

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*
*

GROUNDING OF BULK SHIP *AMERICAN*
MARINER IN SAULT SAINTE MARIE,
ONTARIO, CANADA ON JANUARY 7, 2023

Accident No.: DCA23FM013

* * * * *

Interview of: CHARLIE PARSON, First Assistant Engineer
Grand River Navigation

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
February 21, 2023

APPEARANCES:

MARCEL MUISE, Marine Casualty Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

██████████ Marine Inspector
U.S. Coast Guard

ADAM ZWICKER, Esq.
Gallagher Sharp, LLP
On behalf of Grand River Navigation

BRIAN PETERSON
Grand River Navigation

██████████ SPOTTS, Esq.
On behalf of Captain Jeff Layton

CAPT Jeff Layton
Grand River Navigation

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Charlie Parson:	
By Mr. [REDACTED]	5
By Mr. Spotts	28
By Mr. Zwicker	36

I N T E R V I E W

(2:33 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise with the National
4 Transportation Safety Board, it's 14:33 on Tuesday, February 21st,
5 2023. We are interviewing Mr. Parsons (sic), the first assistant
6 engineer of the *American Mariner*, regarding an incident that
7 happened on board a couple weeks ago. Mr. [REDACTED] can you
8 identify yourself for us?

9 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, this is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the
10 Coast Guard in Sault Ste. Marie.

11 MR. MUISE: And Mr. Spotts.

12 MR. SPOTTS: This is David Spotts and I represent Captain
13 Layton.

14 MR. MUISE: Mr. Peterson.

15 MR. PETERSON: Yeah, good afternoon. This is Brian Peterson
16 and I'm with Grand River Navigation.

17 MR. MUISE: Mr. Zwicker.

18 MR. ZWICKER: Adam Zwicker of Gallagher Sharp, I'm retained
19 counsel for Grand River Navigation.

20 MR. MUISE: And Mr. Parsons, can you spell your last name, as
21 well?

22 MR. PARSON: Yeah, Charlie Parson, P-a-r-s-o-n, and I'm the
23 first engineer on the *American Mariner*.

24 MR. MUISE: Did I miss anybody?

25 CAPT LAYTON: Jeff Layton, captain on the *American Mariner*.

1 MR. MUISE: Okay, welcome, Captain. [REDACTED] it's all yours.

2 INTERVIEW OF CHARLIE PARSON

3 BY MR. [REDACTED]

4 Q. Good afternoon, Mr. Parson.

5 A. Hello.

6 Q. Yeah, so we're here for a casualty investigation, as I'm sure
7 you're aware. You know, the Coast Guard is doing this casualty
8 investigation to determine -- to determine cause and try to find
9 the facts of the event and we use those for prevention in the
10 future. So I'd like to start off, if I could just verify your
11 current address there in Mobile.

12 A. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

14 Q. Okay. And a good contact is the [REDACTED] number, that's your
15 cell?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. And is a good e-mail [REDACTED]?

18 A. Yeah, that's good.

19 Q. Okay. So if you could, just give me a history of your time
20 in the maritime industry.

21 A. I've been doing this for 31 years, I worked with the union
22 back from '91 to '95 sailing deep sea ships and stuff with SIU;
23 '95 up until the plague hit in 2020 there, I was working offshore
24 for Tidewater Marine Services, Hornbeck Offshore, OSV construction
25 vessels, things like that, and then when the pandemic hit, got

1 laid off and I went and worked on the river, inland tug, for a
2 year and I've been for a season and a half now working for Grand
3 River Navigation.

4 Q. Okay, when you say on the river, are you talking ICW or are
5 you talking western rivers or whereabouts?

6 A. Marquette Transportation, Mississippi River, from St. Paul,
7 Minnesota to New Orleans, all the way up the Ohio River to
8 Pittsburgh and the Illinois River almost to Chicago.

9 Q. Okay. Have you had any formal maritime training, like any
10 maritime college or university?

11 A. No, I just went to Piney Point for the SIU, you know, that
12 training program, back in 1991, '92.

13 Q. Okay. And you said you've been with Grand River since two
14 thousand -- just after the pandemic in 2020, is that correct?

15 A. I believe I hired on in the middle of July 2021.

16 Q. And when you hired on in July of 2021, what position did you
17 hire on as?

18 A. I hired on as a first assistant engineer.

19 Q. Okay. And what about time on board specific vessels, has all
20 your time been on the *Mariner* or have you rotated around?

21 A. My first week with the company I worked on the *H. Lee White*
22 and then I was transferred to the *American Mariner* and that has
23 been my permanent vessel the time I've spent here.

24 Q. So a couple seasons on the *American Mariner*, then?

25 A. Yes, sir, a season and a half.

1 Q. Okay. Okay, going back to the incident on January 7, if you
2 could just talk me through that, the time that you came on watch
3 through the incident and actions that were taken, et cetera.

4 A. Okay. I reported to the engine room at 7:30, that's what
5 time we normally, you know, arrive to do our turnover. The second
6 engineer was there and Mike Besco (ph.) and chief engineer
7 Gary Miller were there. We were maneuvering, the ship was
8 maneuvering off the dock, I don't think it had been long since we
9 had started undocking, so we were still in the process of it.

10 I walked in the control room, glanced up at the screen and
11 saw that we were, in fact, not too far off the dock and then I
12 started talking to Besco and Miller, you know, to do my turnover
13 since I was going to be assuming the watch, and at that time they
14 were loading ballast, so we were standing in front of the little
15 ballast console where we, you know, open and close the valves and
16 look at the tank level.

17 The ship was probably like 85, 90 percent loaded, you know,
18 with ballast. At that point we were just putting like the last 5
19 feet in one set of tanks and probably like 5 or 6 feet in the
20 other set of tanks. So that process was almost done and like I
21 said, we were doing our turnover, you know, just discussing work,
22 things that were going to be happening and anything that had
23 happened through the night, the usual stuff, nothing was out of
24 the ordinary because we'd been moored to the dock, you know,
25 unloading all night, prior to my arrival there. And then that was

1 the -- Mike looked up at the screen and, you know, was noticing we
2 were, you know, maneuvering off the dock and then turned back, you
3 know, we were talking and then that's when we felt the ship kind
4 of, you know, shudder and lean a little bit, you know, like maybe
5 we had, you know, bumped something. And then we turned back, you
6 know, like oh, there we go, you know, thought maybe we just bumped
7 into, you know, whatever.

8 And then we started finishing our turnover and that's when I
9 looked at the screen and I noticed that the one set of tanks, 6,
10 you know, the 6's, I'm pretty sure that when I glanced at them
11 before, they were at 25 feet and I glanced down and we have trim,
12 you know, light, so we get two red lights if we're leaning to
13 port, you know, one and the two red lights if we're leaning to
14 port and if we've got to starboard list, we have a single and a
15 double green, you know, to show how much list we have and I saw
16 the one green light.

17 I'm pretty sure, when I glanced at it before, you know, we
18 were white light, we were leveled up and we had the one green
19 light and then I saw occasionally the second green light was
20 starting to blink, you know, and that's when I glanced back at the
21 screen and I noticed 6 starboard was down to like 20 feet and I
22 said -- or I mean, 6 port, rather, was down to 20 feet and the
23 starboard side was still at 25. So I looked at Mike, you know,
24 and I said hey, you want me -- we're starting to take a list here,
25 do you want me to go ahead and take this and put some water in 6

1 port, you know, to bring it up so we'll level back out and he said
2 it has 25 feet in it already, I've already topped those off. And
3 then he turned around and started, you know, going back to talking
4 to the chief there and then that's whenever I looked at it again
5 and I said we've got 20 and then he turned around and looked back
6 at it and he goes well, that's -- that's not -- now, that can't
7 be. And then we were taking the -- you know, taking the list
8 there with the green light blinking.

9 And then that's when I went and picked up the phone and I
10 called Captain Jeff and, you know, I said, you know, is there a
11 possibility maybe we, you know, scrubbed the bottom or something
12 while we were, you know, maneuvering off the dock there and he
13 said no and then I said okay and he said, well, why, why are you
14 concerned and then I told him, you know, about what I just told
15 you, you know, we were -- it looked like we were losing water and,
16 you know, it had dropped 5 feet and he was like okay.

17 And then I said okay, we'll call you back, we're going to,
18 you know, go investigate this and see, you know, see what's going
19 on. And that's when, you know, of course, Chief Gary was standing
20 there, we were all standing there and, you know, he was looking at
21 the screen to make sure, like, we're all seeing the same thing.
22 So then he said you go check the tunnel, you know, make sure we
23 don't have any -- you know, anything going on down there, like
24 water leaking in or anything, you know, like maybe, you know,
25 water flooding into the tunnel or something. And then he called

1 Besco to go outside and sound the tank so that we could verify
2 that the -- you know, the physical sounding from the tank with a
3 sounding tape matched what we were seeing on the -- you know, on
4 the remote screen. And so he went there and then I went, you
5 know, down the tunnel, the tunnel, the lead conveyer man, he was
6 there, you know, and I said hey man, come with me just in case,
7 you know, we're going to go make sure there's no water, you know,
8 flooding in or anything.

9 And we went down there, he went down the starboard side, I
10 went down the port side and, you know, we were looking around, we
11 didn't see anything, come back up, everything looked normal down
12 there. Went back up, you know, up into the engine room out of the
13 tunnel area and I went back to the control room and when I got to
14 the control room, about that time I was arriving, that's when
15 Besco was calling me to tell me that, you know, hey, what is the
16 screen showing and I said it was like 20.1 or 20.2, whatever it
17 was showing.

18 The other thing I noticed right then was we had only lost the
19 5 feet of water in there, so we hadn't lost any more in the time
20 it took me to go down to the tunnel and come back, so I'm like
21 okay, we -- you know, we've just lost that, you know, just that 5
22 feet and then I said -- Mike verified, I think, like the screen
23 said, 20.1 or 20.2 or something like that and Mike said he had 20
24 foot 6 inches, so it was just a few inches off between what he was
25 sounding the tank as and, you know, what the screen said. So we

1 had, you know, a good reading on our screen and we verified that.
2 And then at that point, I think, yeah, Mike came back, he was
3 coming back down to the engine room and then -- so me and Chief
4 Gary were standing there talking and I'm like, well, I guess with
5 our current draft the way it is, you know, we've reached the point
6 of equilibrium, we're not losing any water and we're not gaining
7 any water, so if we do got a hole in that tank, it must be on the
8 outside because it's not leaking in there, you know, inside the
9 tunnel and it's not traveling tank to tank, you know, on that
10 side, the 5 or the 7 on the port side wasn't gaining any water or
11 losing any water, so it just appeared to be something going on
12 with 6 port.

13 So at that point, I think we -- let's see. And then Mike
14 come down and then that's when Chief Gary asked me, he said, did
15 you -- did you sound the double bottom? I said well, I just ran
16 down there to do a visual and he says okay, let's go sound the
17 double bottom.

18 So him and Mike went down there, so that that way Chief Gary,
19 you know, could go see the tunnel area himself and then the two of
20 them went down there with the sounding rod to go, you know, strap
21 each one of the double-bottom tanks to verify that because they're
22 supposed to be dry, but there wasn't any water in them and they
23 were gone 10, 15 minutes, whatever, to do that and when they come
24 back, no, they're all dry. I think at that point I called Captain
25 Jeff and gave him an update like, you know, we're not losing

1 water, we're not gaining water, you know, we seemed to reach a
2 point of equilibrium with our draft, but we might have a hole in 6
3 port, you know, the water's going somewhere. And then he said
4 okay, thanks, and then that was it, he hung up the phone with me
5 because he was -- you know, he was driving up there, so you know,
6 keep the phone conversation short and sweet while he's doing that
7 and just gave him, you know, the update there and then after that,
8 I think -- what did we do?

9 I think Chief Gary and Mike went out on deck to flip open the
10 vent because you can kind of see down in there just to see if,
11 like, they could see water, you know, shine a flashlight in there
12 and see if they could see water like spraying in or something, you
13 know, from just looking at the top of the tank. And I think when
14 those tanks are like at 25 feet, there's still probably another 10
15 or 15 feet maybe above them. Maybe 10 feet. No, probably 10 feet
16 or less to, you know, up to the top of the tank because of the way
17 the tanks are shaped kind of at an angle there.

18 So they might've had enough space to see something, you know,
19 if something was going on, but of course it's limited viewing from
20 the vent area, so they couldn't really see a whole lot and they
21 came back to the engine room and I think, after they come back,
22 then that was when Chief Gary said I'm going to go up and see if I
23 can talk to the captain and, you know, of course they were going
24 to start the reporting process to, you know, call the office and,
25 you know, make a notification that we might have an issue. And

1 that's about it, I was in the engine room the rest of the day
2 until about 19:30 that evening, finishing my watch and then doing
3 overtime. You know, other than that, we were under way, you know,
4 heading outbound from the Sault area there, from the locks, you
5 know, going up through Gros Cap and across Whitefish Bay and that
6 was it. The rest of the day was, you know, just under way, a
7 normal watch, we were watching the tanks.

8 I think, at one point Chief Gary said see if you can pump the
9 tank down and he had called me and told me to try that. Either he
10 called me before we left or he called back, I can't remember that
11 for certain, but we did make an attempt to dewater the tank, so we
12 opened up both number 6 port and starboard to try and pump them
13 down, you know, together so we wouldn't take a list or anything,
14 and in the process of doing that, once I hit about 16 foot, 16-
15 point-something feet, I don't remember the exact number, but 16
16 whatever feet, they wouldn't go down any more, like the starboard
17 side would keep pumping down, but the port side wouldn't.

18 So, you know, I got -- I let the starboard side go down to
19 like, say, 15 feet and then I just shut it off and I was just
20 trying to pump out of 6 port and it just stayed at 16 feet. So I
21 was like okay, the water's -- you know, once we get to 16 feet,
22 the water's obviously coming in enough at that point, you know,
23 that it's not -- the pump's no longer effective in pumping that
24 tank down.

25 MR. ZWICKER: Mr. Parsons, can I --

1 MR. PARSON: Yes.

2 MR. ZWICKER: -- stop you real quick?

3 MR. PARSON: Sure.

4 MR. ZWICKER: You've got to let [REDACTED] ask you questions kind
5 of one at a time and just answer his questions as they come along.
6 You know, it doesn't really help anybody if we go on like a 10-
7 minute narrative. Let [REDACTED] ask his questions and just respond to
8 what he's asking you.

9 MR. PARSON: Understood.

10 BY MR. [REDACTED]

11 Q. All right, Mr. Parson, so thank you for that, I appreciate
12 it. You mentioned that you were in the ballast control room right
13 around 7:30 and you were doing watch relief with the second?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you said -- where is the ECDIS display? Could you see
16 the ECDIS display from that ballast control room area?

17 A. Yes, you could see it, it's like just above where the ballast
18 console is, it's kind of angled away from it a little bit, but
19 it's -- you know, it's right there above it.

20 Q. Okay. And so you mentioned that you thought you were under
21 way right around 7:30 and you were standing there at the ballast
22 console finishing up some ballast. Do you recall, you said the
23 ship shuddered and leaned, do you recall looking --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- up at that ECDIS and where you may have been in relation

1 to the outbound transit?

2 A. No, I do not.

3 MR. ZWICKER: [REDACTED] when you say -- when you say where you
4 may have been, are you referring to the vessel or Mr. Parson,
5 himself?

6 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm referring to the
7 vessel on the ECDIS display --

8 MR. ZWICKER: Okay.

9 MR. [REDACTED] -- when it felt that shudder and a lean.

10 MR. PARSON: I did not look up at it at that time.

11 BY MR. [REDACTED]

12 Q. Did you notice, prior to that, the shudder and the lean, if
13 -- could you tell if you were in a turn at that time or, you know,
14 making a hard turn or anything like that?

15 A. I could not.

16 Q. Okay. Do you have any idea on time, if you said that you
17 were there around 7:30, what kind of time had elapsed in between
18 that time where you felt that shudder and the lean?

19 A. Ten minutes or less, 5 to 10 minutes. Like I said, I hadn't
20 been there long.

21 Q. Okay. And have you felt a shudder similar to this before?

22 A. On this ship, I mean, running through ice, you know, that's
23 about it.

24 Q. Okay, so that's -- if you had to describe something similar,
25 you would say running through ice?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Are you aware, was there ice there during that
3 outbound transit?

4 A. No, sir, I was not aware, I had not looked outside.

5 Q. Okay. So in your statement you mention the second assistant
6 remarked that "the engines were revved up pretty high but we
7 didn't seem to be moving." Did you also notice the engines being
8 revved up high?

9 A. There's noise down there. Not really, you know, I mean, no
10 more than when maneuvering, so the engines, you know, they rev up
11 and down as the captain's maneuvering. So I mean, nothing out of
12 the ordinary, but like I said, I was not staring at the screen or
13 looking at it or anything.

14 Q. Right. So nothing insignificant that you noticed when the
15 second said that?

16 A. No, sir.

17 Q. So when the second made that remark to you, did you look up
18 at the display at that time?

19 A. I believe I glanced at it, but not like, you know, staring at
20 it to ascertain where we were, I just -- you know, because he was
21 looking in that direction, but I can't really see it from the
22 angle from the side of where I was standing, so I couldn't really
23 see it, you know, it's kind of at an angle. So I mean, if I --
24 like I said, I glanced in that direction but not really studying
25 it, you know.

1 Q. So you didn't -- did you notice the speed or the movement
2 that he was describing to you?

3 A. No, sir, I did not.

4 Q. Okay. So for that outbound transit, was all the equipment
5 functional and can you tell me what was ordered on line at the
6 time?

7 A. We were maneuvering, so everything was, you know, up and
8 running, we had three generators on line to power the thrusters
9 and both engines, of course, were on line and, you know, the bell
10 was on standby, which meant some -- you know, somebody had to be
11 there, so it was just a normal, you know, standard departure,
12 there was nothing out of the ordinary.

13 Q. Okay. Would you say -- so prior to departure, you said it
14 was a normal departure, would that mean that the ballasting was
15 normal or routine for a similar port?

16 A. Yes, that was our standard ballast loads, from what I've
17 seen.

18 Q. Okay. Would you say that it's unusual to continue ballasting
19 operations while you're getting under way or was that fairly
20 routine?

21 A. It can happen from time to time. I mean, normally we're
22 wrapped up with ballasting before they're done unloading, but
23 sometimes they -- you know, they get -- depending on the cargo,
24 they may get done before us and then, you know, if we're close
25 then, you know, we'll adjust.

1 Q. And were there any entries -- so, looking at the ballast
2 water log, were there any entries after the 07:19? You may not
3 recall, but --

4 A. No, sir, I don't recall. I don't know if I even wrote on the
5 thing, you know, that day. If I saw it, it was probably because
6 it sits on the console, like I just glanced at it because, as I
7 said, we were almost done, we just had a little bit left in the
8 last two sets of tanks, you know, to get to where they needed to
9 be, so we were almost done, so you know, I wasn't really looking
10 at it.

11 Q. What were the last -- the last two tanks that you completed
12 ballasting in?

13 A. I don't recall for certain. I think it was 6 and 7, if I'm
14 not mistaken, but I could be wrong. The 6 is for sure, that tank,
15 and then 7. Or no, 6 -- no, 6's were done, it was 7's, that's
16 what it was, 7's and 8's. Yeah, I think we were bringing the 7's
17 and 8's. That's right, I'm sorry, it was the last two sets of
18 tanks, not 6 and 7, but 7 and 8. Six was already done, already,
19 or supposed to have been done.

20 Q. And 6's, did you confirm with the second, then, that 6's were
21 completed, but at some point you noted the 6 port was down to
22 approximately 20 feet?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. And that was -- 7's and 8's were the last of the
25 routine or normal transfer prior to getting under way?

1 A. I mean, it varies from time to time, you know, sometimes
2 we're still filling up tanks up in the front, you know, 1's or 2's
3 or something, you know.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. So it depends on the ballast plan.

6 Q. So I guess I'm -- let me make it a little clearer. So on
7 this day, this departure, you mentioned the 7's and 8's were the
8 last tanks to be filled as -- was the order for that day, so the
9 7's and 8's would've been the last of the normal ballasting.

10 A. Yes, as far as I know.

11 Q. Okay. And at some point did you receive a call or an order
12 from the captain or anyone else to add additional ballast in any
13 areas?

14 A. No, I did not.

15 Q. So you mentioned that at some point during the investigative
16 process, and what I mean by that is when you guys were trying to
17 determine what was going on with the 6's, that you would've
18 brought both pumps on line in an attempt to level out the number
19 6. So that occurred sometime after the routine ballasting, is
20 that correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. So was there any other ballasting aside from that
23 troubleshooting or attempt to level out the number 6's?

24 A. Once we ascertained that the -- it wouldn't pump down below
25 16 feet, I let the 6 port, you know, gravity feed to see where it

1 would go, see if it would just go right back to 20 and it did. So
2 then I was occasionally, you know, putting water into 6 starboard
3 to keep us level, so that was it. That was all part of that
4 evolution.

5 Q. And when you lined up both pumps in an attempt to draw down
6 the number 6 and you said you couldn't get beyond 16 feet, was
7 that any indication or it wasn't anything that you understood or
8 thought at that point?

9 A. I don't understand the question.

10 Q. I guess I'm asking if you had both pumps on line and you
11 weren't able to bring that tank down any further than the 16-foot
12 mark, was that any indication in your mind as to what was going on
13 in the number 6?

14 A. The only thing that, like, I reported to the chief was that,
15 you know, it wouldn't go below 16 foot, so obviously whatever hole
16 we may have in it is, you know, big enough that there's enough
17 water coming in that it won't -- you know, the pump won't overcome
18 that. That was about the only thing I ascertained from that.

19 Q. Okay. And do you recall the ballast tank level in the number
20 7's?

21 A. I believe, typically, we don't go over 15 feet in those, but
22 sometimes, occasionally, we may go to 20. But usually, I think
23 there's a chart down there that tells us, they'll call down the
24 bridge with them and say, you know, go to, you know, heavy ballast
25 or whatever, it's going to be bad weather or something. But

1 typically, those tanks are either dry when we're loaded with cargo
2 or they're, you know, 15 feet, usually. What they were that day,
3 they should've been 15 feet if that was the last order that was
4 given and we were stopped, we weren't loading, then that's where
5 they would be, 15 feet.

6 Q. Okay. And in looking at the ballast sheet, who is -- who is
7 Sam?

8 A. Sam is the second mate.

9 Q. Okay. And Scott?

10 A. Scott is the first mate.

11 Q. Okay. And is it typical for you to -- when you -- do you
12 fill out the ballast sheet or is this something the mates fill
13 out?

14 A. I believe the captain and the mates, they have that in a book
15 that they carry with them. I don't really know, it's not part of
16 my -- you know, what I do. I just know that they call down and
17 they tell us what they want and we call it back to them to confirm
18 it over the radio that we understood the order that they gave us
19 and that is why we have our sheet in the engine room to write down
20 what they told us and who. You know, so that's why it will have
21 somebody's name or just their position, you know, and it will let
22 us know who phoned the order down, you know, to us over the radio
23 or by phone and, you know -- and that's it.

24 Q. So for clarity, then, so the order is called down to you and
25 it's recorded by one of the engineers that's on watch at the time,

1 in the ballast record book?

2 A. Yeah, we just have a sheet, we have a clipboard with sheets
3 on it and when we're done with that particular, you know,
4 ballasting or de-ballasting operation on that day, we put it in a
5 binder with the rest of them.

6 Q. Okay. And I was just looking at the engine room logbook
7 entry, 07:40, you were on watch at 07:30, and there's an entry
8 made that while undocking vessel, appears to have scrubbed bottom,
9 putting a hole in the number 6 port ballast tank, and you go on to
10 say that tunnel and double-bottom tanks quickly verified dry,
11 sounding on tank verified same as tank level indicator.

12 Number 6 port lost water from 25 to 20 in a few minutes,
13 adjusted number 6 starboard level to remove list, attempted to
14 dewater number 6 port, won't go below 17, allowed the tanks to
15 equalize then rest at 20. Captain and chief engineer notified
16 shoreside. So when you made that entry at 07:40, what gave you
17 that indication that you had scrubbed bottom or that you had --
18 the vessel had touched bottom on the way out?

19 A. We were losing water out of 6 port.

20 Q. Okay. So is this something that the -- that you had
21 confirmed with the chief or the captain or anyone else or was this
22 an observation that you had made and made the entry?

23 A. It was an observation that I made based on all the
24 conversations that I'd had with the chief and the second, you
25 know, that's what we were assuming, that's something that

1 happened, you know, and that we had a hole in the tank and that
2 was it.

3 Q. Okay. And when you say that the captain and the chief
4 engineer notified shoreside, do you know if that occurred or not?

5 A. I assume that it did, but no, I do have -- I don't have any
6 direct knowledge that they picked up the phone or sent an e-mail,
7 I'm not privy to any of those communications.

8 Q. Okay. And you mentioned, after you had completed your
9 investigation of the tunnel, you said you went down the port side
10 and the conveyor man went down the starboard side and you found no
11 further damage, is that correct?

12 A. That is correct, nothing obvious that we saw at that time.

13 Q. Okay. And did you say that you called the captain at that
14 time?

15 A. Yes, whenever we got back to the -- to the control room, I
16 mean, not immediately, but shortly thereafter, because we were
17 still -- you know, Besco was still on deck sounding the tank,
18 right when I got back to the engine room, you know, he was still
19 doing that and then they still had to have the time elapse for
20 them to go down to the tunnel, you know, the two of them and
21 verify that the tanks, double-bottom tanks, were dry.

22 Q. Okay. And after the double bottoms were verified, that's
23 when you had contacted the captain?

24 A. Yes, around that time. I was going to call him just to
25 report what we had found so far.

1 Q. Okay. And was there any conversation with the captain of a
2 suspicion of a hole in the tank, potential flooding of that number
3 6 port tank, et cetera?

4 A. No. As I said, he was maneuvering and when he's driving up
5 there, we keep the conversation short and just to the facts. I
6 told him what we had found, he said thank you, and then we hung
7 up.

8 Q. Okay. The listometer that you mention within the engine
9 room, where is that located in relation to that ballast control
10 panel?

11 A. It is on the ballast control panel, right at the top of it,
12 in plain view.

13 Q. And can you explain what the lights on that listometer mean?

14 A. You have a white light means that we're centered up and then
15 I believe the red lights are to port, so you have two to the left
16 side of the white light and then two green ones to the right side
17 of it. And then if you have just a little bit of a list, you get,
18 you know, one light and then if you have a little bit more list,
19 you get two, you know, two lights. So that's how it works.

20 Q. So at some point when you mentioned that you felt a shudder
21 and a list, were those lights indicating a starboard list at that
22 time?

23 A. Not at that time, no. I glanced at that area and I don't
24 recall seeing other than a white light.

25 Q. Okay. And at what point, then, did the list -- the lights on

1 the listometer change?

2 A. Well, that was whenever I glanced at the screen, I didn't
3 glance at them at first, I was just looking because we were
4 filling those last tanks up, you know, to look at their status
5 while we were talking and whenever I looked over, that's when I
6 noticed that the green light was on. You know, in that process, I
7 probably looked back and forth because we were talking, so I'd
8 look at them and I'd look back over and then I'd look at them and,
9 you know, I noticed that we had the one green light and then I was
10 like "why do we have one green light?"

11 And I started looking at the tank levels, it's pretty easy to
12 see at a quick glance because all the little bars on the thing,
13 you know, it's a graph-type deal, so all of them are pretty much
14 in a straight line, you know, at that point and it was real easy
15 to look at it for a few seconds and go huh, we're slack in 6 port
16 and then, you know, looking down again and then that's when I
17 turned to him and said, you know, do you want me to put some water
18 in 6 port?

19 Q. So at some point did you have a double green light?

20 A. I don't recall it ever being fully illuminated green, but it
21 was randomly, you know, lighting up, the second green light was
22 randomly lighting up and that was probably just because, you know,
23 we were rocking a little bit.

24 Q. I see, okay. And do you know the tolerance or the limits on
25 those lights, what kind of list or what degree of list they may

1 indicate?

2 A. I have no idea.

3 Q. Okay. Would you say that it's -- so how often are those
4 lights on? Are they usually illuminated during the transit or
5 after leaving, after you're done, finished ballasting or are they
6 turned off?

7 A. Typically, the mates call down and ask for them to be turned
8 on when we start loading or unloading and then usually when we're
9 done, like in the process of where we were at, there at some point
10 while I was finishing loading the tanks, after I assume watch I
11 would've turned them off myself since they would've been no longer
12 to be needed. But no, they are not left on during -- when we're
13 under way.

14 Q. Okay, so the lights were on at that time because you were
15 still finishing your ballasting?

16 A. Yes, that was just because they hadn't been turned off yet.
17 Typically, they would not be, you know, we don't need them for
18 that, we watch the levels on the screen. And then once we tell
19 them that we're done, you know, that's it, we just turn them off
20 or they'll call and just say you can turn them off, we're done
21 with them.

22 Q. Prior to going on watch, is there any required -- or
23 discussion that takes place with regard to the outbound transit
24 and risk management, personnel selection, anything along those
25 lines?

1 A. I don't understand what you're asking.

2 Q. So is there any discussion either with the crew complement or
3 the captain, chief engineer, et cetera, that you would be party
4 to, that would discuss any hazards that may come up with crew
5 selection, the vessel, equipment, et cetera?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Did you talk to the captain at any time prior to departure,
8 prior to going on watch?

9 A. I did not.

10 Q. So prior to the incident, did you feel rested?

11 A. Yes, I did.

12 Q. And did you complete a work/rest history?

13 A. Yes, we do the Helm CONNECT, so my hours would be recorded
14 there electronically.

15 Q. Okay. And did you complete chemical testing after the event?

16 A. I was not requested to do it, no.

17 Q. And by chemical testing, just to be clear, alcohol and --

18 A. No, no alcohol or drug testing was requested of me.

19 Q. Okay. And do you have any questions of me, sir?

20 A. No, I do not.

21 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. I'll open things for further
22 questions. Marcel, if you could -- if you could lead and then go
23 down the line, that would be great.

24 MR. MUISE: I have nothing to add. Thank you, Mr. Parsons,
25 for your time.

1 MR. SPOTTS: Adam, do you have any questions?

2 MR. ZWICKER: David, if you have any, why don't you go?

3 MR. SPOTTS: Okay.

4 BY MR. SPOTTS:

5 Q. Mr. Parsons, I'm David Spotts and I represent Captain Layton,
6 and good afternoon.

7 A. Good afternoon.

8 Q. I don't have too many questions for you. What measure of
9 time or what device do you use or the instrument to tell you what
10 time it is when you make these entries?

11 A. Whenever I make what?

12 Q. When you make an entry, are you looking at a clock?

13 A. Oh, a log entry. Oh, yeah, there's a clock on the port side
14 of the control room, it's right there close to where the little
15 watch deck is, where the logbook sits.

16 Q. And that's what you use to assist you in writing down a time?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you ever compare that clock with the pilothouse clock?

19 A. No, sir, I do not.

20 Q. Okay. All right. So you don't know if there's any variation
21 between the pilothouse clock and the engine room clock? True?

22 A. No, sir, I wouldn't have the slightest idea.

23 Q. All right. So if I was to suggest to you that the vessel
24 departed the dock at 7:20, 10 minutes before you came into the
25 engine room, would you have any information to indicate that

1 that's not true?

2 A. No, I wouldn't.

3 Q. Okay. And if I told you that the electronic chart showed
4 that the vessel was in the St. Mary's River at 7:37, would you
5 have any information to suggest that that's not true?

6 A. I would not.

7 Q. Okay. And so you make your entry at 7:40, correct?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. All right. But it looks like the 7:40 entry encompasses a
10 substantial period of time, from the time of 7:40 and forward to
11 when you finally ended the entry, do you agree?

12 A. Oh, yes, yes, it covers a little bit of time. Yes.

13 Q. Right. And the next entry isn't until sometime around 9
14 o'clock, correct?

15 A. I'll take your word for it, I don't have a copy of the
16 logbook in front of me.

17 Q. Oh, okay. Well, then I won't put you through that, then.
18 Did you make this log entry at 7:40 all at the same time?

19 A. I wrote all of that at one sitting, but I didn't, like, write
20 it exactly at 7:40, obviously. What I usually do is I'll have
21 like a little, you know, sticky note or something I put on the
22 logbook page to write the time down when something's happening and
23 I'll just put some shorthand, you know, on there and then once --
24 you know, anywhere from 5 minutes to an hour later when I have
25 time, you know, if I'm dirty or sweaty or whatever, you know, to

1 sit down and, you know, then actually make the entry in the
2 logbook so I don't get greasy stuff all over the, you know, inside
3 of the book. I would've wrote that down on a sticky note, you
4 know, like 7:40 is about what time I figured the incident happened
5 and then I would've just went back and wrote all of that in there,
6 obviously, after the fact, you know.

7 Q. All right. So the 7:40 was your best estimate. Do you have
8 an estimate for the time that you actually wrote the entry? I
9 mean if you know. If you don't know, that's fine.

10 A. I don't recall. I mean, it wasn't within that hour because
11 we were, you know, in and out. The other guys were in and out of
12 the engine room and then, of course, I'm, you know, doing my
13 normal routine and making rounds, so I mean, I was busy, so yeah,
14 it wasn't like within 5 minutes of it happening, no.

15 Q. Okay, thank you. Mr. Parsons, were you aware that the
16 captain had issued an order that at the time of departure, number
17 7 tank should be at 5 feet?

18 A. I don't have a copy of the ballast sheet in front of me, you
19 know, that Mike would've wrote that down on, so I have no idea.
20 No, I couldn't speak to that.

21 Q. The ballast sheet that I'm looking at suggests that that was
22 the case by an entry dated -- excuse me, an entry at 05:14, so
23 that's well before you took over. But the entry that you might
24 know something about is the one involving the 7's and it says the
25 captain ordered -- or it doesn't say captain ordered, but the

1 captain ordered the ballasting of number 7 tank at 7:19. Do you
2 have any reason to dispute that?

3 A. No, sir, I was not in the machinery space at that time.

4 Q. Okay, so now you have three generators on line, correct?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And you're also pumping into number 8, there's another entry
7 for 7:19 per the captain to start pumping number 8. So you have
8 two pumps. Is one pump on number 7?

9 A. You pump down port side and starboard side and we use two
10 pumps, you know, to pump in or pump out, just to keep things
11 level, but they're cross-connected, you know what I mean, there's
12 a cross-connect. So technically, when you got the pump on, both
13 pumps are pushing into the entire ballast system as a whole and,
14 you know, pressing both tanks or whatever tank valves are open at
15 that time.

16 Q. Okay. And unfortunately, my experience is mostly deck, so be
17 patient with me. If the order is given at 7:19 to start pumping
18 number 7 tank, and the order is given at 7:19 to start pumping
19 number 8 tank, if you had been there, what would you have done to
20 accomplish the order?

21 A. Opened up the valves, obviously, you know, lined everything
22 up and I would've had both pumps running, you know, to fill them
23 up.

24 Q. And does the fact that you have three generators operating at
25 the same time affect anything?

1 A. No. Under normal conditions, it wouldn't.

2 Q. It wouldn't, okay. So if you started at 7:19 pumping into 7
3 tank, that was at 5 feet, how long would it take you to get to 15
4 feet?

5 A. I mean, just pumping into that one tank by itself with one
6 pump, it could take 5 or 10 minutes, maybe. Maybe 10 minutes,
7 yeah, something like that. If you had both pumps going in there,
8 a little bit less.

9 Q. Okay. Well, you're pumping into 7 and 8, so would you use
10 two pumps, one for 7 and one for 8?

11 A. Both pumps are pushing water into the system as a whole, it
12 would just be like having one pump on and then turning another one
13 to give it a little extra capacity, make it -- you know, fill it
14 up quicker.

15 Q. Does one tank get filled first? Do you fill 7 first and then
16 fill 8?

17 A. Typically, you would just open up all four tanks, you know,
18 both 7 port and starboard and then number 8 port and starboard and
19 then, obviously, you would probably hit 5 foot in the 7 first and
20 then you would just keep going. At that point, the pressure may
21 build up and, you know, get a little higher than you'd want it to
22 and there'd be no reason to run, you know, two pumps, so you would
23 just shut one of them down and finish doing it with just one pump
24 and there's no -- you know, you pick whichever pump you want to
25 turn off.

1 Q. Okay. Were you present in the engine room when Mr. Besco
2 called the captain in the pilothouse and asked permission to start
3 pumping into 7 and 8?

4 A. No, I was not.

5 Q. But none -- excuse me, never mind. I'm looking over my
6 notes. Did you participate in a fire and boat drill and an
7 abandon ship drill at 08:20 on the 8th of January?

8 A. If that's what was in the logbook. There again, I don't have
9 a copy of the logbook. When we have drills they're all hands, so
10 if that's what was logged, then yes, I would've been there.

11 Q. Okay. Forgetting about the log part, do you remember
12 participating in the drill?

13 A. Man, I couldn't tell you for certain. Like I said, if it's
14 wrote down in the book, it happened and I was there.

15 Q. Okay, I appreciate that. Now, when we were looking at the
16 ballast logs and Mr. [REDACTED] pointed out to you that, with
17 regard to the pumping in 7 and 8, there is a start time but there
18 is no stop time, and the stop time probably would've happened on
19 your watch because you said they were still pumping 7 and 8 when
20 you took over. Do you have an estimate of the time that should've
21 been put there?

22 A. I don't recall, a lot of stuff was going on, you know,
23 obviously, at that point in time, but at some point in there, not
24 too long after, you know, in the process of going up and down, you
25 know, the tunnel and trying to do our little investigation, during

1 that elapsed time the tanks would've reached their level and
2 would've stopped the pump. There was just a lot going on, you
3 know.

4 Q. Oh, no, no. I'm not being critical, I was just trying to
5 fill in the blank, if you know what I mean.

6 A. Oh, yeah, I would have to -- you know, I can't say for
7 certain because I don't recall exactly what level they were at,
8 you know, whenever the first time --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- I glanced at them, I didn't write any of that down.

11 Q. So I want to go back to the 7:40 entry that you made and you
12 covered quite a bit of information in there about what was done to
13 ascertain what might've caused the problem with number 6 tank.
14 And one of the things that I didn't see mentioned is the initial
15 checking of the gauges. Do you remember checking the gauges?

16 A. Which gauges?

17 Q. The gauges that showed number 6 port tank could be losing
18 water.

19 A. Oh, you're talking about the screen where we see the tank
20 levels? Yeah, I mean, yeah, I looked at it, I was standing there
21 looking at it and I'm the one that noticed that we were, you know,
22 having a list and that we were missing some water out of 6 port.

23 Q. Okay. But you don't remember the chief engineer telling
24 someone to check the gauges to make sure that the reading was
25 accurate?

1 A. Oh, yeah. Well, when that was -- that was the process when
2 we were doing our investigation to figure out what was going on.
3 That was why Besco was out on deck, he was sent outside to go and,
4 you know, physically sound the tank with the sounding tape to see
5 if it matched, you know, that we weren't getting an error on the
6 screen, you know, electronically, that the physical sounding
7 matched what we were getting from the remote sounding.

8 Q. I'm looking over my notes again, I don't want to repeat
9 things, so I'm going to -- did you stay mostly -- let me start
10 over. Because you were the watchstander in the engine room, did
11 you stay in the engine room while this investigation took place to
12 determine what was going on with number 6 port?

13 A. I mean, at first I went down to the tunnel, however long that
14 time elapsed for me to go down there and, you know, make the -- go
15 end for end on it and come back up, once I went back from there
16 and went into the engine room, I was in there the rest of the day.

17 Q. Right, exactly.

18 A. I mean -- yeah.

19 Q. And do you recall First Mate Stills participating in the
20 investigation?

21 A. I don't think so, not that I recall. I mean, the only person
22 I remember talking to was Mike, you know, Besco, because he called
23 down to the engine room, you know, to tell -- ask me what, you
24 know, the screen was reading to compare it to what he got from the
25 physical sounding. Yeah, I mean, we were -- they were securing

1 the deck outside, there was other radio traffic on there, they --
2 you know, but as to him, like actually talking to us or being
3 involved in it, no.

4 MR. SPOTTS: Okay. All right, well, thank you very much for
5 answering my questions and I don't have any more at this time.

6 MR. [REDACTED] Mr. Zwicker, do you have anything, sir?

7 MR. ZWICKER: Yes, I do, just a few.

8 BY MR. ZWICKER:

9 Q. Mr. Parson, Adam Zwicker, I represent the company in this
10 investigation. Are you at a computer or if I wanted to share my
11 screen with you, are you going to be able to see what I'm trying
12 to show you? Or did you call --

13 A. I'm using my phone, I mean, I can -- would it be visible in
14 that Teams app or something?

15 Q. You might be able to see my screen if you were in the Teams
16 app, but if you just dialed in, I don't think you can see what
17 my --

18 A. No, I dialed in the audio only.

19 Q. Okay. If I were to e-mail you -- if I were to e-mail you
20 copies of what I believe is the engineering rough log and the
21 ballast log, would you be able to access those so you can -- we
22 can look at the same thing --

23 A. Oh, yeah.

24 Q. -- and questions?

25 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I've got access to my e-mail right here on

1 the phone, the company e-mail.

2 Q. And your good e-mail address is [REDACTED] ?

3 A. Yes, sir, that's me.

4 Q. Okay, I'm going to send you an e-mail without -- it won't
5 have a subject on it or I'll just put "investigation."

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. And the two documents attached are going to be jpeg, one is,
8 you know, 1072023 e-n-g rough log and the other is trip 67 unload
9 ballast log. And I'm going to hit send right now and let me know
10 when and if you get those. And then in the interim, what I'm
11 going to do, with everybody logged into Teams, I'm going to -- you
12 know, I'm going to try and share the screen, what I'm looking at,
13 so that people can --

14 A. Yeah, I haven't got anything yet. I'm refreshing my box.

15 Q. Okay, just let me know.

16 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel, I can see it.

17 MR. ZWICKER: Okay.

18 (Pause.)

19 MR. PARSON: Okay, I received them. Which one do you want me
20 to look at first?

21 MR. ZWICKER: The rough engineering log.

22 MR. PARSON: Okay, I'm looking at that one.

23 MR. ZWICKER: Okay. And just so I can, you know, see if
24 we're on the same page, what I'm looking at is basically kind of,
25 you know, like a loose leaf notebook and -- there's some feedback

1 somewhere.

2 (Audio feedback.)

3 MR. ZWICKER: Okay. It's a loose leaf notebook and then on
4 the top it says Saturday, 7 January 2023.

5 MR. PARSON: Yes, I can see that.

6 (Audio feedback.)

7 MR. ZWICKER: Do you have any idea where that feedback is
8 coming from?

9 (Pause.)

10 MR. ZWICKER: Is someone near something (indiscernible)?

11 MR. MUISE: Let me see if I can mute --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 MR. PARSON: Yeah, I have my mike, I have my mike muted, so I
14 don't know, it's not coming from me.

15 (Pause.)

16 MR. ZWICKER: Okay.

17 MR. MUISE: Okay, that was somebody from 8200, when I muted
18 it, it went away.

19 BY MR. ZWICKER:

20 Q. Okay. All right, Mr. Parson, I have -- what I have opened,
21 it's a loose leaf notebook and then in black ink at the top it
22 says Saturday, 7 January 2023 and the first entry looks like it's
23 near 00:00, M. Besco on watch, is that what you're looking at?

24 A. Yes, sir, that's what I see.

25 Q. Okay. So what I want to do is kind of go down to the entry

1 that starts at 7:40. Wait, start -- let's look at the one that
2 starts at 07:30.

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. All the way down to 14:50.

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. Can you tell me whose handwriting that is?

7 A. That's my handwriting.

8 Q. Okay, so you made these entries?

9 A. Yes, I did.

10 Q. Okay. Now the one at 7 -- 07:40, my question is, is the
11 07:40 entry when the event happened or when you logged them?

12 A. That is when I jotted down a rough guess as to when it --
13 when it happened.

14 Q. Okay, so in other words --

15 A. Is it the exact time it happened? No.

16 Q. Okay. So in other words, that 07:40 is not when you wrote
17 that down, correct?

18 A. No, sir, it is not.

19 Q. And is everything that's listed in this entry, did it happen
20 over a period of time?

21 A. Yes, it did.

22 Q. So not everything that's listed in here happened at 07:40, is
23 that accurate?

24 A. That is accurate.

25 Q. Okay. The 09:02 entry, is that when that event happened or

1 when you logged it?

2 A. I believe that is when that one happened, if I recall, and I
3 believe the mate on watch called down and told me that we were at
4 Gros Cap.

5 Q. Okay. Did you log that, you know, as soon as you received
6 that message?

7 A. Yes, I would've walked over and wrote that down.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Not in the logbook, but on my little, you know, scrap piece
10 of paper. Like I said, sometimes I'm sweaty and dirty, I don't
11 write it all down or maybe to write it in.

12 Q. Okay. All right. But in other words, you know, you're
13 fairly certain that what you logged for 09:02 is when it happened,
14 is that fair?

15 A. Yes, that is fair.

16 Q. Okay. Is there any way you can tell us, you know, what times
17 each of the individual items that you have logged in 07:40
18 happened? In other words, can you tell us what exact time, for
19 example, second to bottom line, that the tanks were allowed to
20 equalize and rest at 20 feet?

21 A. No, I couldn't give you a definitive exact time.

22 Q. Okay. Is it the same answer for, you know, my next question,
23 can you tell us exactly when you became aware that the captain and
24 chief engineer notified shoreside of the events?

25 A. No, I could not tell you that for certain.

1 Q. If you can't tell us the exact time, can you tell us whether
2 or not, you know, the events, as you have them logged, did you log
3 them chronologically as they happened?

4 A. As I recalled them, yes.

5 Q. Okay. So the very last thing that happened, at least, of all
6 these events is that the captain -- you were made aware, at least,
7 that the captain and then chief engineer notified shoreside.

8 A. Yes, when the chief engineer left the engine room, that was
9 where he said he was going, he was going to go talk to the captain
10 and he said -- I believe he said something to the effect of, you
11 know, we're obviously going to have to call the office.

12 Q. Okay. Now, I think when Mr. [REDACTED] was asking you
13 questions, you made a comment that the stuff that happened at the
14 07:40 entry happened roughly, you know, within an hour, is that
15 what -- am I remembering your testimony correctly?

16 A. That could be, yes.

17 Q. Okay. So I take that to mean that all this stuff that you've
18 logged here at the 07:40 entry happened anywhere between 07:40 and
19 8:40, is that fair to say?

20 A. That's fair to say, yes. Like I said --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- it's a lot going on.

23 Q. And as we've established, you kind of logged this stuff
24 chronologically as it happened so, you know, you became aware that
25 the captain and the chief engineer were going to notify shoreside

1 at the end of that roughly 1-hour block, is that fair?

2 A. Yeah, give or -- yeah, that's fair.

3 Q. Okay. As part of this investigation that you guys conducted
4 after, you know, you noticed the shudder and all of that and then
5 the 6 port dropping, was part of that done in order to not only
6 investigate what was going on, but also to assess the condition of
7 the ship and whether or not there were any safety concerns?

8 A. Yes, all of that would've been done all together, figure out
9 what's going on and whether or not, you know, everything's good to
10 go.

11 Q. Okay. At any point during your investigation or afterwards,
12 did you become concerned, from a safety standpoint, that the
13 vessel was not seaworthy or there are risks to property or crew,
14 you know, if you guys didn't stop immediately?

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. Okay. Was that true even at, you know, 09:02 when you guys
17 were at Gros Cap?

18 A. Yeah, I mean, at that point, as I wrote, you know, as I've
19 got written here, once we realized that we weren't gaining water
20 or losing water, that, you know, everything seemed to be good to
21 go at that point.

22 Q. Okay. And at any point for the rest of your entries in this
23 log from 09:02 to 14:50, at any point did you become concerned
24 with, you know, any kind of safety issue with the vessel, whether
25 or not it was -- remained to be seaworthy?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. Did you become aware of anybody else, you know,
3 developing any such concerns?

4 A. No, not to my knowledge.

5 Q. If you had developed a concern like that regarding safety or
6 seaworthiness, would you have felt comfortable communicating that
7 to, you know, any of your superiors?

8 A. Oh, yes. Yeah, everybody's easy to get along with and, you
9 know, an open door policy.

10 Q. Okay. And I guess, to be more specific, it sounds like you
11 had a number of conversations while this investigation was going
12 on with the captain, is that correct?

13 A. Yes, I think twice. I think I spoke to him twice.

14 Q. Okay. At any point did you -- I take it that you didn't
15 voice any kind of safety or seaworthiness concerns to the captain
16 during any of these conversations?

17 A. No. No, I did not.

18 Q. Okay. And similarly, would you have felt comfortable doing
19 so, if you, in fact, had any such concerns?

20 A. Oh, yes, of course I would.

21 MR. ZWICKER: Okay. I will pass the witness.

22 MR. SPOTTS: This is Spotts. First of all, let me apologize,
23 I was trying to be on the team and look at the document at the
24 same time as I was listening on the phone, so I think I was the
25 cause of feedback because of my lack of technical knowledge on how

1 these things work. But I have no further questions.

2 MR. MUISE: Any further questions from anyone?

3 MR. PETERSON: Not from me.

4 MR. MUISE: Okay, nothing heard, with that, Mr. Parson, I
5 sure appreciate your -- your willingness to participate and your
6 time today.

7 MR. PARSON: No problem.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you, everyone.

9 MR. MUISE: Thank you, I'll be signing off.

10 (Whereupon, at 3:41 p.m., the interview concluded.)

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: GROUNDING OF BULK SHIP *AMERICAN
MARINER* IN SAULT SAINTE MARIE,
ONTARIO, CANADA ON JANUARY 7, 2023
Interview of Charlie Parson

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM013

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: February 21, 2023

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.



David A. Martini
Transcriber



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594

1a/e C. Parson

Interview Transcript

Grounding of the M/V American Mariner
DCA23FM013

Page/Line	Original	NTSB Correction
7/6 & 12	Mike Besco	Mike Besko
10/1 & 15	Besco	Besko
23/17	Besco	Besko
35/3 & 22	Mr. Besco	Mr. Besko
33/1	Mr. Besco	Mr. Besko
38/23	M. Besco	M. Besko
44/2 & 9	Mr. Muise	Mr. [REDACTED]