



U.S. COAST GUARD SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATING OFFICER ACTIVITY

Matter Investigated: Collision – (OSV) THUNDER and (M/V) BUNUN QUEEN
Vessels: (OSV) THUNDER (ON.1257685)
(M/V) BUNUN QUEEN (ON.9912438)

Interview Of: Raul Knight III, Master
Date/Time: 24 July 2022 (at approximately) 17:30
Location: Interviewed on vessel as the vessel arrived into port
Interviewed By: CWO [REDACTED]

On Saturday, July 23, 2022, at approximately 1315 the M/V BUNUN QUEEN and the OSV THUNDER collided. I was the MSU Houma investigating office on watch. I received a call from OOD informing me of the incident. I reached out to vessel captain for additional information and to advise him the Coast Guard personnel would be present when they arrived into port.

On Sunday, July 24, 2022, at approximately 1733, the (OSV) THUNDER arrived at Bollinger shipyard, Port Fourchon, LA. I boarded the vessel with LTJG [REDACTED] and vessel representatives. While taking pictures of the bridge, the attorney representative informed me that the vessel Captain, Raul Knight III, requested to speak with me in his cabin. I spoke with the vessel Captain with the attorney present in his cabin. LTJG [REDACTED] remained on the bridge, as the attorney requested. The justification from the attorney was the captain was very shaken up and emotional so wanted to speak with the lead investigator only at this time.

The captain stated that he did not want to talk on the bridge because there was recording equipment that would record the conversation and he did not want it recorded yet. He was seeking advice on how to proceed with the interviews. I informed him that I did not have my recorder on and that he could speak freely, but the statements he makes could still be considered evidence even if it was not recorded. He acknowledged that the statements could be used in the investigation.

The captain stated that he was the only person on the bridge at the time of the collision. He then asked, beginning with “hypothetically speaking”, would he lose his license if he was on his phone at the time of the incident. I said that “hypothetically speaking” if the phone was found to be a causal factor of the incident that the license could be looked at for Suspension and Revocation (S&R) and it was all on a case-by-case issue. I told him that I was there to investigate the collision and that S&R would be done as a separate investigation, after the facts for this collision were found, and that it may not be me who would do the S&R investigation. I let him know that I did not have enough information yet as to whether or not S&R was being considered towards his credential.

The attorney told him to go ahead and start telling me what the captain previously told him.

The captain started crying stating that he would never put his crew or the vessel in danger and that he told the crew to evacuate the vessel. He was willing to stay on the vessel alone and bring it into port to



ensure the crew would be safe. He said, the crew that stayed on board voluntarily stayed with him. The captain started to take deep breaths and could barely speak.

I comforted him and told him that the whole crew was now on shore, safe and sound, because of his actions after the incident. I told him to take some deep breaths and try to calm down. After a few minutes he began breathing normal and stopped crying. The attorney told him to continue.

The captain continued saying that he was confident the vessel was clear of dangers so turned on his phone and began watching something on it. He said he looked at the phone every now and then and could not even recall, at this time, what he was looking at on the phone. He was adamant about letting me know that he constantly kept a look out while on the bridge but did occasionally look down at his phone.

I asked him if he felt that him being on the phone was why the vessel's collided. He said very sternly that him looking every now and then at his phone was absolutely not the cause. He restated that he would not put his crew or the vessel in danger. He also stated that he was aware of the BUNUN QUEEN transiting in the area but also knew that he had the right of way for crossing paths. I told him that he was very emotional right now and should take a few minutes by himself. I let him know that I would return to the bridge, and we could talk to him up there when he was ready. I left the cabin and returned to the bridge. The captain and attorney stayed in the cabin but joined us on the bridge a few minutes later.

Investigation and interviews scheduled to continue throughout the following days.

Full name of person producing the summary:

//S// [REDACTED]
SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

24 July 2022
DATE