sure.

9 A. And then on this side, it gives you deck heights and what
10 deck number it is.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And then I fill in the volume -- or not me, but I used to, I
13 should say, fill in; now Riss does it -- the volume per hatch, and
14 then the weight of that cargo per hatch or per deck.

15 Q. Okay. So can you define a little bit better your
16 relationship with Riss, you and Samy? How do you guys work
17 together?

18 A. We work hand-in-hand. I mean, so I'm setting up the vessels.
19 I mean, me and Samy -- obviously not these couple weeks -- we
20 probably talk three or four times a day.

21 Q. Understood.

22 A. We're always liaising with each other on, hey, this ship's
23 doing this, or what's going on here, or this is how we're going to
24 adjust this, or -- we talk all the time. We have a pretty good
25 open relationship.

1 Q. Okay. So is that spreadsheet then, you guys email it back
2 and forth; is it a shared database?

3 A. We email it back and forth. There's nothing shared because
4 they're third-party.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So we can't -- we don't have like a Dropbox or anything like
7 that.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. There's an email base.

10 Q. Okay. So you'll do a little work on it, you'll send it over
11 to Samy, he'll do a little work on it, it goes back and forth?

12 A. So that's the one thing I'm going to comment on. When port
13 captain starts stowing ships, you never mess with a port captain's
14 stowage plan, unless there's an issue.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So I won't do any work on it. I let Samy stow the ship,
17 unless he asks me to look at it or I see a glaring issue. And
18 then I'll call him or email him and say, listen, this is
19 definitely a problem.

20 Q. Okay. So you're telling me then that you staff it out, and
21 then you send it to Samy, and he works as the port captain.

22 A. Yep.

23 Q. He makes the final changes to it, and then it goes to the
24 chief mate --

25 A. Right.

1 Q. -- and that's it?

2 A. Yes. The one thing I'd like to just --

3 Q. Oh, please.

4 A. I wouldn't consider Samy as a port captain; I would consider
5 him for what you guys are doing here a planner.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Because when we were doing large load volumes, 700, 800,
8 1,000, or anything specialty, Riss will send out a local port
9 captain that will then take Samy's plan and make sure that it is
10 per what it is what -- and he's boots on ground.

11 Q. Okay. All right. Do you happen to know who that local port
12 captain was?

13 A. This one, we didn't have a local port captain because it
14 wasn't a large volume.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And like I said, here in Brunswick, you will almost never see
17 a local port captain, because SSA is really good at reporting what
18 the issues are, and the checkers here, which is a separate union
19 from the ILA that loads the cargo really does a good job in
20 keeping cargo volumes, trim and proper, everything, whatever term
21 you want to use.

22 Q. So what's the difference between -- you said it wasn't really
23 a load, a large load. So -- and I'm not trying to pin you down to
24 five. But what's the difference between a large load and a small
25 load?

1 A. Well, I would say usually I try to keep, we'll call it a
2 local Riss person on board, if we're loading POVs or anything
3 that's used, because we want to make sure it's by our definition
4 and our standards.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And also, volumes, I mean I'm not going to put an exact
7 number on it, but I usually, in the back of my head, think it is
8 more than 6 hours of work.

9 Q. Okay. And how many cars you move in an hour?

10 A. That really varies on where we're at, but let's just call it
11 500 as a number.

12 Q. Okay. So in very round numbers, less than 500 would be a
13 small load, more than 500 would be a large load. So if you're
14 loading more than 500 units, chances are you have a Riss person --

15 A. Exactly.

16 Q. -- physically here?

17 A. Yep.

18 Q. Okay. And how many units were loaded here?

19 A. 359.

20 Q. 359 loaded?

21 A. Um-hmm.

22 Q. Okay. All right. How many were --

23 A. Discharge, I won't usually bring them in, because discharge
24 is a little different, right, you're not putting something into
25 stow where the cars have to be straight and they have to be in

1 line. When you're discharging the cargo, it's just simply flowing
2 out. So there's less detail that goes into it from the ILA side.

3 Q. And since I'm coming late to the party, can you -- OEM, what
4 does that stand for?

5 A. Original equipment manufacturer.

6 Q. Okay. So it's the same thing for auto parts?

7 A. Yeah. Basically, it's any cargo that's -- hasn't been
8 registered to a person.

9 Q. Okay; so it's -- it would be a new --

10 A. New.

11 Q. -- unit of some type?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. All right. Cool. Something to do with a sticker in a
14 window?

15 A. Exactly.

16 Q. Okay. All right. You mentioned the -- that you use this
17 average weight of vehicles, and that's kind of a standard
18 practice. And then you mentioned this terminal processor. Who is
19 that? Who do they work for? Can you tell me a little bit about
20 that first?

21 A. So the terminal processor is the physical entity in space on
22 the actual port; right?

23 Q. Okay; the parking lot?

24 A. So the -- yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So the -- and there are a group of people that will move cars
2 around, they'll take cars off of trucks, or trains, or whatever.
3 They get there. They'll hold the cargo for them. If they want to
4 do a large load and wait, they'll move them around, they'll
5 exercise them. A lot of these guys will do upfits, and clean, and
6 setup. So they're a separate entity from us.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And they will contract directly with whatever manufacturer
9 they're working with.

10 Q. Okay. Do you -- so it sounds like you understand the
11 terminal processor business. You have done it; is that correct?

12 A. I never did the physical, we're going to call it port
13 processor side, but I was heavily involved with building the port
14 of Freeport for the railroad side.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And the --

17 Q. Freeport, Texas?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And also, with Port Everglades, I did a lot of work down
21 there.

22 Q. Okay. So in obtaining the vehicle weights, this terminal
23 processor, port processor, do they have a set of scales that they
24 use or is it primarily data-driven, something --

25 A. It's data driven.

1 Q. -- that comes from the OEM?

2 A. It's data driven.

3 Q. So the OEM provides the -- a scalable -- weights for a group
4 of vehicles or each VIN?

5 A. Usually, we get a weight for each VIN after the load.

6 Q. After it's loaded?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So they confirm all that. But it's usually 1.8, 1.9,
10 whatever the average is or for the number they want to provide.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And then if I see anything, or Samy sees anything, or anybody
13 here saw anything that was glaringly off --

14 Q. Sure.

15 A. -- obviously, we're going to say something.

16 Q. Okay. So the OEM says, given vehicle, given fleet of
17 vehicles, 1.8, but then later, by then a weight comes in?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And again, that's all from the OEM, that's not verified or
20 anything there locally?

21 A. Now, again, that's a separate entity, so if they want to
22 verify it locally, they're happy to do so.

23 Q. Is that standard practice?

24 A. Not usually.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. It's whatever the OEM gives us is what we use.

2 Q. Do you understand the terminal here in Brunswick; did they do
3 that?

4 A. Not normally, no.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. The reason they --

7 Q. Do they even have a scale there in --

8 A. I don't think they do. And they really -- especially for
9 export cargo, they're only doing one type of unit.

10 Q. Yeah. Okay.

11 A. So currently, it's only Kia Telluride.

12 Q. That's pretty much --

13 A. All they --

14 Q. -- all they load out of Brunswick?

15 A. Yeah. For us.

16 Q. Okay, for you.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. On your vessels, on this vessel, Kia Tellurides, that's the
19 358?

20 A. 359.

21 Q. 359. That's all you put on there was Kia Telluride?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So in -- so theoretically, every unit that went on there
24 should weigh within tolerance about the same?

25 A. Yeah. And as per the manifest, that should be there. If

1 there's anything else, it's news to me.

2 Q. Okay. Can you, real quick -- and I know we're kind of
3 running over. But fuel levels in the vehicles.

4 A. Less than a quarter tank.

5 Q. Less than a quarter. So it could be vapors, fumes, pushing
6 it into space --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- or it could be up to a quarter?

9 A. The -- when you say vapors and fumes, I can tell you
10 first-hand, when you get on that angle to get up that ship, if
11 it's vapors and fumes, the car will shut off.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. So it needs something in it, so it's always less than a
14 quarter tank. Ballpark it, usually about 3 to 4 gallons, just to
15 -- we don't want a lot of fuel in there for issues of this nature
16 or a fire.

17 Q. Understood. Yeah.

18 A. But we need enough that when it goes up in incline, it's not
19 going to roll to the back and kill -- and --

20 Q. Chug-chug-chug.

21 A. Exactly.

22 Q. Yeah, okay.

23 A. Not good for any of the cargo to do that.

24 Q. I got you. Okay. All right. Let me check over my list real
25 quick.

1 MR. WELBORN: Anybody, follow-ups?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I got one quick question.

3 Other than cargo booked by Hyundai Glovis and LGL, are there
4 any other charters in space on this vessel?

5 MR. MAVRINAC: (No audible response.)

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have one little quick --

7 MR. WELBORN: Hang on, hang on. What was the answer to that?
8 Because we didn't get it for the recording.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, I thought he said, no.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I thought he said, no.

11 MR. MAVRINAC: No --

12 MR. WELBORN: Okay.

13 MR. MAVRINAC: -- there -- from my understanding, there is
14 not.

15 MR. WELBORN: Okay. Just want to make sure it was good for
16 the recording.

17 BY MR. WILLETT:

18 Q. Just for the POBs, I know people that ship them overseas. So
19 on a POB, you guys pay particular attention because -- do they
20 need to be completely cleaned out, nothing in the trunk, nothing
21 in the --

22 A. So the way we do that is, no personal items.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So what we mean by that is, I'm not going to take a car
25 that's full of junk. If -- I'm not going to kill you either if

1 the spare tire is in the trunk; right?

2 Q. Um-hmm.

3 A. So if -- as long as it's parts for that vehicle, and it's not
4 full of additional, we'll take it; right? So it's really a
5 flat -- if it's got an additional tire, that's okay. But if you
6 bring a car and it's got blankets and everything else, sorry,
7 that's not going.

8 Q. I've seen before where you'll have a third-party processor
9 verify that the car is ready for shipment and has a quarter of a
10 tank.

11 A. That's what the terminal does. That's what --

12 Q. So the terminal does that --

13 A. Yeah, the port processor will do that --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- and everything else.

16 Q. All right. That's all I have.

17 MR. WELBORN: Okay.

18 LT [REDACTED]: Just one more --

19 MR. WELBORN: Yes, ma'am.

20 LT [REDACTED]: -- thing; sorry.

21 When were they due in Baltimore; do you recall?

22 MR. MAVRINAC: This happened on like the 8th. So by the
23 numbers, it's 29½ -- 28½ hours up. So 10, 1, add 28 to that;
24 you're looking at 9 -- so it would've been there for probably 10th
25 04:00 pilot.

1 LT [REDACTED]: Okay.

2 MR. MAVRINAC: Top of my head, if I remember.

3 LT [REDACTED]: That's fine.

4 LT [REDACTED]: Is that all?

5 MR. JEONG: I'm sorry; very simple question.

6 BY MR. JEONG:

7 Q. Do you have a seaman's background?

8 A. I went to SUNY Maritime College, so yes, I do have a seaman's
9 background.

10 Q. Could you tell me details, more?

11 A. I went to 4 years of Maritime College. I was a Naval Arc for
12 2½ of that. I've been on private yachts and on commercial boats
13 my whole entire life. I've worked in -- my grandfather was an ILA
14 worker, so I've been on ships and around ships since I could walk.

15 BY MR. WELBORN:

16 Q. And your degree is in?

17 A. My degree is in International Trade and Transportation.

18 Q. Okay. And do you have any certificates or specialized
19 training after that, other than OJT?

20 A. I've done some Hazmat training and obviously whatever
21 training on board for all the lines I've worked for.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And the gentleman that stows the vessels out of Mexico is
24 actually a captain as well.

25 Q. Okay. All right.

1 MR. WELBORN: Yes, sir?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If we're going to adjourn, can we --
3 can I request that we start at 13:15? The reason why I say that
4 is I haven't been able to secure the next witness.

5 MR. WELBORN: Okay.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He was supposed to be here at noon. I
7 don't see him.

8 MR. WELBORN: That's fine. Let's finish with this. Any
9 other questions for Mr. Mavrinac?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

11 MR. WELBORN: No? Okay.

12 MR. WELBORN: Dave, you're good?

13 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah, I'm good; thanks.

14 MR. WELBORN: Ryan, you're good?

15 MR. GILSENAN: Sorry. Yes, thank you.

16 MR. WELBORN: Okay, good. So Lee, if you want to punch us
17 out.

18 MR. WILLETT: All right. It's 12:15. This interview is
19 concluded.

20 MR. WELBORN: Thank you.

21 MR. MAVRINAC: Appreciate it, sir. Hope I answered all your
22 questions. If you need anything else, let me know.

23 (Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

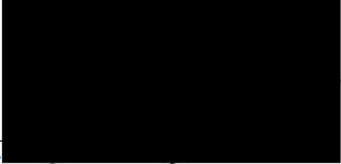
IN THE MATTER OF: CAPSIZING/SINKING OF THE *GOLDEN*
 RAY IN THE BRUNSWICK RIVER,
 GEORGIA, ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2019
 Interview of Michael Mavrinac

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA19FM048

PLACE: Savannah, Georgia

DATE: September 19, 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.



Jeffr
Transcriber