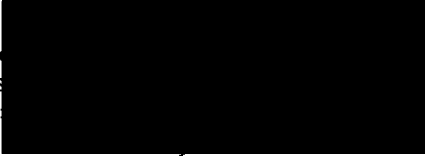




U.S. COAST GUARD WITNESS STATEMENT FORM

Witness Name
Street Address
City/State/Zip



Date: 26 SEP 2019

Phone Number:
MMC#:



I, the undersigned, make the following statement voluntarily, without threat, duress or promise of reward:

- What was your position during the response? i.e. COXSWAIN, LOOKOUT.
- Describe the scene as you approached GOLDEN RAY.
- Did you see any fire or smoke? If so where was it coming from and can you describe its appearance, smell, etc.
- Did you hear any alarms from the GOLDEN RAY?
- Were there any other sounds from the GOLDEN RAY?
- Was there any other vessel traffic in the area?
- What was the observed weather on scene including sea state, wind, etc.?
- As you conducted SAR Ops, what were your interactions with the GOLDEN RAY crew?
- Did you have any discussion with the GOLDEN RAY crew? Please summarize.
- Did you take any photo or video during the response?
- Is there any other amplifying information that can aid in the investigation?

OATH/SIGNATURE: I have read my statement consisting of 5 page(s) and hereby swear or affirm the information provided is true to the best of my knowledge.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS



SIGNATURE OF INTERVIEWER

Subscribed and sworn to me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 26 (day) of SEPT (month), 2019 (year).

SIGNATURE OF OATH



- 1) My position aboard the CG45741 on the evening in question was as a crewmember, navigator and break-in coxswain.
- 2) Coast Guard Sta Brunswick received a relayed distress call from Glynn County Emergency Dispatch at approximately 0130 on the morning of 08 September 2019. The SAR crew launched the CG45741 at approximately 0145 and arrived on scene at approximately 0155. As we approached the M/V Golden Ray, we noticed that there were already several (02 I believe) tugs from Moran Tug Company on scene and at least 01 pilot boat and 01 sea tow boat. The M/V Golden Ray was listing on its port side, approximately 070 degrees, several hundred yards south of Green Buoy "19" (Chart 11506, Plantation Creek Range). By the time we left the scene approximately nine hours later, the vessel had listed to approximately 090 degrees. It appeared as though the vessel had been heading outbound when it capsized. We could see several crew members on the deck of the boat and it appeared that most of them were injured and unable to move from where they had caught themselves post-capsizing.
- 3) Initially, there was no smoke or fire coming from the vessel. After being on scene for approximately 60-90 minutes, we noticed that there was black smoke coming from the starboard side of the hull (which was the highest point of the vessel due to its list). Simultaneously, we also noticed that there was white/grey smoke coming from the forward port region of the vessel. I recall a M/V Golden Ray crewmember stating that the ship's batteries were in that general vicinity, inferring that a battery fire could potentially be the source of the white/grey smoke. The smell in the air was that of burning oil/fuel.
- 4) I do not recall hearing any alarms from the M/V Golden Ray, however upon arriving on scene we were able to hail the pilot on board the vessel and there was yelling in the background. The pilot was able to relay to us that the majority of the crew had made its way to the pilothouse/bridge of the vessel.
- 5) Throughout the entire rescue operation I recall hearing a lot of loud banging/crashing coming from inside the vessel, as if heavy cargo was shifting and falling as the vessel continued to list. We also heard crewmembers yelling for help as the rescue operation occurred. There was also a lot of noise coming from the 02 Coast Guard rescue helicopters that were on scene throughout the night.
- 6) Other vessel traffic other than our own included:
 - a. An inbound RORO that the CG45741 passed on our way to the scene of the capsized Golden Ray. We passed with the inbound RORO at approximately Red Buoy "24" (Chart 11506, Cedar Hammock Range). It was approximately 0150 when we passed her. A Moran Tug Company tugboat was accompanying the inbound RORO.
 - b. 02 (to the best of my knowledge) Moran Tug Company tugboats were on scene when we arrived on scene at approximately 0155.
 - c. 01 pilot boat was on scene when we arrived on scene.
 - d. 01 Sea Tow "Response" boat was on scene when we arrived on scene.
 - e. 01 DNR law enforcement boat arrived on scene shortly after us. I believe a second DNR law enforcement boat arrived on scene later in the morning.
 - f. CG29139 arrived on scene at approximately 0330 to aid the CG45741. We transferred the crewmembers that we had taken off of the M/V Golden Ray onto the CG29139 so that they could be taken to CG Sta Brunswick where EMS was waiting on scene.
- 7) The observed weather on scene was as follows:

- a. Sea states of 2-3 feet, with an approximate 5 second period.
 - b. Approximately 7-10 kt winds.
 - c. Visibility was clear, approximately 75%.
- 8) My interactions with the crew were minimal as many of them did not speak English very well. I and Mk1 [REDACTED] were on the bow pulling the members of the crew off of the port bridge wing of the M/V Golden Ray. I would then escort them to the survivor's compartment where MK3 [REDACTED] and MK3 [REDACTED] were waiting to administer first aid. My interactions with each crew member that could understand what I was asking them was:
- a. "Are you hurt?"
 - b. "How many people are still onboard?"

Responses to the latter questions were different for almost every member we pulled off but after rescuing the pilot off of the port bridge wing, we were informed that nobody was left in the bridge but that the ship's chief engineer was still in the living spaces located one deck below the bridge. We then passed a 60' mooring line from our vessel to the chief engineer via electrical cords that he had tied together and lowered down to us. He used the 60' mooring line to repel down to the waterline so that we could remove him from the vessel. After taking the chief engineer off of the vessel, we conducted a headcount of crewmembers that we had already transferred from our vessel, other vessels aiding in the rescue, and the Coast Guard helicopters. We confirmed that 19/23 crewmembers had been safely removed from the vessel in addition to the pilot on board. We discussed with the chief engineer about where he thought the last four crewmembers would be and he informed us that they were most likely in the ship's engine room. He directed us to his best guess of where we could gain access to the engine room and we disembarked 01 Glynn County Firefighter (we had embarked 03 members of the Glynn County Fire Department who were repel/climbing experts) and 01 Coast Guard rescue swimmer (who we had previously embarked from CG6544). After investigation, it was determined that the firefighter and rescue swimmer would not be able to reach the engine room from the deck level of the ship. CG45741 re-embarked both personnel and waited for further tasking. We stayed on scene running a security zone of the vessel until it we were relieved at approximately 1130. These are the facts of the rescue operation for the capsized vessel M/V Golden Ray to the best of my recollection. Below please find my original statement from several days after the case occurred.

Original Statement from 12SEP2019:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

THE FOLLOWING IS A RECOUNT, TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, OF THE FACTS OF THE MORNING OF 08SEP2019 REGARDING THE RESCUE OPERATIONS FOR THE CAPSIZED VESSEL GOLDEN RAY:

AT APPROXIMATELY 0135 ON 08SEP2019, USCG STA BRUNSWICK RECEIVED A PHONE CALL VIA NIGHT SERVICE FROM GLYNN COUNTY EMERGENCY DISPATCH THAT A CARGO VESSEL HAD CAPSIZED NEAR ST SIMONS SOUND. THE SAR CREW FROM STA BRUNSWICK IMMEDIATELY PREPARED TO LAUNCH THE RB-M 45741 TO RESPOND TO THE REPORT. RB-M 45741 WAS LAUNCHED AT APPROXIMATELY 0145 WITH THE FOLLOWING CREWMEMBERS:

COXSWAIN: BM2 [REDACTED]

ENGINEER: MK3 [REDACTED]

BO: MK1 [REDACTED]

CREWMEMBER/BTM: BM3 [REDACTED]

CREWMEMBER/BTM: MK3 [REDACTED]

WE ARRIVED ON SCENE AT APPROXIMATELY 0155 AND DISCOVERED THAT THE REPORTS WERE IN FACT TRUE AND THAT THE CAR CARRIER VESSEL GOLDEN RAY HAD CAPSIZED ABOUT 200YDS SOUTH OF GREEN BUOY "19," OUTSIDE THE CHANNEL, AND WAS LISTING ABOUT 70 DEGREES TO PORT. AFTER ARRIVING ON SCENE, WE TOOK CONTROL OF RADIO COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE MULTIPLE PILOT BOATS AND SEVERAL TUGS THAT WERE ALREADY ON SCENE. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS OCCURRED BETWEEN RESPONDING VESSELS ON CHANNEL 12. WE WERE INFORMED BY ONE OF THE PILOT VESSELS THAT THE PILOT WHO HAD BEEN ON THE GOLDEN RAY WAS COMMUNICATING WITH THEM VIA A HANDHELD VHF ON CHANNEL 12. WE SUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PILOT ON BOARD THE VESSEL AND GAIN A HEADCOUNT OF CREWMEMBERS ON BOARD. THE PILOT INFORMED US THAT THERE WERE 23 CREWMEMBERS ABOARD THE VESSEL, 24 TOTAL POB INCLUDING HIM. HE ALSO INFORMED US THAT A MAJORITY OF THE CREW WAS GATHERED IN THE BRIDGE, WITH SEVERAL OTHERS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE SHIP. AT THIS POINT, WE BEGAN DISCUSSION ABOUT THE BEST WAY TO REMOVE THE CREWMEMBERS OUT OF THE BRIDGE AND ONTO OUR RB-M. IT WAS BY ALL VESSELS ON SCENE THAT THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO REMOVE THE CREWMEMBERS WAS TO HAVE THEM LOWER THEMSELVES VIA THE SHIP'S FIREHOSE DOWN TO THE PORT BRIDGE WING WHICH WAS NEAR THE WATER'S EDGE. AS THE FIRST SURVIVOR WAS LOWERED TO THE BRIDGE WING, BM2 [REDACTED] POSITIONED THE RB-M IN BETWEEN THE DECK AND THE PORT BRIDGE WING. MK1 [REDACTED] AND I POSITIONED OURSELVES ON THE BOW OF THE RB-M. ONCE THE RB-M WAS PINNED AGAINST THE BRIDGE WING WE REMOVED THE FIRST SURVIVOR OFF OF THE CAPSIZED VESSEL AND ONTO THE RB-M. WE THEN ESCORTED HER FROM THE BOW TO THE SURVIVORS COMPARTMENT WHERE MK3 SHUBIN AND MK3 BENOIT PERFORMED FIRST AID ON HER AS HER HAND HAD BEEN BADLY INJURED. WE REPEATED THIS PROCESS FOR 11 MORE CREWMEMBERS AND THE PILOT UNTIL ALL OF THE SURVIVORS THAT WERE IN THE BRIDGE WERE SAFELY ON BOARD THE RB-M. THERE

WERE SEVERAL CREWMEMBERS WITH INJURIES, HOWEVER NONE WERE LIFE THREATENING. WE THEN TRANSFERRED THOSE SURVIVORS, EXCLUDING THE CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE GOLDEN RAY, TO THE RB-S II 29139 WHICH HAD ARRIVED ON SCENE AT APPROXIMATELY 0400 SO THAT THEY COULD BE TAKEN BACK TO THE STATION WHERE EMS WAS WAITING ON SCENE. AT SOME POINT THROUGHOUT THIS TIME FRAME, COAST GUARD RESCUE HELICOPTERS AND THE OTHER BOATS ON SCENE HAD RESCUED AN ADDITIONAL 07 PERSONNEL OFF OF THE CAPSIZED VESSEL. AFTER A HEAD COUNT WAS TAKEN, WE CONFIRMED THAT 20/24 OF THE CREWMEMBERS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM THE CAPSIZED VESSEL. UPON CONVERSING WITH THE GOLDEN RAY'S CHIEF ENGINEER, WHO WAS ABOARD THE RB-M, WE CONCLUDED THAT THE REMAINING 04 SURVIVORS WERE MOST LIKELY IN THE ENGINE ROOM IN THE REAR OF THE SHIP. RB-M 45741 EMBARKED AN AST1 FROM ONE OF THE RESCUE HELICOPTERS ON SCENE AND 03 MEMBERS OF GLYNN COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT WHO WERE TRAINED AT REPELLING RESCUES. WE MANUEVERED INTO PLACE AT THE AFT OF THE SHIP WHERE THE CHIEF ENGINEER HAD TOLD US THERE WOULD BE ENGINE ROOM ACCESS AND DISEMBARKED THE AST1 AND 01 OF THE FIRE DEPT PERSONNEL ON TO THE CAPSIZED VESSEL TO INVESTIGATE. UPON INVESTIGATION, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE DOOR THAT WOULD HAVE GIVEN ACCESS TO THE ENGINE ROOM WAS PADLOCKED AND UNACCESSIBLE. AT THIS POINT IT WAS APPROXIMATELY 0730. WE REMAINED ON SCENE UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 1130 WHEN WE WERE DIRECTED TO RETURN TO THE STATION TO BE RELIEVED BY ANOTHER BOAT CREW. WE THEN RETURNED ON SCENE AT 2200 THAT EVENING UNTIL 0600 THE FOLLOWING MORNING TO CONTINUE THE SECURITY ZONE. THESE ARE THE FACTS OF THE CASE TO THE BEST OF MY RECOLLECTION. IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, I CAN BE REACHED AT [REDACTED] OR [REDACTED]

VER [REDACTED]

BM [REDACTED]