

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL *

Accident No.: DCA22FM035

CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JOSHUA BAKER, Master

CC Portland

Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi

Thursday,

August 11, 2022

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

Capt Joshua Baker, Master, CC Portland

TAKEN ON

August 11, 2022 (second interview)

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
6	10	here	there
6	13	(Indiscernible)	Corpus division
6	23	of the channel	area and the channel
7	2	(Indiscernible)	characteristics
7	2	ASC	ASD
7	3	(Indiscernible)	all the way back
8	7	"	in another division
9	1	"	in other divisions
10	14	ASC	ASD
10	15	ASC's	ASD's

If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

NO CORRECTIONS NEEDED. _____

Initials

Joshua Baker

Printed Name of Person providing the above information



Signature of Person providing the above information

10-24-22

Date

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10	15	ASC'S	ASD'S
10	16	ASC	ASD
11	9	that boats bow	that took with him
11	15	because so much	because so lets
11	16	to say	say
11	16	(Indiscernible)	around the old Navy dock
11	17	now in Embridge	now its Embridge
11	18	turning	turn
11	21	number one side	number one tug
11	22	one there	there just in case

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12	13	do a tug for (indis)	use a tug for powered indirect
13	17	(Indiscernible)	deal with the same
14	4	a lot to be	a lot to do
14	11	a ASC	an ASD
15	1	(Indiscernible)	into position
15	9	answered	answer to them
16	1	(Indiscernible)	La Quinta channel or Rockport cut
16	10	in the	into the
17	11	that	at
18	2	used to be a pilot	is a good pilot

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18	15	dratts	drives
18	15	hole	hull to
18	24	in the	instead of the center
19	18	(Indiscernible)	TOAR
19	24	"	Designated Examiner to sign off
19	24	mate in tow	Mate of Tow
20	2	documents	requirements
20	3	it towing off	a Towing Officers Assessment Record
20	10	master tow	Master of Tow.
21	7	going	coming

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[Redacted Signature]
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PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
21	19	sight	the type
22	14	want to do that	wants to go through that
22	21	we're nothing	we've got nothing to hide
23	12	into the marine	into the marine industry
23	22	haven't	have

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APPEARANCES:

LCDR [REDACTED], SIO
United States Coast Guard

CWO [REDACTED], IO
United States Coast Guard

R. JON FURUKAWA, IIC
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:22 p.m. Central)

1
2
3 [REDACTED] All right. Great. Okay. So good afternoon.
4 It is 12:22 Central Time on Thursday, August 11th. We're at Coast
5 Guard Sector Corpus Christi. And we have Captain Joshua Baker on
6 the line. This is an over-the-phone interview concerning the
7 incident that occurred on the *CC Portland* on Sunday, August 7,
8 2022, at approximately 1635 Central Time that resulted in a
9 grounding and subsequent property damage to the *Portland*.

10 Do I have your permission to record this interview, Josh?

11 MR. BAKER: Yes, ma'am.

12 [REDACTED] Okay. Awesome. And can you please just state
13 your name for the record?

14 MR. BAKER: Captain Joshua Baker.

15 [REDACTED] Okay. Awesome. And then, I'm going to have
16 everyone that's present with me also state their names for the
17 record.

18 MR. FURUKAWA: Jon Furukawa, NTSB.

19 [REDACTED] Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED]

INTERVIEW OF JOSHUA BAKER

20
21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q. All right. So, like I said, Josh, I just had a couple
23 follow-up questions. I know we already interviewed you, but I
24 just wanted to go down, like, the training path a little bit more.
25 And since you've been a captain with Chouest for three years, I

1 feel like you may have some good insight for us.

2 A. Yeah, 14 altogether.

3 Q. Fourteen altogether.

4 A. Yeah, so captain since February 2018.

5 Q. Oh, that's right. Okay. But you've been with them -- that's
6 right, for 14 years altogether. So you'll be super beneficial for
7 this. So when you were hired on with Edison Chouest, were you
8 required to attend Edison Chouest Academy?

9 A. Back in June of '08, negative. I don't think that was around
10 back then. Are you talking about the TopShip, program they have?

11 Q. We were on their website, and it was called, like, the ECO
12 program. It looks like they have some training pertaining to Z-
13 drives. I wasn't sure if it was mostly OSV or what it entailed
14 from just looking at the website --

15 A. Yeah, that was not when I was hired, that was not around.

16 Q. Is it a thing now?

17 A. Only mates' training program for these tugs now. And that
18 was implemented a couple years back.

19 Q. With Edison Chouest Academy.

20 A. We have an unofficial packet that the operations management
21 came up with. Now, as far as, like, simulations and training like
22 that, I know (indiscernible) division, Alaska division, they had
23 special simulations training. As far as the academy stuff, I'm
24 not familiar with academy. I do know that they have a Nicholls
25 State program with Edison Chouest offshore. That could be

1 something with the college kids coming in. Yeah, that Chouest
2 Academy, that's a new one on me. It's the only thing I could
3 think of that's either TopShip out of Mississippi or the Nicholls
4 State program with Chouest, you know, the college kids graduating,
5 transitioning.

6 Q. Okay. Does Edison Chouest have their -- you mentioned
7 simulation, do they have their own Z-drives simulator?

8 A. I believe they do. I haven't been to the training center in
9 a long time. I hear that they do have DP simulations and then
10 also the Alaska simulations here at the training center -- Alaska
11 boats were Z-drives as well. So yes, technically they do have the
12 Z-drive training as well. But as far as, like, the Corpus
13 (indiscernible), like I've been to before on the first interview,
14 we were sent to Baltimore MITAGS. And that's where we went for
15 simulations.

16 Q. Oh, speaking of that one, so we spoke with the pilots today.
17 Kevin Monaco also mentioned that same training that you all were
18 up there at the same time --

19 A. Yeah, yep. That's where I met him, yep --

20 Q. Okay. Was it a training specific for Z-drives, or was it for
21 they were trying to figure out how they wanted to accomplish
22 Cheniere ships coming in?

23 A. Exactly. It was familiarity with the area of the channel
24 because the (indiscernible) including myself, I was new to the
25 area. So I went to MITAGS twice to get familiar with the layout

1 of the channel and then the operation, you know, you see the boat
2 handling (indiscernible) coming from a true tracker to an ASC with
3 the drives (indiscernible) to the stern. Some of the simulations
4 was also throwing curve balls at us, like, some weather, some
5 currents, and training of how the boats and the ships react to
6 everything that they can throw at us.

7 Q. Okay. Well, this wouldn't apply to you necessarily since you
8 were already with Chouest at the time, but when they hire new
9 captains, are they required to start out as a mate to go through
10 Z-drive position qualification?

11 A. To my knowledge, the last few that have come through, yes,
12 they'll ride with, like a guy like me that's been around for a
13 little while in this division. And then, we'll sign them off on
14 that packet that I was telling you about that was created by the
15 operations department.

16 Q. Okay. And how long is the process normally from start to end
17 with the new mate or new captain, I should say?

18 A. Let's see. I don't have an exact time. There's a lot of
19 stages through it. So we have, like, a beginner's stage,
20 intermediate, and then, advanced. And then, it's a certain amount
21 (indiscernible), so , you know, I'm thinking, just a ballpark off
22 the top of my head, probably close to a year, you know, if you go
23 step by step from the beginning. And then, some guys have already
24 had some training from other companies. So we'll kind of evaluate
25 them and see if they need to go, you know, to beginner's stage,

1 intermediate, stuff like that. But if they're training on my
2 boat, we do basically, you know -- I mean, every boat's got the
3 beginner, intermediate, and advanced. So we just do it, you know,
4 because we got to evaluate everybody anyways to see where they're
5 at. So I've had a couple guys that transferred from a different
6 division, I already knew where they worked because I worked with
7 them (indiscernible). So we came over and did some intermediate
8 and advanced because another captain had already done, like, the
9 beginning stage. Do you know what I mean?

10 Q. Yeah, that makes sense.

11 A. Yeah. We had some people transferring around and coming
12 around, you know so -- yeah, we do have that packet. And, like I
13 said, it's got three stages. And then, it's a certain amount of
14 inbounds and outbounds at each position for each stage. And, you
15 know, it could probably, depending on the ship count and what
16 (indiscernible), how many days are here, you know what I mean,
17 probably six to eight months maybe to a year depending on how well
18 they're doing because, you know, if they're not proficient at it,
19 it's not going to get a check mark.

20 Q. Okay. And --

21 A. Or you'll have to do it over and over until I sign that step
22 off.

23 Q. When you have a new hire, are they assigned to only one
24 vessel, or do they jump around?

25 A. Actually, they'll go boat to -- when they first get to our

1 division, I don't know how they do it in (indiscernible). But our
2 division for Cheniere, they'll ride a couple weeks with one
3 captain and then try on another (indiscernible) they'll go down
4 the line with all four captains initially to try to pick up things
5 from every other captain because, you know, you show me two
6 captains that do things the exact same way, and that's hard to
7 find. So they get a little piece of each captain everywhere they
8 go and try to piece their ways of how they're going to do things
9 and -- you know, so they can kind of see what works for them and
10 what doesn't.

11 And then, that way, when they get on their own, they have a
12 little experience with all boats.

13 Q. With that experience, are all of the tugs able to do all four
14 positions at all times, or are there sometimes situations where
15 you'll have a tug that isn't necessarily qualified for the bow
16 position?

17 A. Well, that's when it's like -- so if there's a boat with a
18 mate that hasn't done a one yet, then we'll call the other captain
19 and say, he's not quite ready, but would you mind letting him do a
20 two, three, or a four today? So we'll work around it. But if
21 they're not comfortable on the one, we're not putting them on the
22 one. So, yeah, that's --

23 Q. Okay. That makes sense. So if I'm understanding this
24 correct, if you have a new hire coming in, they kind of look at
25 their experience with that type of vessel or Z-drive prior to and

1 decide if they need to start out at the beginner, intermediate, or
2 advanced. And then, from that point, they work through the
3 different positions like we had discussed previously from the
4 least advanced to the most advanced position.

5 A. Right. Now, if it's, like, guys from, like, (indiscernible)
6 paths that I've personally seen or management has seen, you know,
7 we've seen that before on the beginning. So they know how to get
8 off the dock and -- you know what I mean. So that's part of the
9 beginning stage, which I forgot to tell you. Now, a lot of it's
10 like maneuvering the boat and how well you can work a Z-drive. So
11 that's the beginning stages. So I actually left that part out.
12 So yeah, so I've known this guy, Joe Blow, you know, for 15 years.
13 And I've seen him get on and off the dock on a Z-drive for a lot
14 of years. But he'll come to an ASC and (indiscernible), yeah,
15 I'll sign him off, like okay, the ASCs are different, let me see
16 what you have. You know, if I don't know you've come off an ASC,
17 then that's different but -- so, yeah, --

18 Q. And for the incidence [sic] with Mr. Thorsen, do you happen
19 to know the difference between the types of Z-drives he had
20 experience on versus the one that you all operate now?

21 A. I do not. I could ask him. It's not off the top of my head.
22 I do not know.

23 Q. That's fine --

24 A. Yeah, because when he got over to us, he was with a different
25 captain. So I had him after he had already got out training from

1 another guy.

2 Q. Oh, so his previous positions were signed off by another
3 captain.

4 A. I'm assuming. I'll have to ask him. I don't know.

5 Q. Okay. Well, I can take a look at that too because we
6 requested, like, the training records and everything. So I'll be
7 able to see who signed off on it. Does the company track all
8 that, or do you all have to personally track it?

9 A. Yeah, we usually -- the mate will carry that boat's bow with
10 him.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Him or her, you know, it depends on where we're at.

13 Q. Okay. All right. So I just want to talk a little bit more
14 about the positions. Why is the bow-to-bow position necessary?

15 A. So in Baltimore, that came up. We were told, because so much
16 to say the ship's coming inbound (indiscernible) naval dock, Moda
17 is what it is now in Enbridge. The junction there, when we go
18 north into the La Quinta Channel, there's a huge turning, there's
19 a huge junction right there. So you either continue into Corpus,
20 or you can shoot up to Cheniere in the La Quinta Channel. We were
21 told in Baltimore that we were going to keep the number one side
22 one there just in case, let's just say, we're coming inbound, and
23 let's say 13 to 14, 19 or 20, and some little boat or something
24 sunk right in front of us or, you know, right before the junction.
25 But basically, long story short, that was going to be our

1 emergency turnaround spot for our ship to take her back outbound
2 and anchor her until everything is clear in the channel.

3 Q. Okay. So once you're made-up in that number one position,
4 are you assisting at all?

5 A. We are just running a tight line. We're not affecting the
6 ship at all. Depending on the tide that day, we can give them a
7 little angle to port or starboard just to kind of help them out,
8 you know. But we do, we have, you know, it's not unnormal to do
9 any work on the bow. We do, you know, go to port or starboard a
10 few degrees and give them what we can but just, you know,
11 depending on the speed there. You know, sometimes we'll just say,
12 hey, you know, at this speed, I can't give you anything. So
13 they'll do a tug for (indiscernible) or something to port or
14 starboard. And it rectifies the bow (indiscernible) so --

15 Q. As a bow position, is it actively used when making that turn
16 into the La Quinta Channel?

17 A. It has been. I would say about 25 percent of the time we'll
18 be asked to go to port or starboard. It really depends on the
19 pilot. There's only a couple of pilots that really use the number
20 one in that turn.

21 Q. Okay. Is there anything gained from it being a bow-to-bow
22 position -- it's like, if you were to be on the bow quarter?

23 A. Yes. So we've talked amongst ourselves about that. I think
24 the consensus is maybe one day just have tugs on the port and
25 starboard bows instead of just center lead forward. But that's

1 coming up, and that's actually coming up in a meeting that I was
2 told about with the operations department. We're going to have
3 (indiscernible) with the client and all that. And we're just
4 going to reevaluate this whole number one as a whole.

5 Q. Okay. Yeah, I mean, we had a incident not long before this
6 one that was this same position so --

7 A. I remember -- it was right before I got back to town.

8 Q. Yeah. So that's why my head -- I've been kind of going down
9 this path now. It's like, okay, well, why is this position
10 absolutely necessary if we've had these two incidents back-to-
11 back, and it's just so sensitive with your controls that it can go
12 wrong very quickly.

13 A. Yeah, it's true. I mean, you know, no matter where you're at
14 in the world, that number one tug, I mean, you can Google it.
15 It's not just Texas that it happens. I mean, the number one as a
16 whole, I know on the west coast, California, you know, they
17 (indiscernible) same thing so --

18 Q. Okay. All right. And then, I was also curious, like, we
19 talked a little bit about the ebb current the other day. And is
20 there a reason or is it ever a thought about why they don't try
21 to, like, time ships up with maybe a slack tide -- or slack
22 current, my bad.

23 A. Yeah, from what I know I think that's just like the logistic
24 side of things, the traffic speed, you know, hey, we got three
25 that need to go in front of -- you know, it depends on the agents

1 and their timings that they're orders and things like that. Now,
2 we have called off jobs when the current was way too high, you
3 know, so the pilots set their limits, you know. But yeah, I think
4 it's a lot to be with just ships' agents and, you know, the mighty
5 dollar. But, you know, that ebb was not, to me that was under one
6 knot, fine, I'll take that any day. Now, what I think of as
7 estimated around .75 ebb at that time in front of Enbridge, which
8 that's fine. That's a normal operation.

9 Now, when we do the number one on the flood tides, it's
10 easier by a little bit. I mean, it's still the same variables.
11 You're still going backwards with a ASC tug, you know, so -- but
12 it's a little easier with the flood tide, I'm not going to lie.
13 It's favorable. But the ebb, you know, it was there, but it
14 wasn't -- to me, that speed at that ebb, that was nothing. It
15 does affect, so don't get me wrong. Now, you know, when you start
16 moving around like that, it will affect you obviously. But, you
17 know, due to our keel design that you saw, you know, got the big
18 sail underneath us --

19 Q. Yeah --

20 A. -- but, you know, you'll feel it, you'll feel it.

21 Q. What would be then, the most favorable speed for, like,
22 making up, I should say, like, of the ship? So they're moving
23 about, what, eight knots approximately?

24 A. Yeah. I mean, so yeah, we started coming in right when the
25 ship was, like, eight knots, and she was slowing down all the

1 time. And then, by the time we got (indiscernible) to get the
2 ship's messenger line up, we were around, like, 7. And for me,
3 anything below six to five, it's actually harder to do. It's
4 just, I don't know, it's just (indiscernible) or whatever but
5 around seven or eight with me, that's a pretty normal day. That's
6 a good scenario. And then sometimes, we'll be all the way down
7 to, like, six and a half. And the pilots are always accommodating
8 to us. They'll ask, hey, what are you comfortable with? And
9 then, so I answered, like, hey, we're going to get in there.

10 You know, I'll do a little test run in front of the ship to
11 check the, you know, the current and winds to see how my ship
12 acts. And then, we'll sweep in there. You know, and I'll let
13 them know that. I'm like, yeah, let me take look, speed's looking
14 good, but let me see how she feels and stuff like that. That
15 particular day, I didn't (indiscernible), but the mate was in the
16 chair. I was telling the mate, you know, what's okay,
17 everything's looking good, let's go ahead and get in there so.

18 Q. All right. And then, why are they making tugs up at that
19 specific location for Enbridge versus, like, closer to La Quinta
20 Channel?

21 A. I guess because of the turnaround, the emergency turnaround
22 situation at the junction.

23 Q. Okay. That's makes sense.

24 A. Yeah, in case something happens in the La Quinta Channel with
25 a barge, you know, (indiscernible) or something or a push boat

1 coming out of (indiscernible). So that's my answer that I was
2 given every time that we've had meetings about it, you know, about
3 the ones, just not because of incidents or accidents but just
4 overall. The number one would come up every now and then. And we
5 reevaluate that position. You know, we've done that a few times.
6 But I think the overall consensus is because of an emergency
7 turnaround at the junction. And then, we can take the ship back
8 out.

9 Q. Yeah, just kind of a risk versus reward, right.

10 A. Exactly, yep, yep. We don't want to be turning in the La
11 Quinta and then have a boo-boo. You know, that's the most narrow
12 part of the channel. So we can't turn around. And then, that'd
13 be really our (indiscernible) all the way, you know, back into the
14 junction so --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yep. That is why.

17 [REDACTED] Okay. Jon, did you have some questions?

18 MR. FURUKAWA: I can't really think of anything right now.
19 You already got his personal information --

20 [REDACTED] I have all of his personal information, yeah,
21 because we had already spoken on Monday in person. I think this
22 is helpful. I'm just trying to get a better understanding of the
23 training aspect of it. I did request documents from Chouest about
24 the training program that they have. I just haven't seen anything
25 yet.

1 BY [REDACTED]

2 Q. And then, I just was also curious, why we're in that position
3 and why we make the vessel up where we do at that speed. Oh, I
4 did have a question. When we were talking about the ebb, you said
5 under one knot is pretty good and that the pilots have limits.
6 What are those limits?

7 A. Well, that's pilots discretion. So they're not going to
8 bring in a ship from what I was told, they're not going to bring
9 in a ship if they don't feel it's safe especially at the Harbor
10 Island turn if it's a rolling flood. You know, I've seen them
11 called off that high current speed. That is a really critical
12 turn right there. But yeah, as far as number one, like I said,
13 they're accommodating to us. If we're not comfortable with the
14 speed, hey, you know, cap, could you slow her down just a hair so
15 we can work with it, not a problem. So that's never been an issue
16 with the pilots.

17 Q. That's great.

18 A. Um-hmm. Oh yeah, love working with them.

19 Q. That's good to hear. Yeah, I mean, we got the same kind of
20 feeling today speaking with them that they really take your input
21 seriously so --

22 A. They do more or less, no doubt, no question. And he was very
23 accommodating during the whole evolution too. As soon as we told
24 him what our situation was, he started backing down on her just to
25 slow everything down --

1 Q. Yeah, he mentioned that as well. So that's good stuff.

2 A. Yeah, Monaco used to be a pilot.

3 Q. Yeah. It was also nice to see, like, he mentioned that the
4 *La Quinta* and the *Aransas* were kind of standbys alongside, they
5 really filled their purpose so --

6 A. Oh, for sure, for sure, yeah, oh yeah. Yeah, we always try
7 to keep a plan B handy, and we needed that.

8 Q. Hey, that's what they're there for.

9 A. Yes, yes, she got there. They docked her (indiscernible).

10 [REDACTED] Well, I don't think I have any further
11 questions. Jon, did you have anything?

12 MR. FURUKAWA: It was ASD is the (indiscernible) Z-drive.

13 MR. BAKER: Right, right. Yeah, there's a type of tug that
14 (indiscernible) paths, they're called, well, unofficially, true
15 trackers with the drafts further in the center of the hole, the
16 center all the way --

17 [REDACTED] Oh, so they're a slightly different
18 construction.

19 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

20 Q. The true tracker -- center --

21 A. Over there, yeah.

22 Q. The drive is in the center on a true tracker, is that what
23 you said?

24 A. More center than these. These are all the way back in the
25 center.

1 Q. Okay. Is one easier than the other?

2 A. As far as the number one, my honest opinion is the ones I'm
3 on now, these ASDs are easier to do.

4 Q. Okay. Josh, do you have any suggestions of what steps we
5 take so something like this doesn't happen again?

6 A. Yeah. So I know we're having a bit of a pow wow with the
7 client and all that. We're going to put our heads together. You
8 know, I'm kind of fifty-fifty on it. I don't mind doing the
9 number one. And I understand that junction there (indiscernible)
10 the emergency turnaround. You know, as far as just speeds and all
11 that, I mean, like I said, our speeds have been fine. I guess,
12 you know, I'm trying to think of what we can -- you know, this why
13 we're going to have a big pow wow, put some heads together.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q. How do you feel about the training program?

16 A. I'm glad it's in place. I'm glad it's in place that's for
17 sure because, you know, we have to do -- well, I don't have a DE,
18 so I can't sign the (indiscernible) off anyway. But I can sign
19 that unofficial packet of the company. So to me, that's fine
20 because if they haven't done it successfully, then I won't sign
21 it. And there's no he said she said. It's either signed or it's
22 not, you know what I mean.

23 Q. What's a DE? Is that what you said?

24 A. (Indiscernible) off so guys can get their mate in tow.

25 Q. Designated examiner for Coast Guard documentation or for

1 company?

2 A. Yeah, yeah. No that's Coast Guard documents for a toar, was
3 it towing off (indiscernible) assessment.

4 MR. FURUKAWA: The toar, right, t-o-a-r.

5 MR. BAKER: Yeah, yeah.

6 [REDACTED] So that's not required for the Chouest
7 training program. It's only required if they're trying to pursue
8 Coast Guard credentials.

9 MR. BAKER: Well, yeah. But you still have to be for Chouest
10 anyway to run master tow, just not all of our captains have the DE
11 endorsement.

12 MR. FURUKAWA: Josh, did you say you had one, or you don't?

13 MR. BAKER: I do not. I'm currently trying to get that. I
14 got to get some information from my company. They got to, I
15 guess, type some kind of letter. And I got to get a, like -- I
16 don't know, it's something. It's not easy.

17 [REDACTED] (Indiscernible), that's a company position, or
18 is that a --

19 MR. FURUKAWA: NMC.

20 [REDACTED] NMC. Okay, yeah, because Jon's background,
21 actually, he used to work at the National Maritime Center part of
22 being in the NTSB. So I'm still learning some of this info.

23 MR. BAKER: Yeah. The towing aspect of all this Coast Guard
24 stuff's like a whole new world. It's like northern California and
25 southern California, it's two different planets. And yeah, we

1 have the toar, we have the DE. Well, I think in or about a year
2 or two, I think no matter what, everybody has to have QA and then
3 the DE. If I'm not mistaken, that's coming.

4 (Crosstalk)

5 MR. FURUKAWA: Oh, okay.

6 [REDACTED] Okay.

7 MR. BAKER: Yep, that's something that is going -- so I
8 guess, what I'm trying to say is that in about a year or two
9 years, I don't remember the deadline, I guess they're doing away
10 with just the DE by itself. I guess, I think everybody has to
11 have QA and DE, but that's from my recollection.

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q. Okay. So when you're just signing off as basically the
14 captain saying, hey, this person I feel is sufficient to handle
15 this position --

16 A. Correct, yeah, or (indiscernible) or something like that or,
17 hey, he has my blessing, you know, it's completely signed off.
18 He's doing really well, you know, like, I would trust him on his
19 own watch, sight thing.

20 Q. Okay. And then, are they then further assessed by a DE since
21 you do not have that?

22 A. Well, the DE's job -- well, so yeah, they would __ that's
23 when they will have to go to that particular tug, the captain that
24 has the DE. So he can do both at the same time, work on the DE
25 and the unofficial packet because I can only do the unofficial

1 packet with my operations department.

2 Q. Okay, okay.

3 A. Yeah, so they would eventually make their way down to the DE
4 boat, you know, so -- because it's kind of like the same thing,
5 the toar is basically like maneuvering the boat, you know, rudder
6 commands, or hiping up to a barge or hiping up to another tug.
7 So it's just a different scenario that you got to go through to
8 get signed off. It's been a long time since I've done one. I
9 haven't read through it in a while.

10 Q. Okay. Do you have anything else or -- Josh, do you have any
11 questions for us?

12 A. I do not. You know, I'm just bummed out that it happened, it
13 had to happen period. You know, nobody wakes up on Sunday and
14 want to do that.

15 Q. Yeah --

16 A. I'm just glad no one got hurt, you know, that's the main
17 thing.

18 Q. Yeah, thank goodness. Well, you've been super helpful. I
19 really appreciate all your cooperation thus far. It's been great
20 for my investigation.

21 A. Yeah, you know, we're nothing to hide here. We, you know,
22 we're just being completely honest, the evolution. And then,
23 that's all we got, you know. It is what it is. It happened, and,
24 you know, all we can do is learn from it and move on.

25 Q. Exactly.

1 A. I reckon the can get my boat fixed and get back to work.

2 [REDACTED] Yeah, right.

3 MR. FURUKAWA: Hey, Josh, it's Jon again.

4 MR. BAKER: Yes, sir.

5 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

6 Q. So for the Chouest training program, beginner, intermediate,
7 advanced, is there, like, a classroom part of it?

8 A. I didn't see one on there.

9 Q. The classroom. And there's no local simulator. You go to
10 MITAGS or Nicholls State or --

11 A. Yeah, I guess at Nicholls State's just for the college kids
12 to come in, they'll want to transfer into the marine if you're --
13 you know, instead of boat life's period. I don't know if Nicholls
14 State is an academy. I think the nearest academy that I know is
15 Texas A&M Maritime. But yeah, as far as Nicholls State, I am not
16 familiar with that at all. But I know it's been around for a long
17 time with the college kids.

18 Q. What about TopShip?

19 A. TopShip, that was something a few years back. I am not
20 familiar with that at all.

21 Q. Okay --

22 A. I do know it existed. I haven't seen deckhands come through
23 there. But I could not tell you anything about it because -- I
24 really hadn't asked a lot of questions about it either.

25 Q. So (indiscernible) MITAGS that mates program.

1 A. What about MITAGS?

2 Q. Is that what they would do? Doesn't MITAGS have some kind of
3 mates program for (indiscernible) and tugs?

4 A. Oh, I have no idea. I've only been up there for the Corpus
5 Christi LNG operations. So I went twice -- yeah, I couldn't tell
6 you on their program or anything like what kind of programs they
7 have (indiscernible).

8 Q. Okay. So it's only the Chouest inhouse program is what you
9 know of as going on.

10 A. The packet that I'm sent. So the mate shows up with the
11 packet from the operations department. That's what I'm doing.

12 Q. Okay. Great. Thank you.

13 A. Yeah, no problem.

14 [REDACTED] Awesome. All right. Well, I think we have
15 everything we need. I'm just going to stop the recording now. So
16 it's 12:55 Central Time on August 11th. This is Lieutenant
17 Commander [REDACTED]. And this concludes our interview.

18 (Whereupon, at 12:55 p.m. Central, the interview was
19 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

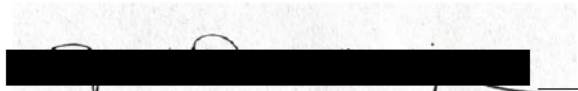
IN THE MATTER OF: GROUNDING OF TOWING VESSEL
 CC PORTLAND ON AUGUST 8, 2022
 Interview of Joshua Baker

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM035

PLACE: Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi

DATE: August 11, 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.


Janet Deal
Transcriber