

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL * Accident No.: DCA22FM035

CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022 *

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Interview of: CAPTAIN KEVIN CALDWELL, Master, CC Aransas
Edison Chouest

Corpus Christi, Texas

Wednesday,
August 17, 2022

APPEARANCES:

██████████, Lieutenant Commander, Investigator
United States Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Captain Kevin Caldwell:

By [REDACTED]

4

I N T E R V I E W

(2:11 p.m.)

1
2
3 [REDACTED] Good afternoon. It's 1411 on Wednesday,
4 August 17, 2022. This is Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED]
5 with Coast Guard Corpus Christi Investigations. I'm here with the
6 interview of Mr. Kevin Caldwell in regards to the *CC Portland*
7 grounding incident.

8 And, sir, do I have your permission to record this interview?

9 MR. CALDWELL: Yeah. My name's Kevin Caldwell, the captain
10 of the *CC Aransas*. Yes, you do.

11 [REDACTED] Awesome. Thank you so much. Okay. So,
12 first, what I'll do is, I just want to go through like your
13 background information; and then, I'm going to go into the bow
14 position that you all maneuver; and then, I'm going to ask you
15 some questions specifically about the --

16 MR. CALDWELL: Okay.

17 (Crosstalk)

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN KEVIN CALDWELL

18
19 BY [REDACTED]

20 Q. Okay. So, what's your background? How long have you been
21 working for Chouest?

22 A. Chouest, 13 years this time and 11 years before.

23 Q. Before? Okay.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. So, have you been a captain that whole 13 plus --

1 A. I've been a captain for 28 years.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Awesome. So, have you been working -- how long have you been
5 working with z-drives specifically?

6 A. Thirty years.

7 Q. Okay. So, you've got experience.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Yeah. So, do you feel --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. How do you feel about that bow position when you're doing it?

12 A. It's, it's aggressive, and it's, it's not an easy position.

13 Q. No.

14 A. Of course, current, speed, wind, timing, everything makes a
15 factor into it.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. You've got to get close quarters operation bow to stern or
18 bow to bow, and you're at the mercy of the people lowering you the
19 line or throwing the line while the wind gets it, so you've got to
20 get closer for them to get to it. Just got to go in real gentle,
21 you know. If the ship's going to fast, well, then, you just don't
22 get in there. If it's in 7 knots, 5 to 7 knots is perfect,
23 because once they get slower, well, then, your limit -- your slip
24 clutch wants to outrun him.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So, now, you're braking, you see, instead of driving the
2 vessel.

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. And it gets a little tricky. And then, if you've got a
5 following current, also, well, that even makes it a little harder,
6 because it's already giving you another knot or so of speed with
7 the ship, so you're not getting the water you need coming across,
8 is --

9 Q. What's your preferred method for getting connected to the
10 ship?

11 A. My standard way and the way I train my, the guys, is, if I'm
12 number one position, we meet over there around 25 or Moda. I
13 prefer to wait over on the green side of the channel. Never wait
14 in the center of the channel. I see a lot of guys do that, wait
15 to the ship. I wait until the ship gets up to me; and then, I
16 pace it. And then, once I match my speed, then I move over in
17 front of it.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And then, that's when we try to send our messenger up after
20 they send theirs down.

21 Q. So, are you bow to bow for the entire thing, or do you go
22 over --

23 A. It's bow to bow.

24 Q. -- to one side --

25 A. Well, the --

1 Q. -- in the line?

2 A. Naturally, you're going to, you're going to shift back and
3 forth, because again, it all depends on speed --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- you know. If they're doing slower, well, then, it's a
6 little bit more wiggly --

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. -- you know. These boats are really easy to overcorrect, you
9 know. They don't have that deep skeg like some of them. Me, I
10 prefer to get out there beyond the -- on his port side when he
11 comes in; and then, I move in front.

12 Q. Okay. So, you're kind of like --

13 A. I'm off to the side.

14 Q. -- portside, and he is bow.

15 A. Like, here he is. I'm here. Then, I pace him; then, I move
16 over.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Now, some of the guys will wait here in the channel, and wait
19 to him; and then, they'll start doing this --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- to meet up.

22 Q. So, when you're taking the messenger line from the tinker,
23 where are you typically tied?

24 A. As soon as I get my messenger line up, I pull away about say
25 3 meters, maybe 4 meters, to give me a little space to where I can

1 see that bubble.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. You see? Because each ship has a different bubble, and
4 that's the one that -- you know what I'm talking about.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. The bulbous bow. So, you don't want to make contact with
7 that. You've got to know. Because that way, if you're out there
8 a little further, you have a little bit more swing on it. If
9 you're up under him like that -- I mean, there is some times that
10 we have to what we call, get in the pocket, because the wind's
11 blowing 18, 20 miles an hour, and they can't get the line to us.
12 So, we'll drop in over on the starboard side --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- and then, they would throw the line. Soon as the line is
15 -- they, my deckhands, get it, then they secure it to their line,
16 right? Then, I'll pull out about 3 to 4 meters, at a comfortable
17 position and distance so I can see everything.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And then, I can see up top when the line's being hoisted, and
20 then when they give me the signal --

21 Q. So --

22 A. -- real fast.

23 Q. -- when they're taking the lineup, how do you all have your
24 towing? Is it faked on deck, or is it --

25 A. It's faked on deck.

- 1 Q. It's faked on deck?
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. Okay. So, about how much do you have faked out?
- 4 A. I have roughly probably 90 to 120 feet.
- 5 Q. Okay. And then, is your deckhand -- do they have a choke on
- 6 it at all, or are they --
- 7 A. Mine does.
- 8 Q. Yours does? Okay.
- 9 A. Yes. Yeah.
- 10 Q. All right. I notice --
- 11 A. I can show you the method that I have of that.
- 12 Q. I'm familiar with your method, because --
- 13 A. Okay.
- 14 Q. -- we've been on a couple of boats now, and it's interesting
- 15 to see. Some captains prefer not to have it faked; and then, some
- 16 do --
- 17 A. Okay. Well --
- 18 Q. -- and some --
- 19 (Crosstalk)
- 20 A. -- it faked between the staple and the winch. Okay. I've
- 21 experienced that they've dropped the line overboard, the messenger
- 22 line breaks. I cannot winch it in, because my line is not
- 23 fairlead.
- 24 Q. Yeah.
- 25 A. Now, if it's past the staple, well, then, it's fairlead. I

- 1 can immediately line the winch up and pick it back up.
- 2 Q. Okay. So, when you say you have it faked past, so that's --
- 3 A. Other words, it goes out the staple and down --
- 4 Q. And then, you --
- 5 A. -- my side.
- 6 Q. -- you rigged it.
- 7 A. Yeah.
- 8 Q. And then, you have your eye ready to go --
- 9 A. Set -- ready --
- 10 Q. -- off the bow?
- 11 A. -- to go.
- 12 Q. Okay. I understand.
- 13 A. And then, what I have is a choker line that's got two eyes,
14 and one eye has a tail.
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. Okay. That way, my guys don't get none of their fingers
17 anywhere. And the line does the work. I keep -- they get excited
18 sometimes, you know? So, basically, all it does is slow the line,
19 because I used to, we would choke it by hand on the cap rail.
- 20 Q. That's (indiscernible).
- 21 A. You know what I mean.
- 22 Q. Yeah.
- 23 A. I mean, now, in the harbor here, it's not hard.
- 24 Q. Yeah.
- 25 A. Offshore, you don't want to do that, you know. So, come up

1 with this method, and that way, they can just step back, let the
2 line do the work. When it comes time, grab the tail, pull it,
3 take that eye off, and just let it go.

4 Q. So, what's the purpose, then, of them choking it?

5 A. It's to keep from -- all right, when they're going up with
6 the line, you don't want massive line getting in the water --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. -- because that creates more drag for them to pick up, you
9 see. Sometimes, their winches are not that strong or it depends
10 on how far their cathead is. We can't see that. We can see no
11 operations up there. We're in --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- the blind. So, I'm trying to make it easy for these guys
14 up there. So, my guys don't have to be on the deck, or not in the
15 area, and when that line -- because it's happened to us before,
16 the line go up, and then, all of a sudden, a bunch of line go in
17 the water. Well, next thing you know, it's being dragged, and
18 they're struggling trying to pick it up --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- you know. If -- some ships'll do it by hand, and some
21 won't. And then, some have to do maybe 10 feet by hand to get to
22 their cathead.

23 Q. Oh, I see what you're --

24 A. You see?

25 Q. Yeah, yeah.

1 A. And then, some of them will go right straight to their
2 cathead; and then, it eases on up.

3 Q. Yeah. So, is there any concern with the -- like too much
4 line being in the water, and then you sucking it up with your
5 z-drive, or --

6 A. My drives are at the other end.

7 Q. Okay. So --

8 A. I run them backwards.

9 Q. Yeah, so -- okay. So, if you were to happen to run up on the
10 side of the ship, is it possible that that slack could then go
11 into the z-drive?

12 A. The only way that that slack can get in your z-drives is if
13 you overcorrect it, and you got to the side of the ship, and then
14 tag line parts, falls in the water, and immediately is coming at
15 you.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Because, see, in the ships here, these right here?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. All right. So, you're going this way. If it falls in the
20 water, it's just going to stream.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Okay? Now, if you get out of commission over here, it falls
23 in the water, it's coming down this way.

24 Q. Okay. So, what if you were (indiscernible) like this, and
25 then you got a little out of the way, like overcorrecting, and you

- 1 ended up like right here?
- 2 A. You can't get it in your line.
- 3 Q. Can't get in your z-drive?
- 4 A. Not unless it pops and coils out there.
- 5 Q. If you -- so, there's no way the line would end up --
- 6 A. Yes, it can.
- 7 Q. -- right here?
- 8 A. It can get there. If you --
- 9 Q. Yeah?
- 10 A. -- drop back and get close to the ship --
- 11 Q. Yeah.
- 12 A. -- oh, yes.
- 13 Q. It could easily --
- 14 A. Because that's a --
- 15 (Crosstalk)
- 16 A. -- nylon line, that tag line, that tag line. It stretches
- 17 before it parts, right? I think it stretches one-third the length
- 18 of what it is.
- 19 Q. This is the messenger line or the tow line?
- 20 A. The messenger line.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. Right? And that's a rubber band. So, yes, that could
- 23 happen, that could actually happen, because what it does, it's
- 24 already leading this way, right? So, if it snaps, it's going that
- 25 way.

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. You know?
- 3 Q. For this scenario, we're trying to still figure out exactly
4 how it happened, because they were bow to bow, and it sounds like
5 it may have overcorrected. He (indiscernible) up over here.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. And in the process, it happened very quickly --
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. -- and the messenger line snapped. But I'm trying to figure
10 out if the messenger line snapped because it was sucked -- the tow
11 line ended up sucked into the --
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. -- z-drive --
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. -- or if it's --
- 16 A. Yeah.
- 17 Q. -- because --
- 18 A. It's because of, point A to point B, he's here.
- 19 Q. Yeah.
- 20 A. Okay. So, now, the line's going up. So, now, he loses a
21 little bit of ground, gets over here. So, now, that distance is
22 greater --
- 23 Q. Yeah, so there's --
- 24 A. -- right?
- 25 Q. -- tension.

- 1 A. There's tension. So --
- 2 Q. Even though they had line faked up, it ended up in the water?
- 3 A. Right.
- 4 Q. And that belly --
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. -- that belly would have --
- 7 A. That done pulled that -- this is your belly here. The
- 8 tension's up here. Even if they got it on on a cathead, you see,
- 9 because that line's getting shorter and shorter on the messenger,
- 10 and it's already -- you're in the line of fire now, because if it
- 11 parts, it's coming this way. So, what it does, that line's so
- 12 heavy, it just shot over, and then he ran back over it, possibly.
- 13 I wasn't there to see it.
- 14 Q. Yeah.
- 15 A. You know.
- 16 Q. We're still trying to figure that part out, but I figure --
- 17 A. They didn't -- he didn't --
- 18 (Crosstalk)
- 19 A. -- he got into the --
- 20 Q. -- that's when the captain was in the --
- 21 A. -- port drive.
- 22 Q. -- port drive. So, that's fine. I like asking the captains
- 23 who have experience, to kind of get your --
- 24 A. Right.
- 25 Q. -- take on what may have caused that, because to me, it feels

1 like the -- well, I can't speculate, but the -- we know that the
2 tow line was found caught in the z-drive, so those -- I mean,
3 they're pretty heavy lines. I mean --

4 A. Yes, it is.

5 Q. -- I felt it.

6 A. Yes, yeah.

7 Q. So, I mean, it all happened so quick. The choke was let go,
8 and --

9 A. And there's probably the chafing gear in it, also, the sleeve
10 on the pennant, you know. That makes it even (indiscernible).

11 Q. Yeah, because -- it hadn't made it all the way up to the
12 chalk yet --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. -- the tow line itself.

15 A. Well, that -- well, just because of the messenger parting,
16 that tells me that that wasn't on the bit yet.

17 Q. Yeah, yeah. So, we're just -- I'm still trying to figure out
18 when the messenger actually parted. Was it -- what caused the
19 messenger to part is one of my things I'm --

20 A. Well, they ran out of slack on the deck, and even though if
21 they would have freewheeled the brake --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- that's a lot of turns, and arounds, and -- you know what I
24 mean? For it to --

25 Q. It just kind of gotten --

- 1 A. -- to pull, because our messenger --
- 2 Q. -- in that scenario --
- 3 A. -- line is only, what, an inch and a half, an inch.
- 4 Q. Yeah, 3/4 inch --
- 5 A. Yeah, 3/4 inch.
- 6 Q. -- when I -- the one that I've done --
- 7 A. Right.
- 8 Q. -- so -- okay. Well, that's very helpful. And then, did you
- 9 have any training specific from Chouest with z-drives?
- 10 A. Years ago, when I was trained, it was in San Diego with the
- 11 Navy --
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. -- on --
- 14 Q. Oh, okay.
- 15 A. -- the true tractor tugs.
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. That's where the propellers are on the bow, and you drove the
- 18 boat backwards. And that's where I got my experience. And then,
- 19 I was there for 11 years. And then, I went to the Bay Area of
- 20 San Francisco and worked for a different company, which was this
- 21 type of tug --
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. -- right? And I did five years there. And --
- 24 Q. And was that Chouest, or was that --
- 25 A. No, that was --

1 (Crosstalk)

2 A. -- Harley Marine.

3 Q. Oh, okay.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah. And then, from there, I came -- they was asking me to
7 come back and run the short, so I came and worked in Sabine on
8 those tugs.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Well, actually, it was -- well, Sabine; but before that, it
11 was Golden Pass. They had those few tugs there. And then, that
12 was C-Tractor-21; and then, I ran the Ivory for --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- I guess, nine, 10 years over there. Eight years.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And then --

17 Q. So, you have a lot --

18 A. -- I've been on this one three years.

19 Q. -- hands-on experience. So, is there a simulator that
20 Chouest has?

21 A. They -- not -- I don't know if Chouest has -- they do have
22 simulators in their training, but I don't know if they have it for
23 the tugs. Now, before I came to this contract, all of the new
24 captains coming in for the new group people, we all had to go to
25 Maryland.

- 1 Q. Oh, MITAGS.
- 2 A. MITAGS, yeah. And do some training there.
- 3 Q. That was the training with the pilots?
- 4 A. Pilots, right. Local knowledge in this area, you know.
- 5 Q. So, who was that required for?
- 6 A. That was required for all the new captains for the new
7 contract.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. Right.
- 10 Q. So, what is your understanding of what they're making new
11 captains now?
- 12 A. We're doing a write off sheet --
13 (Crosstalk)
- 14 A. -- trying to, yeah, trying to get --
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. -- back there, trying to get them in, too, because the
17 simulator's just a simulator. It's basically -- it does give you
18 some guidance, but not what you need.
- 19 Q. What guidance does the company provide you on this tractor
20 tug training program worksheet?
- 21 A. What do you mean? Like --
- 22 Q. Do they give you any guidance for people, trainees, like how
23 to go through this, or --
- 24 A. Well, there's, I mean -- may I look at this?
- 25 Q. Yeah, yeah. Go for it.

1 A. Okay. Okay. You see on this book here they have steps that
2 they've got to do.

3 Q. Okay. So, how -- do they have to complete one before the
4 next, or --

5 A. Well, it's kind of hard to do that. If you read into it the
6 best you can, you're supposed to finish one before you start
7 another one.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. But a lot of times -- on my perspective, when I get a new
10 guy, first thing we do is lightboat running up and down, point A
11 to B, until he knows local knowledge, knows how to stop the boat,
12 back it up, maybe do a little walk or whatever, turn it around,
13 you know what I mean.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. Work the radar. Of course, they know all this. And then,
16 from there, we'll start docking the boat at the dock, you know.
17 That's just doing it slow. Each boat has a different berth. Some
18 of them are a little more aggressive. And it's either, if you
19 dock here or you dock out at the other end, you've got more wind
20 and current. Then, once that's done, they get that up to par,
21 we'll start them just -- when the ship is tied up to the dock,
22 I'll let them make approach to the number one and number three
23 position, and that's the starboard bow, starboard quarter, and --

24 Q. But why -- you let them do the one?

25 A. No. No --

- 1 Q. Oh, oh, oh.
- 2 A. -- no, no. This is baby steps --
- 3 Q. Oh, okay.
- 4 A. -- the way I train. That's the way I train.
- 5 Q. Yeah.
- 6 A. Now, if they come to me, and they've been on a boat for
- 7 six months training, and I can hear them on the radio, they
- 8 already know, well, they need to move on. And if they've already
- 9 been doing a certain position over there, like if they come to me,
- 10 and if they was doing, they was doing fours, okay, I've seen you
- 11 do them, so let's see where you're at from here.
- 12 Q. Do, fours are the stern?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay.
- 15 A. Right. And then, the ones are the ones. But the ones is the
- 16 most aggressive. Now, see here, six one *Aransas* run bow first and
- 17 hold course. Okay. That's exactly what he did, assist the number
- 18 one position, okay?
- 19 Q. Is this your signature?
- 20 A. That is my signature.
- 21 Q. Okay. All right. So, for --
- 22 A. But I want to read this. Run bow first --
- 23 Q. Run bow first and hold course --
- 24 A. Okay.
- 25 Q. -- and speed. So --

- 1 A. And speed.
- 2 Q. -- that's number one position.
- 3 A. Okay. So, basically, what that is, is like run bow first.
- 4 In other words, he's just running out from the bow in just a
- 5 lightboat.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. You know.
- 8 Q. So, this is like one of --
- 9 A. Yeah, maneuver a --
- 10 Q. -- the beginning --
- 11 A. -- lightboat.
- 12 Q. -- this is one of the beginning --
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 (Crosstalk)
- 15 A. Yeah.
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. All right.
- 18 Q. So, ideally, this section, lightboat handling, should be
- 19 completed before they move on to --
- 20 A. These sections.
- 21 Q. -- the other sections?
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. Okay. When you receive a trainee, do you take a look at
- 24 these, or how in depth do you look at their training program?
- 25 A. I do look at this. I mean, what it is, is, I'm seeing where

1 they are; but now, I told them, I always tell them, before I sign
2 anything, they've got to be able to do that position without me
3 saying anything. No help from me.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. So -- and if they can do that right here, well, then, they'll
6 get my signature. Now, I don't know what the other ones are
7 doing.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. You know.

10 Q. I mean, well, reading how this is laid out, it's, I mean --

11 A. Right.

12 Q. -- it's really on the masters to feel that they're
13 proficient.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. So, they shouldn't be given --

16 A. But there's even --

17 Q. -- some of this --

18 A. -- sections in here that you can coax them along and explain
19 to them --

20 Q. I did see that.

21 A. You know?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. But on your final checkoff, the way I am is -- let's see if
24 my signature --

25 Q. So, the was another line I think I saw. You were only in

- 1 here a couple of times.
- 2 A. You know what? See, he only rode, actually, with me. I --
- 3 Q. He's --
- 4 A. -- have it in the log book 6/1.
- 5 Q. -- he is --
- 6 A. That'd be, that would be me.
- 7 Q. Is that your signature?
- 8 A. Yeah. And this is the Canookson (ph.). But let's see here.
- 9 Trainee must complete five maneuvers on each element before
- 10 advancing to the next evaluation. Line up on forward hull, chop
- 11 (ph.). Forward hull, chop. Sunken bit. See, that's the number
- 12 two position. Trainee operate until completed the job. Line up
- 13 after the hull. Trainee operates until completed. Okay. Line up
- 14 on aft hull chop.
- 15 Q. So, my question was for this one, the reason I have that
- 16 highlighted, he was kind of doing these concurrently, so it says
- 17 you're technically supposed to complete (indiscernible) after this
- 18 one, but I notice that the dates --
- 19 A. Okay.
- 20 Q. -- were about the same, which -- you said 6/1, which --
- 21 A. Okay.
- 22 Q. Who's RB? RB would have been on here 6/1. Did they relieve
- 23 you?
- 24 A. That would be --
- 25 Q. Robert -- but I think he's no longer with the company.

- 1 A. Oh, yeah, he is, but he's --
- 2 Q. Oh, I know. He's --
- 3 A. That's Rob Berry (ph.) --
- 4 (Crosstalk)
- 5 A. -- you're talking about.
- 6 Q. Your (indiscernible).
- 7 A. But this is -- we called him T Bob.
- 8 Q. Yes. I spoke with him earlier and I'm going to have an
- 9 interview with him tomorrow.
- 10 A. Okay.
- 11 Q. But T Bob, so, he relieved you on June 1?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. At 9 something in the morning.
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. Yeah. Matter of fact -- so, I'm going to go back here. I
- 17 just want to show you something. See, this has got me confused,
- 18 right here, because this says, trainee must complete five
- 19 positions on each of the elements. Okay.
- 20 Q. So, this is an element -- or, evolution, right?
- 21 A. Yeah, evolution, yeah. I'm sorry.
- 22 Q. So, evolution number two is the basic ship assist arrivals.
- 23 But this is supposed to all be completed before they go to this --
- 24 A. Yeah. See, this is sailings.
- 25 Q. So, what's arrivals mean? It means --

- 1 A. Oh, that's a ship and (indiscernible) ship.
- 2 Q. -- it's in balance --
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. -- sailings as departure?
- 5 A. Right.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. Okay. So, now, this was the basic ship sailing, all right,
8 during basic training. (Indiscernible). Okay. Line up on the
9 forward hull. Sunken bit. Trainee operate -- line up on the aft
10 hull bit. Trainee -- Okay. So, here's -- this is what's getting
11 me lined up on the aft hull, okay?
- 12 Q. So, he kind of penciled in there, position three, and then --
- 13 A. Okay.
- 14 Q. -- this is --
- 15 A. But, see I want to show you something here.
- 16 Q. Yeah.
- 17 A. Okay. That particular day, 6/1, okay, 6/1, 6/1, right here?
- 18 Q. Yes.
- 19 A. Okay. So, that's an outbound.
- 20 Q. Sailings?
- 21 A. Right. That's a sailing.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. Okay? And we was number one position.
- 24 Q. Oh.
- 25 A. You see what I mean?

- 1 Q. So, you weren't the number three.
- 2 A. Right.
- 3 Q. Okay.
- 4 A. And that --
- 5 Q. Over in there, does it have the (indiscernible) arrivals?
- 6 A. Six -- okay, that would -- the thing about that one is, I was
7 already off. And yes, it is here.
- 8 Q. But you --
- 9 A. But see the different --
- 10 Q. Yeah.
- 11 A. -- handwriting?
- 12 Q. Yeah. No, I understand that. So, I'm just curious, what
13 position was that?
- 14 A. He was number two.
- 15 Q. Okay. So, is that the same thing as line up on forward hull
16 chalk?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Okay. So, that one lines up.
- 19 A. This one here, I believe he made a mistake here. Because I
20 don't think that's my initial.
- 21 Q. Okay. So, this one is evolution three, element two, number
22 five, you don't think is yours?
- 23 A. No.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Wait one sec. Now, he could have made a mistake on that one.

- 1 Q. Is it common for trainees to fill those in for you, or --
- 2 A. Well, this is what -- they do the pencil-working, but --
- 3 Q. On the --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- tug and --
- 6 A. Right, on this here, because I have enough paperwork to do.
- 7 Q. No, I understand, but --
- 8 A. And --
- 9 Q. -- for the MI --
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. -- for master's initials --
- 12 A. Right. Okay. This is my initial.
- 13 Q. Okay. That's not the same.
- 14 A. You see?
- 15 Q. Yeah. Can I take a picture of that just so I have it?
- 16 A. But let me get you another one to compare it to, also.
- 17 Q. Okay. All right.
- 18 A. But also, if you notice my initials here, too.
- 19 Q. Yeah, your --
- 20 A. You see what I mean?
- 21 Q. Yeah. Let me just take some pictures of that. So --
- 22 A. And here's the --
- 23 Q. -- this is --
- 24 A. -- other ones.
- 25 Q. So, this one's definitely yours on the first one, right?

- 1 That doesn't --
- 2 A. No, I don't --
- 3 Q. -- look the same, either.
- 4 A. -- think so.
- 5 Q. No. That's not the same, either. So, that's lightboat
- 6 handling (indiscernible) courses.
- 7 A. See, that's where I'm confused, here.
- 8 Q. Well, this is one of the issues that I've come across, is
- 9 that we've found a number that are not actually the captain's, so
- 10 --
- 11 A. Okay.
- 12 Q. -- that's what we're trying to get to the bottom of.
- 13 A. I understand that. Now --
- 14 Q. Yeah.
- 15 A. -- I don't want to hurt the fellow. He's a great guy, and he
- 16 really works hard at what he's doing. But -- okay. So, here's
- 17 what I'm confused at. It says, maneuver lightboat, open waters.
- 18 Okay. If we're at the number one position, we're either waiting
- 19 on him or we're already made up. Now, number one position, we --
- 20 okay, I see what happened. We was the number one position. Once
- 21 we dropped the line, because I took it out, I might have let him
- 22 pull it up and put the line up; and then, once the ship -- that's
- 23 the way I start with my number one's. Say this ship's at the
- 24 dock.
- 25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. I let then get underway, go over and put the lineup. Then,
2 they'll stand about a 90, you know, 90 angle.

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Then, they'll pull the ship away; and then, they'll work
5 their way in. And by the time they get to that first curve,
6 they're always getting a little wiggly, so I'll take over.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And we'll work that way until they can start getting it,
9 getting comfortable, and then going around that curve. I won't
10 let them catch the ship coming in until that one's mastered.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. You see? So, that's just me. Now, again, you see the
13 initials.

14 Q. Let's see what else we have for -- for your initials, we just
15 went through --

16 A. Here.

17 Q. -- that one.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And then, we have, I (indiscernible) this one, as well. So,
20 this is going to be evolution number five on May 30, element two.

21 A. Center line. See, this is probably where I let him come in
22 and put the lineup.

23 Q. Is that your initials, though?

24 A. That does look like my initials there. You see, if you look
25 more at these right here --

- 1 Q. Yeah, that looks like them. Okay.
- 2 A. See? Yeah.
- 3 Q. A little bit, yeah. And then, we've got --
- 4 A. Depends on how much coffee I've drank before --
- 5 Q. Yeah, right?
- 6 A. -- doing this, huh?
- 7 Q. Here's another one. We have evolution six, element two, line
- 8 one.
- 9 A. Center line forward. I don't. This one don't look like
- 10 mine.
- 11 Q. Okay. All right. And then, see, I think that's all yours.
- 12 So, I mean, yeah, you said he wasn't on very long. So, how did
- 13 you feel with -- you only had two, three days with him?
- 14 A. I felt confident with him. Like I said, up and down the
- 15 channel, I seen him work around, and talked to him. He's had
- 16 experience, you know what I mean? But not what we're doing. He's
- 17 working his way into it, you know. And he has what it takes. He
- 18 really does, you know? He's very aware, very knowledgeable. He
- 19 seems to be a great guy, you know?
- 20 Q. Yeah.
- 21 A. Accidents happen, you know?
- 22 Q. Yeah.
- 23 A. I got my butt kicked on this one, you know? And the
- 24 experience that I've done. I've done thousands of ships, and
- 25 just, it takes that one that gets you, you know?

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. But I know it made me a better operator. I know, you know,
3 the difference --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- you know. And I know how to explain to the other guys
6 coming around, say, don't let it get you.

7 Q. Do you feel he would -- well, I guess you had him in June, so
8 he may not have been ready at that point, but do you feel he would
9 have been ready for a bow position?

10 A. I haven't worked with him since.

11 Q. Yeah, you haven't worked with him.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Okay. Again, like the way I train, I take them out first,
14 let them go that, before I let them come in. And then, sooner or
15 later, they've got to get in there, you know? Sooner or later.
16 But I don't know how his training programs are going.

17 Q. Do you ever verify with the other captains --

18 A. Oh, we discuss it --

19 Q. You do?

20 A. -- because, matter of fact, when Robert came on, T Bob, I
21 told him, I said, look, Tim seems to be okay. He's grasping
22 things, you know. He's got it. And then, when we were crew
23 changing, he says he's a nut. But he's just teasing, you know. I
24 can't say exactly how he felt about it, but he said --

25 Q. Oh, I'll be interviewing him.

- 1 A. -- you need to keep an eye on him.
- 2 Q. Oh, he --
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. -- did say that?
- 5 A. Yeah. You do need to keep an eye on him, you know, from now
6 on, so --
- 7 Q. I mean, do you have any suggestions for the training program?
- 8 A. For the training program?
- 9 Q. Um-hum.
- 10 A. Hm. That's hard to say, because we get some guys that come
11 in that have been in the Gulf of Mexico for 20 years, and they've
12 been running boats over 350 foot long. But the problem is,
13 they're running DP.
- 14 Q. Yeah.
- 15 A. They may have three other people under them, so they haven't
16 touched the sticks in years. So, when they come here, it's all
17 new to them.
- 18 Q. Yeah.
- 19 A. You know? But you have to dock it. There's nothing
20 automated here. We do have autopilot, but that's straight line.
- 21 Q. Yeah.
- 22 A. You can't DP this one. You have to actually do it yourself.
23 And as far as training program, it's just got to be patient, you
24 know?
- 25 Q. Would it be beneficial to follow this the way that it's

1 intended with one element at a time or one evolution at a time
2 once you get to this section three?

3 A. That's a good question there, because sometimes, you have to
4 skip it around, you know, just because you've got day moves/night
5 moves, and sometimes, you might be doing only night moves, you
6 know; and then, you need to move on to even get those, you see.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. It's a good program. It really is. It's just, they need to
9 stick with it and be moored to it. But it goes beyond this. This
10 is just a piece of paper.

11 Q. What else is there?

12 A. Just knowledge. I mean, just actually grasping it.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. Just because you get this down, you had a good time, you got
15 it initialed and signed off, don't mean that you know what you're
16 doing, you know? And that could go -- that's anywhere.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. You know? That's just anywhere.

19 Q. How long should it take a new trainee to be up to the point
20 where they can successfully operate --

21 A. Say you haven't --

22 (Crosstalk)

23 A. -- driven boats before?

24 Q. No, they had some experience.

25 A. Some experience? Should take about eight months.

1 Q. Eight months? Okay.

2 A. Yeah. And that is if they come in and work a month, and then
3 get off two weeks, and then work another month. You see what I
4 mean? Eight --

5 Q. So, they're doing like --

6 A. -- continued months, not the time off.

7 Q. Not --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Yeah, I got you.

10 A. Because that would be like a year.

11 Q. So, it ends up being about a year --

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. -- right?

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It takes about eight months. And it's a hard training. That
17 means that you've got to be up there the whole time, you know, to
18 stick with them, you know? And then, some people get it, and some
19 don't. I don't -- just -- the harder ones --

20 Q. Have you had anyone under you work through this program
21 successfully?

22 A. The mate I've got on now.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. He's actually going to -- he's getting off Sunday or Saturday
25 and doing his radar, and all of his paperwork's done, you know?

- 1 Q. Does he have a credential already, or is he --
- 2 A. He's got his mate's license.
- 3 Q. Yeah.
- 4 A. You know what I mean?
- 5 Q. Yeah.
- 6 A. But excellent operator. But he's been with me for
- 7 three years.
- 8 Q. Wow.
- 9 A. Right? And we have took our time.
- 10 Q. As a mate?
- 11 A. As -- no. He was engineer.
- 12 Q. He started as an engineer?
- 13 A. Started as engineer.
- 14 Q. Okay.
- 15 A. Right? I mean, we broke the boat out of the yard together.
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. You know, we walked on this thing, and there was nothing
- 18 here, so we brought it out together. And he's a really good guy,
- 19 very knowledgeable, asks a lot of good questions, you know? And
- 20 he understands when you're trying to explain it to him, because he
- 21 sees it now. He's been in the sea. But he'll be a good captain
- 22 when he comes out.
- 23 Q. That's awesome.
- 24 A. You know.
- 25 Q. Yeah, it's not an easy job, I've come to find out. And I'm

1 talking to you all --

2 A. The number one position is very demanding.

3 Q. Do you know that position's absolutely necessary for this
4 operation?

5 A. No.

6 Q. No?

7 A. No, it's not.

8 Q. What would be your suggestion?

9 A. Put two tugs on the bow, one on port, one starboard. I know
10 it's a narrow channel, but, okay, in that number one position, in
11 my experience, okay, after 4 knots, you are no good to him,
12 because you're going to use 80 percent of your power to get in
13 position and hold it, you know? And you're strung out there. And
14 then, if you happen to lose an engine right then, you're done.
15 That's going to be another accident.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. You know? And it could get worse --

18 Q. What's the --

19 A. -- from there.

20 Q. -- purpose of having that position?

21 A. I don't -- well, I guess, to help swing that bow, control it,
22 but the stern tug, that's what he's for. He can go indirect. But
23 I'm not the one driving the ship, either, you know? And the
24 slower you go, the less effect that that number four tug has doing
25 indirect, you know? And plus, you need a short line, because if

1 you use a long line, you'll run out of the channel and hit the
2 blank. You know, you're in a ditch here, especially right here.
3 The rest of the channel's not so bad.

4 Q. So, is there any value to having that position before you
5 even come into the La Quinta Channel?

6 A. You would have to go and ask the pilots that. I guess it's
7 written that they're supposed to have the number one tug.

8 Q. I did interview the pilots, and their reasoning was in case
9 of an emergency if they had to do a turnaround. But that's why it
10 was --

11 A. But then, you already have two tugs with you on the --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- bow standing by, right? You have a better effect pushing
14 than you do pulling at 5 knots because of that, and I can -- where
15 are they going to turn? Really, if they needed to --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. -- where are they going to turn?

18 Q. I don't know.

19 A. Once you come around that Moda turn, there's no
20 (indiscernible). Okay.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Well, then, who's in a big hurry?

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. You know?

25 Q. Would it be beneficial for that to be revisited and --

- 1 A. I'd say yes.
- 2 Q. Yeah?
- 3 A. Yeah. Just for safety alone.
- 4 Q. Yeah. Because every captain I've spoken to seems nervous
5 about that position, and you all have such experience --
- 6 A. I'm going to tell you, I've got experience in that --
- 7 Q. Yeah.
- 8 A. -- and I still get nervous doing it.
- 9 Q. I get nervous thinking about it. And I'm not on the boat.
- 10 A. And the thing about it is, in one little rubbing scuffling
11 that we're sitting at this table having a meeting, you're trying
12 to --
- 13 Q. Yeah.
- 14 A. -- defend your license, you know, when it could be -- that
15 number one position could go away; then, you have -- there's
16 three tugs, minimum three tugs, you know. And with one pilot --
17 well, there's actually a couple of pilots, likes to have one on
18 the stern, one at the bow, and one on each side --
- 19 Q. Oh, I --
- 20 A. -- made up.
- 21 Q. And so, the -- oh, made up?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. And sort of like assisting on the port side?
- 24 A. Made up.
- 25 Q. Oh.

- 1 A. Coming in.
- 2 Q. Okay. So, not all of the pilots follow --
- 3 A. He says that's --
- 4 Q. -- the same --
- 5 A. -- his brakes. No, no, pilots are not all the same. That's
- 6 just one or two of them that likes to have all four tugs made up
- 7 coming in (indiscernible). And I can't tell every --
- 8 Q. Do all of the pilots want that bow tug?
- 9 A. They all use it.
- 10 Q. They all use it?
- 11 A. Now, I don't know about having the bow tug, if they want it
- 12 or not, but it's -- if it's for an emergency turnaround purpose,
- 13 there's only two places you can turn around. That's right there
- 14 at the intersection of Moda --
- 15 Q. I think that's what he was talking about.
- 16 A. Yeah. Okay. Well, then, by the time we get our lineup,
- 17 we're past that in 10 minutes. We're trying to figure out, why
- 18 don't they just make up the number one tug right here at this
- 19 (indiscernible)?
- 20 Q. That was my next question.
- 21 A. We were trying to get that done, but we haven't --
- 22 Q. Well --
- 23 A. -- been sailing.
- 24 Q. -- one of the reasons why we do investigations is to
- 25 determine how to prevent this again from happening in the future,

1 and I can provide recommendations with my investigation based on
2 the facts --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- and determine --

5 Q. In San Francisco, we was doing number one positions, but
6 those boats were different. You could come in and just actually
7 lay right on that bubble, right in that corner. But you're doing
8 container ships, too, and they also have two 4,000 horsepower
9 thrusters, right? So, as we was coming in, we put up a line and
10 come in, and then, that way, we could push them in the turning
11 basin at Oakland right there, and that's very tight, very -- it's
12 like clockwork. These guys knew what they were doing, you know?
13 I mean -- and then, after a while, it got to -- there was an
14 incident or two in that. So, then, it came out that the tugs are
15 no longer to do that number one position, because of the danger to
16 it.

17 Q. Do you remember when that was?

18 A. Ooh. That was 15 years ago.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Right? And I don't know the exact incident that had
21 happened.

22 Q. We have like a -- I can look up case history.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Now, I don't -- well, that could be an incident between -- it

1 might have -- the Coast Guard might not have been involved, or
2 someone just uncomfortable and refusing. But when one company did
3 it, the rest of the companies did it.

4 Q. And followed suit?

5 A. They all followed suit. So, to me, that led to thinking that
6 there was an incident or so that came in there, because again,
7 you're getting new guys --

8 Q. I mean --

9 A. -- coming in --

10 Q. -- normally, it --

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Thankfully, with this scenario, there was no injuries or
13 death.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. But, I mean, thank God like we can prevent that from
16 happening. So, hopefully -- that's why, like I said, we do our
17 due diligence with these investigations and like to get as much
18 information as possible so that we --

19 A. Well, I'm hoping I'm helping you --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 A. -- and not hurting anyone.

22 Q. Oh, you --

23 A. It's just --

24 Q. -- are helping me. Trust me.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. You are definitely helping me, so I really appreciate it.
2 And if you come up with any other suggestions, please feel free to
3 let me know, but --

4 A. Oh, suggestions on what?

5 Q. Well, just how to make this operation safer. I mean, that's
6 the position that we've now had two incidents in the last three or
7 four months with that --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- specific position, so that's what kind of puts my radar
10 up, like ooh --

11 A. Okay. Those are the incidents that was an incident. How
12 about the other ones that was close?

13 Q. Yeah. So, we don't get called on --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. -- or we don't --

16 A. Well, no one talks about it.

17 Q. -- investigate near misses. It's just --

18 A. It's just, man, we made it through that one, you know?

19 Q. Do they ever get reported to the company, or --

20 A. We make comments to -- when we had meetings for Cheniere. Is
21 that how -- this number -- well, number one factor, these ships,
22 these guys, are -- these are guys that's on ships, right? For
23 some reason, they don't know what a heaving line is or how to
24 throw a heaving line, okay? I mean, a heaving line's got a
25 monkey's fist on there --

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. -- a weighted sandbag, a small line attached to a bigger
3 line. You put two handfuls of loops, and you throw it. They will
4 bunch it all up --

5 Q. Oh, no.

6 A. -- in one, then drop a big belly a line halfway down the
7 ship, and then try to throw it. Well, it goes here and drops --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- because, I mean, that wind. And that's why we have to get
10 aggressive and get -- like, this is the bow of the ship we have to
11 get in this hole just to get the line. If not, we're sitting here
12 and sitting here, and next thing you know, we're making that turn
13 and trying to put our lineup. Now, you just multiplied the
14 hardness or the --

15 Q. Level of difficulty?

16 A. Yeah, the difficulty --

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. -- level of what's going on, because now, you're turning,
19 right? And he's picking up a little bit more speed coming at you
20 to make this turn, so --

21 Q. Is that part of the Cheniere contract, then, that they have
22 these four tugs and --

23 A. Well, we're strictly with Cheniere.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. These four. And that's -- we'll have three to bring it down,

1 one to meet it in Moda, because there's --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- no reason (indiscernible). And then, again, my thing is,
4 is, once at a certain speed, you -- they want you to get out at a
5 90. Well, you're lucky to get out at 20 to 30 degrees. My 90 is
6 what I'm comfortable with without getting in trouble. I roger,
7 you know? There's times they'll tell me, I need you at 90 at a
8 four. Well, if I can get to a 45 and give you four, I will, but
9 there's no way I can get to a 90. I don't have no power. Then, I
10 have to release my brake to try to get back, and the net just
11 slingshots you. Now, you're shooting back across and doing all
12 kinds of good stuff, you know? It's an aggressive position. It
13 is.

14 Q. And then, as your lining up that, are you paying out the
15 line, or do you have a mate with you?

16 A. I prefer -- I can do it myself, because it breaks off, and
17 all I have to do is touch a button. But normally, my line is
18 already set up to the length that I need it.

19 Q. Oh, you're --

20 A. Yes.

21 (Crosstalk)

22 A. I've got the choker and everything.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. They take it off; and then, I'll pull out. Now, if I feel
25 that I need to shorten it up a little bit, I can shorten it up.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Just take the brake off, shorten it. Now, when I'm training
3 someone, I'm operating the winch and he's operating the boat.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Right?

6 Q. Which makes sense. I wonder if there's something in
7 Cheniere's contract that requires that.

8 A. I heard --

9 (Crosstalk)

10 A. -- Don Hoffman (ph.) showed one of the captains or one of the
11 captains read something about the contract that there will be a
12 number one and four tug transiting the La Quinta Channel. I
13 haven't seen it, and I don't know about it, you know, because I
14 think it's time to rewrite that contract on that, or that
15 section --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. -- you know? But I don't want to get nobody in trouble,
18 again, and that's just --

19 Q. Well, was that discussed --

20 A. -- my opinion.

21 Q. -- at all at the training that you went to in MITAGS?

22 A. Well, see, at MITAGS, when we was trained, we would do the
23 one position just like normal, I mean, that's normally done; and
24 then, of course, the two and threes. But they was also trying to
25 put two tugs on the stern. They was trying to put like for

1 stopping power or turning. And I asked them, I said, do you all
2 know what clackers are? Do you know what clackers are? You don't
3 remember those? Two little round balls on a string, and you --

4 Q. Oh, yeah, yeah, right.

5 A. -- pop, pop, pop, pop. That's all you would be back there.
6 And actually, you're only as good as the most experienced -- the
7 least experienced person back there.

8 Q. So, would it be better -- so, currently, they have the two
9 three, the one port, so you have four tugs total. Would it be
10 better to have just one on the side, and then two on the bow, and
11 one on the stern, or --

12 A. Well, it's -- I can see you need to have that number four
13 boat. That's for brakes. And if you have to emergency steer, you
14 can. We can go indirect. I don't know --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- if you've ever seen that before. You've never seen an
17 indirect move?

18 Q. No. I mean, I may have, but I don't recall.

19 A. Okay. I'll share this one with you. Okay. (Indiscernible).
20 Okay. Now, this, one of the pilots is a friend of mine. He had
21 took this picture for me. Okay. And I'm trying to find out --
22 oh, here it is. Okay. And see, what we're doing, we're stopping
23 the ship from turning. That's making the turn to port coming
24 around inbound; and then, there's the ferries right there, you
25 see?

- 1 Q. Yeah.
- 2 A. And see, he'd kind of oversteered a little bit, and he has me
3 to come in there and go indirect, and I can turn the ship or stop
4 it.
- 5 Q. Oh, I see.
- 6 A. See?
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 A. I can maneuver it, and see how that is?
- 9 Q. That's pretty cool. So, you're basically just holding and
10 backing --
- 11 A. Actually, I'm driving into my line off to the side.
- 12 Q. Oh, okay.
- 13 A. Yeah. And here's another video. This is to kind of show you
14 how aggressive you can get with them. See?
- 15 Q. Oh, wow.
- 16 A. Right?
- 17 Q. Yeah.
- 18 A. Now, see, we're going to get to leaning and leaning. See
19 this water coming up on deck?
- 20 Q. Oh, my gosh.
- 21 A. Right? But that's on the outbound side making that turn, and
22 the ship is not using a rudder.
- 23 Q. Wow.
- 24 A. We're steering it.
- 25 Q. Wow. That's quite a bit.

- 1 A. That's something, huh?
- 2 Q. Yeah.
- 3 A. So -- but to me, that number one position, that's not over.
4 If they keep doing it, we're still getting newer guys. It's
5 just -- there was an incident. No one got hurt, nothing. The
6 only thing is a hydraulic line got ruptured. But zero visibility.
7 And can you imagine being zero visibility in front of that ship
8 running backwards?
- 9 Q. No.
- 10 A. Well, it happened. And so, you get -- the captain, he got --
11 he says, I couldn't even see --
- 12 Q. Was that --
- 13 A. -- the ship.
- 14 Q. -- Tim?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. Oh. I was going to say, I think Tim told us a similar story.
17 It might have been -- I'm trying to remember.
- 18 A. No, this --
- 19 Q. Or Andy --
- 20 A. -- was Andy.
- 21 Q. Oh, Andy did tell us the story, because --
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. -- I spoke with both of them last week, and I remember him
24 telling me --
- 25 A. Right.

1 Q. -- that the fog laid in like real quick.

2 A. Yes. And I've been in that position. And then, the pilot
3 says, can you turn your light off? Because it's creating a big
4 glare. What are you going to say? I can't even see. What do you
5 mean? And then, you turn the light off. That's even worse. You
6 can't even tell where your line's at, okay? So, you say, well,
7 naturally, you'll look up and see if your line's leading straight
8 up, right? Well, you've got to look at your staple and see if
9 it's angled a little bit. If it's angled a little bit, that means
10 you're off to the side of the ship.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. You know? So, it's -- you've got to really watch your
13 (indiscernible) and what you're doing, because it's -- man. And
14 then, even if you turn your -- get your light off, where's the
15 bank at? You know. Where's the other tugs at? Because you don't
16 have time to look down at your gages or anything. You're just
17 trying to get away from the ship and just hold (indiscernible).
18 Well, you already know that there's a tug on the stern. And
19 where's the number three boat or the two boat, you know? You're
20 trying to pay attention. And everybody's -- we're doing really
21 good kind of keeping contact. But that number one position is not
22 for the kindhearted, that's for sure. You've got to be seasoned
23 to get in there.

24 [REDACTED] All right. Well, I don't think I have any
25 more questions. Do you have any questions for me?

1 MR. CALDWELL: No.

2 [REDACTED] No? This was --

3 MR. CALDWELL: No, I --

4 [REDACTED] -- really helpful. I really appreciate it.

5 MR. CALDWELL: Well, I hope so, I hope so.

6 [REDACTED] So --

7 MR. CALDWELL: I'm like you. I'm glad no one got hurt. It's
8 just a lesson learned.

9 [REDACTED] Yeah.

10 MR. CALDWELL: You know? It's --

11 [REDACTED] I mean, all we can do is --

12 MR. CALDWELL: -- a little expensive lesson, but --

13 [REDACTED] -- improve --

14 MR. CALDWELL: Right.

15 [REDACTED] -- our processes somehow. So, I think Chouest
16 is a good company, and they've been --

17 MR. CALDWELL: They're a good company. I --

18 [REDACTED] -- looking into this one, as well --

19 MR. CALDWELL: Yeah.

20 [REDACTED] -- so -- all right. Well, I'm going to close
21 up the recording, then. It is 1500 on Wednesday, August 17. This
22 concludes our interview with Mr. Caldwell. This is Lieutenant
23 Commander [REDACTED].

24 (Whereupon, at 3:00 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

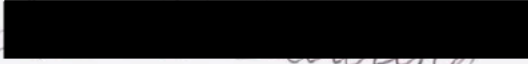
IN THE MATTER OF: GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL
 CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022
 Interview of Captain Kevin Caldwell

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM035

PLACE: Corpus Christi, Texas

DATE: August 17, 2022

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.



Lisa D. Sevarino
Transcriber