



U.S. COAST GUARD INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Matter Under Investigation: Main Space Engine Room Fire aboard the Passenger Vessel SANDY GROUND (O.N. 1299657), which occurred in the Upper Bay of New York Harbor on December 22, 2022.

Interview Of: Trevor E. Gherardi, Chief Marine Engineer of the SANDY GROUND

Date/Time: December 22, 2022 / 2052

Location: St. George Ferry Terminal, Staten Island, NY

Interviewed By: CWO [REDACTED]

Others Present: CDR [REDACTED] Mr. Ralph Savercool

Mr. Trevor Gherardi, of [REDACTED] was the Chief Marine Engineer onboard the SANDY GROUND at the time of the main space engine room fire. Mr. Gherardi stated that the vessel had departed at 1640 from the Whitehall Ferry Terminal located in Manhattan, NY, and within approximately ten minutes, while in the engine control room, Mr. Gherardi observed low fuel oil pressure alarms on all four main diesel engines. Mr. Gherardi called the Captain to inform him of the status.

Mr. Gherardi related that the #2 main diesel engine was on fire, on the exhaust manifold side. He related that there was fuel oil spray coming from the #2 main diesel engine spin-on filters and puddles of fuel oil near the #3 and #4 main diesel engines. He related that the Marine Engineer had spotted fuel oil spraying on the #2 main diesel engine exhaust manifold and communicated to Mr. Gherardi about the situation. Mr. Gherardi related that he observed that the main diesel engines had shutdown automatically. He related that a fuel oil shutdown was on the machinery control screen when he attempted to shutdown the main diesel engines but was unsure what caused the shutdown of the main diesel engines. He related that the ship service diesel generators stayed online until he had pulled the emergency fuel cutoff valves prior to evacuating the engine room.

Mr. Gherardi went up on deck from the engine room to energize the emergency fire pump. He related that the emergency diesel generator came online, then had shutdown and the vessel lost the emergency fire pump, possibly due to the melting of the emergency stop, that was located outside of the engine control room. Mr. Gherardi transited to the NOVEC locker room and manually released the NOVEC 1230 fire suppression system, by-passing the 61-second time delay. He then proceeded to the emergency diesel generator in an effort to restore emergency power and discharged one 15-pound CO2 fire extinguisher on the emergency diesel generator flat, after mistaking the exit sign light for a flame. Mr. Gherardi related that he did not ground the fire extinguisher and was slightly shocked.

Mr. Gherardi related that the alarm log could be pulled up in order to retrieve alarms. He related that the vessel used the Maximo system for preventative maintenance records and work orders. Mr. Gherardi related that the crew does fuel oil filter replacement maintenance and spare filters were kept

onboard the vessel. He related that he does not know when the spin-on fuel filters were replaced and that there were no indications of low fuel oil pressure or fuel oil spray prior to getting underway.

Mr. Gherardi was cooperative during the interview and answered all questions asked. He agreed to answer further questions at another time if it became necessary.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] CWO, USCG

December 24, 2022