

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: CAPTAIN JOSEPH DUNN, Master, *CC Portland*
Edison Chouest

Corpus Christi, Texas

Thursday,
August 18, 2022

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

Capt. Joseph Dunn, Master (off-duty), CC Portland

TAKEN ON

August 18, 2022

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
5	3	ground water	brown water
6	13	sub trapped	sub-chapter
6	14	rim	M
6	14	SB	SP
8	7	stimulators	simulators
11	11	subtrapped rim	sub-chapter M
11	13	subtrapped	sub-chapter
11	14	rim	M
14	13	hold truck	hull check
15	16	individual	initial

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

JOSEPH P. DUNN

Printed Name of Person providing the above information

 Signature of Person providing the above information

10/19/22

Date

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PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
16	23	hold	hull
16	24	truch	chock
18	13	hold truch	hull chock
18	15	hold truch	hull chock
18	19	hold truch	hull chock
18	20	hold truch	hull chock
18	24	too	to
19	9	hold truch	hull chock
19	10	hold truch	hull chock
19	17	about	port bow

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 NEED.

_____ Initials

JOSEPH P. DUNN

Printed Name of Person providing the above information

[REDACTED]
Signature of Person providing the above information

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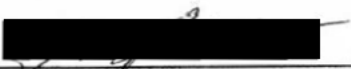
PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
19	23	hold	hull
19	24	truck	chock
19	24	hold	hull
19	25	truck	chock
20	3	hold truck	hull chock
20	4	hold truck	hull chock
20	9	hold truck	hull chock
24	9	I've	I
25	9	Grabeire's	Grabert's
25	19	Emard	Eymard

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PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
25	19	bloat	boat
28	1	evaluation	evolution
28	19	hold truck	hull chock
13	1	Thorson	Thorson
16	10	Thorson	Thorson

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Initials

Joseph P. Dunn

Printed Name of Person providing the above information



Signature of Person providing the above information

10/19/22

Date

APPEARANCES:

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

ROBERT FURUKAWA, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:02 a.m.)

1
2
3 [REDACTED] And, Jon, this is -- I'll be able to send you
4 this actual recording, as well, if you want.

5 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

6 [REDACTED] Show everything. Okay. So, good morning. It
7 is 10:02 on August 18, 2022. This (indiscernible) interview in
8 regards to the *CC Portland* grounding and subsequent property
9 damage. My name is Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED]. I'm
10 with Sector Corpus Christi Coast Guard Investigations. And I have
11 with me here from NTSB?

12 MR. FURUKAWA: Jon Furukawa, NTSB.

13 [REDACTED] Okay. And, Joe, do we have your permission to
14 record this interview?

15 MR. DUNN: Yes, absolutely.

16 [REDACTED] And could you please state your name for the
17 record?

18 MR. DUNN: Yes. My name is Joseph Dunn. I am a captain for
19 Edison Chouest and employed as the captain on the *CC Portland*.

20 [REDACTED] Awesome. Thank you so much, Joe. Okay.

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN JOSEPH DUNN

21
22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q. So, can we just -- we're going to start off, just give us a
24 little bit of your background, where you went to school, what
25 companies you worked for, positions you've held since you

1 graduated, and just up until this point.

2 A. Yes. I graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy in 2014.
3 Since then, I have been primarily employed on the groundwater
4 fleet tugboats kind of thing. After I graduated, I worked for
5 Western Towboat for only a short period of time. I moved to
6 Signet right after that. And then, for about two years, I was not
7 employed in the maritime -- or, the fleet. And then, in early
8 2018, I hired on with Chouest as a deckhand. And then, since
9 then, I was promoted a mate, and then captain, and have been
10 employed in that capacity since last July/August time frame.

11 Q. Okay. So, what's your experience with z-drives specifically?

12 A. So, since I started working on tugs, I've only been on a
13 z-drive powered -- not powered, but z-drive type throttle
14 propellers. I've never been on a traditional twin screw tug. So,
15 I mean, I never want to say I have the best understanding of
16 anything. Sure more people than I do.

17 But, you know, I understand, A, the basic concept of the
18 drive moves 360 degrees, the direction of the thrust, how that's
19 going to react to the boat. Again, that changes per boat, of
20 course. No two boats are going to be the same, even though they
21 could be designed exactly alike. But my more recent personal
22 experience with driving them from even the Chouest Sabine tugs
23 versus the Chouest Corpus tugs are vastly different. In Sabine,
24 those tugs, z-drives are located more midship, so the driving
25 style, while theoretically the same, is much different than it is

1 for the Corpus tugs, as they're located pretty much on the stern.
2 So, your point of turn radius is going to be different. How you
3 back on the ship, how you walk on the tug, is going to be
4 different. So, yeah, does that suffice?

5 Q. Yeah. That's helpful. So, you mentioned you worked on the
6 Sabine tugs. How long were you on -- is that where you were as a
7 deckhand and worked your way up, or --

8 A. Yes, ma'am. So, from May of 2018 until about September of
9 2018, I was in the Sabine division as a deckhand, because that was
10 the only job I could find. And then, when the Corpus tugs came
11 out, I went over on the *Portland* actually as a deckhand for a
12 couple of months. And then, when they instituted the mate
13 training program as the Sabine tugs were going in the subtrapped
14 rim (ph.), then I became the mate on the *SB Pearl*, which is in
15 Sabine, and I was there from February of 2019 until last
16 July/August time frame learning to be a mate. And then, I came
17 down to Corpus. I had gotten my master's license at that point.
18 And then, trained with Captain Baker for a little while, excuse
19 me, and then took over as his relief on the *Portland*.

20 Q. Okay. So, you mentioned the mate training program. Can you
21 just talk a little bit about what that entails and what you were
22 required to do?

23 A. Yeah. Absolutely. So, from the get-go, it's, the overall
24 broad spectrum is just learning how to drive the boat and doing
25 every single ship position, but also learning how to maneuver the

1 boat in different angles, walking the boat. And then,
2 essentially, it's, you get a captain or you -- whatever boat
3 you're on, and you learn from that captain how to drive the boat.
4 And I was very fortunate to have two of the best drivers on the
5 dock teach me how to drive when I was in Sabine. But then, you
6 just start off with very basic, basic lightboat running, light
7 ship handling. In Sabine, it was very, not nice, but the docks
8 where the LNG tankers tie up right there, so that was a great
9 reference point for learning how to just walk the boat back and
10 forth, back and forth.

11 And then, different captains have different styles of
12 driving, as well. So, in Sabine, the -- when I say, walk, that's
13 just, you know, taking the boat and being able to go left or
14 right, no forward or aft movement. Certain captains have
15 different styles of walking. So, certain captains like having the
16 drives positioned a certain way. Other captains like having the
17 drives positioned a different way. And all of that, you know,
18 funnels into, essentially, you learn how to drive however that
19 captain drives. And then, you get to a point, after getting
20 through the sign-offs, after making sure that they're confident in
21 your ability, then you progress onto actually doing the ship
22 movements.

23 And then, you know, that's also in stages. Every part of the
24 program is in stages so that you, you know, don't -- you know,
25 it's not throwing you into the fire, essentially. And so, you

1 know, for the number two spot, it's running alongside the ship
2 first; and then, slowly coming in; and then, putting a line up;
3 and then, actually doing the whole job. And that's one, two,
4 three, four, every single position.

5 Q. So, were you required to do any simulators, or was it
6 strictly just training documents that you worked through?

7 A. Yeah, no stimulators. The only simulators we had were -- I
8 never went to, but the only that I know of was when the Corpus
9 tugs came out. The Corpus pilots and the captains who knew they
10 were going to Corpus went up to MITAGS and did training for that.
11 But other than that, everything else was real-world, on-hand,
12 practical experience using that training checklist.

13 Q. So, not every captain is required to go to the MITAGS
14 training?

15 A. Not to my knowledge, no.

16 Q. Okay. All right. So, since we're talking about the actual
17 document, I'm going to try sharing my screen, and I want to ask
18 some questions specifically about the document.

19 [REDACTED] Jon, do you have any questions before I do
20 that?

21 MR. FURUKAWA: Let's see.

22 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

23 Q. Joe, how old are you?

24 A. I'm 31. I'll be 32 in September.

25 Q. Okay. And you've got -- let's see. Eight years since

1 graduation, but you had --

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. -- in the industry?

4 A. Correct, yeah. So, I quit Signet in November of 2015. That
5 was a very poor decision on my behalf. And then, I spent the next
6 eight or nine subsequent months unemployed. I looked for any job
7 I could find, and at a certain point, I just had to take something
8 so I wasn't homeless. And so, I did that for, I did that job for
9 about eight or nine months. And then, I went out to west Texas at
10 my friend's, his wife's father's company (indiscernible) gas
11 treatment skids; and then, that was the job I had right before I
12 started working with Chouest.

13 Q. Okay. Okay. And the other two companies that you worked
14 for, did they have z-drives, also?

15 A. Yes, they do. But then -- so, with Signet, I would drive
16 every now and then, but we were primarily towing a barge offshore,
17 so that was just driving in a straight line or having it on
18 autopilot and watching it go. And then, Western Towboat, same
19 thing. Very similar, but no in-depth, you know, (indiscernible)
20 up to the barge, maneuvering, kind of bringing it in kind of
21 stuff.

22 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. Okay. That's it. Go ahead, [REDACTED].
23 Thank you, Joe.

24 MR. DUNN: No problem.

25 [REDACTED] Let me know if you can see this. I'll move it

1 there. All right. Do you see a calendar, or do you see a tractor
2 tug training program?

3 MR. DUNN: I see a tractor tug training program.

4 [REDACTED] Okay. Perfect. Because I've got two screens
5 going, and it popped up with the one. Okay.

6 BY [REDACTED]

7 Q. So, is this the same document that you worked through when
8 you were training to be a captain?

9 A. Yes, that is the same exact one.

10 Q. Okay. Awesome. So, what guidance was given to you by the
11 company on how to complete this program?

12 A. Oh, man. So, pretty much from day one, being a new mate, it
13 was, here's your -- it's not a pamphlet, but here's your book,
14 essentially. And depending on who your captain was, it was -- for
15 me personally, it was, you know, this gets done as fast or as slow
16 as you want it to get done. I'm not going to get on you for
17 getting it completed as soon as possible or learning. So, it was
18 -- you know, I liked that mentality, and that is the same approach
19 I take with this. It's not my job to make sure people -- now,
20 bear in mind, if people want to do this, I absolutely will do my
21 absolute best to show everything I know, and teach, and help
22 someone learn how to do the job. But, you know, I'm not going to
23 be hounding an individual to learn how to do this every single
24 day. But, sorry, I digress there. But it was handed to me my
25 first day as a mate and said just, you know, this gets completed

1 as fast or slow as you want.

2 Q. Okay. And when it says in here, training masters are the
3 people to sign off, are all the captains considered training
4 masters, or are only specific captains considered training
5 masters?

6 A. All captains are training masters. Now, this document was
7 designed by certain Sabine captains, to my knowledge. It was in
8 place years before I even got there, because there was no
9 traditional mate program, technically, in Sabine, because it was
10 just a captain, engineer, and two deckhands. It wasn't until
11 subtrapped rim came that they had the actual mate position on
12 board. They were sending people to Sabine to train in the mate's
13 capacity, but it was never a billeted position until subtrapped
14 rim came around. So, this, more than anything, was designed by
15 the captains as a checklist for the engineers and the guys getting
16 their apprentice mate's program to move up.

17 Q. Okay. All right. So, how -- are you given guidance on how
18 to work through it, or is it, you get it, you read it, and you
19 figure it out?

20 A. Yeah, absolutely, you're given guidance, you know. I can't
21 say we sat down and went through it page by page, but it's also
22 pretty self-explanatory. But again, you know, no one ever told me
23 they're not going to help me with that or understand anything
24 about it.

25 Q. Okay. So, when you get through -- okay, so, I'm scrolling

1 down. We get through section one, observation time. Are you --
2 is this supposed to be completed in order, or is this something
3 that you can do certain sections concurrently?

4 A. Both. So, it was some movements on there, you're going to,
5 you know, like stop transverse (indiscernible) slow motion of
6 stern, like you can knock out some of those in a day. And again,
7 it's, in my opinion, that's not something you displayed once,
8 okay, cool, you sign it off, you're good to go. All of the
9 lightboat handling and, to some degree, the ship moves, you know,
10 it's on a case-by-case basis of how proficient the individual is.
11 And again, sure, you could put somebody in the seat, and they
12 could drive the boat in a straight line, but, you know, by no
13 means does that mean they can spin the boat 360 degrees, back it
14 up, move it left or right. So, sorry again. That was a
15 longwinded answer. But I know it -- okay, what is this? Section
16 three?

17 Q. So, this gets to section three, which -- so, at this point,
18 my understanding is, you've worked through your observations,
19 you've worked through your lightboat handling; and now, we're on
20 to section three, ship assist training.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. So, the way that it's broken down in here, they have
23 evolution one, evolution two, and so on. Are these evolutions
24 required to be completed in order?

25 A. So, the basic ones, I've always used that as the benchmark

1 for how I proceed forward. Now, again, with Mr. Thorson (ph.), he
2 had a good bit of his book signed off before I started working
3 with him. So, I know, when we spoke yesterday, you said -- you'd
4 mentioned the things I'd signed off for. To my knowledge, the
5 only thing I had signed off was that *Cool Discoverer* number two on
6 the inbound.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So, I knew he knew how to drive the boat, but with anyone I
9 get on, especially in the mate's position, in that capacity, I'm
10 not going to just put them in the chair and say, go have fun, you
11 got it, even if you have your book signed off. That's not how I
12 operate as a captain. I have to do my own due diligence to make
13 sure that this person is capable, and I'm comfortable with him
14 getting in the chair, because it's one thing to be able to drive
15 the boat in a straight line, but it's just as, if not equally more
16 important -- you know, I still work on this every day, is, if you
17 get into a bad or interesting position, you need to know how to
18 maneuver yourself out of that, as well. So, for me, again, how I
19 do it, again, I use this training program as well, but I had seen
20 he had a bunch of things signed off, so it was, okay, let's start
21 from square one. I only worked with him for a week, and the only
22 thing I had signed off was that inbound on June 20.

23 Q. Okay. So, let me go back to the top. I saw your signature
24 on here more than once, so that's why I want to through now that
25 you mentioned that.

- 1 A. Oh, okay.
- 2 Q. Okay. So, the first one that comes up is that element one,
3 June 20, *Portland, Cool Discoverer*. Are those your initials?
- 4 A. They are, yes.
- 5 Q. Okay. All right. And then, next, I saw -- is this the same
6 evolution, evolution number three, 6/20, *Portland, Cool*
7 *Discoverer*? Are those your initials?
- 8 A. They are, but those two ships should not be in the same spot.
- 9 Q. What do you mean by that?
- 10 A. So, he had the *Cool Discoverer* also in evolution number one.
- 11 Q. Evolution number one, correct, yes.
- 12 A. Okay. So, the way this works is, this part, this portion, of
13 the training program is just getting the line up on the hold truck
14 (ph.); and then, I think it says, operates until the point of
15 turn.
- 16 Q. Yes.
- 17 A. That should move -- says, okay, he got the lineup. He
18 operated until the turn. Okay. But that should not also be on
19 the same line on the same date in section three.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. Those should not count as the same checkoff point.
- 22 Q. So, do you know why you signed it off then, or did you --
- 23 A. To be honest, no, I don't. I apologize.
- 24 Q. No. That's fine. I'm just --
- 25 A. So, I will tell you this: I would not have signed it off on

1 section one, and then immediately signed off for section three.

2 Q. Okay. So, you did write in your initials on this guide, so,
3 I mean, I can't speculate, but did he ever go back to you again
4 for more signatures, or --

5 A. So, the only -- the day -- so, he -- let's see. I got off on
6 August 3. He was out with COVID and came back to the boat late
7 August 1, and when he got back on, I signed off a couple of
8 things. I did not put my initials on the -- he probably wrote JD
9 on the left, if I'm guessing, because that's when he was on board.
10 He was on board with me and wanted to remember that.

11 Q. Yeah, that's what I'm thinking, as well.

12 A. But like whenever I was doing this, I would write comments,
13 the name of the ship, day or night, and then I would write the
14 name of the captain.

15 Q. In the comments section?

16 A. Yeah. And then, they would individual in. So --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- I don't know, but that could be what he's doing.

19 Q. Okay. So, then, right here on evolution number four, on
20 June 18, he has this *Shinshu Maru* on the *Portland*, number five,
21 element one. Is that --

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. -- your signature?

24 A. That is my initial, yes, ma'am.

25 Q. Okay. And then, like the *Celsius Charlotte* on June 19,

1 element one, are those your initial? It's -- or, element three.

2 Sorry.

3 A. Line up center lead aft. All right. So, that would be

4 the --

5 Q. Element one, number three. Sorry.

6 A. Okay. On the 19th?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. Okay. That is my initials, but I can state with full

9 confidence I never let him put the lineup. I never did a

10 number four position with Mr. Thorson.

11 Q. Do you remember signing this, though, or -- I mean, I know

12 they're your initials, but did you write those initials, or did --

13 A. I cannot honestly say I remember writing those initials --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- but --

16 Q. No, I mean, that's why we're here, so -- all right. And

17 then, on evolution number seven, we have a couple with you under

18 element one. The numbers two, four, and five, the *Shinshu Maru*,

19 *Cool Discoverer*, and *Diamond Gas Metropolis*?

20 A. Okay. Yeah, those are all my initials, but again --

21 immediately, what sticks out, the *Cool Discoverer* on the 6/20

22 should not be there at all. And then, neither should the

23 *Shinshu Maru* if he's already listing that previously on the hold

24 truck sunken bit forward.

25 Q. Okay. Do you recall signing this page?

1 A. I believe so, but I -- again, if I would have seen the other
2 inputs, if I would have gone through his sheet, those ships should
3 not have counted for those.

4 Q. Okay. Yeah, I think that all of them had your initials on
5 it. I just wanted to see if they were physically yours or if he
6 had written them in. So, the intent of it, then, if I'm
7 understanding correctly, is to work through -- complete the first
8 evolution and move to the second evolution, not be doing them all
9 at the same time.

10 A. Yeah. And so -- and you will advance through different
11 portions of the program, because it's -- you never -- so, the ship
12 position is changed on a daily basis, so, you know, you might be
13 the number four on an inbound. Yes, you will be the number four
14 on the outbound, but the next day, you'll be the number one. And
15 if you're not proficient doing the number one spot, you just
16 either won't do that or you'll swap to a different position with
17 somebody else and do the number two or the number three. So,
18 that's why it's designed to do the sunken bit forward and sunken
19 bit aft versus, the number two and number three positions are
20 designed to kind of get you up to speed and aware of how to handle
21 the boat, come alongside, that kind of thing. But again, so, he
22 very well could get through the number twos first and the number
23 threes first, but by no means should an entry for one part of the
24 program be counted for a later part of the program.

25 Q. I see what you're saying. So, you shouldn't be double-

1 counting?

2 A. Yes. So, he put the *Cool Discoverer* for two other entries.
3 The only time that should be on this entry should be in this
4 evolution number one section.

5 Q. Okay. So, how does the evolutions correspond to the
6 positions? That, I'm still having a little -- because it's not --

7 A. Oh.

8 Q. -- it doesn't specifically say one through four when I read
9 through this.

10 A. Yes. I'm sorry.

11 Q. Well, that's fine. It's just something I've been trying to
12 figure out.

13 A. So, when it says, line up on forward hold truck, that's just
14 going to be your starboard forward recess bit. And then, it says,
15 line up on aft hold truck. That's going to be your starboard aft
16 recess bit. And the only reason I say starboard is because every
17 ship move, the positions relatively are going to be the same.
18 We'll have -- the number one boat will be centerline forward. The
19 number two boat will be that forward hold truck and the recess
20 bit. Number three boat, aft hold truck. Number four boat will be
21 center lead aft.

22 And the only reason it's on the starboard side is that when
23 we bring the LNG tankers in, we spin them around and put them
24 portside, too, on the dock. And both cargo loading manifolds have
25 the ships designed to be pointing outbound so that when we take

1 the ships back out to see, we just pull them off the dock, head
2 down the channel.

3 Q. Okay. So, sailings is going to be starboard side position,
4 element one would be the number two, and then element three would
5 be the number -- or, element two would be the number three?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And then, you go to arrivals, and would that be portside?

8 A. So, it'll be the same thing for on arrivals or outbounds. If
9 it says, forward hold truck, that's going to be your number two
10 spot; and if it says, aft hold truck, that'll be your number three
11 spot.

12 Q. Okay. But is that going to be portside, since it's arrivals,
13 or is it still starboard side?

14 A. So, okay, and so, during -- for putting the lineup, it'll be
15 on the starboard side. For -- so, as the number three boat, at
16 the initial point of the inbound from the jetties, the pilots like
17 us to shadow about. So, the number two boat will typically shadow
18 the starboard bow, number three boat will shadow the port side of
19 the bow. And then, once we get through the ferries and
20 everything, typically, the pilots will have the number two boat
21 run out ahead and have the number three boat fall astern. And
22 then, once we get close to Cheniere and it's time to put the line
23 up, then the number two boat will take the starboard forward hold
24 truck, and the number three boat will take the starboard aft hold
25 truck.

1 Q. Okay. That's making sense. All right. So, then, we have
2 evolution number three. It's maybe departure and line up on the
3 forward hold truck is position two, and then lineup on the aft
4 hold truck is position three. So, what is --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- the difference between that evolution number one, where,
7 to me, that seems like the same, almost, right? Line up on --

8 A. So --

9 Q. -- the forward hold truck?

10 A. I think -- so, there, it says, basic ship assist, sailings
11 and arrivals. That's the primary difference.

12 Q. Okay. So, this has, then, basic ship assist sailings during
13 basic training (indiscernible). Oh, I think I see what it is.
14 Okay. So, this one, trainee operates until completion of job, the
15 first one was --

16 A. Until the --

17 Q. -- trainee operates until point of turn. Okay. So, it's
18 kind of like stepping you through the whole process. That makes
19 sense.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. So, now, I understand why you shouldn't be
22 overlapping. Like, it's not a one and done, right? It's --

23 A. Right, right. It's, okay, well, you've showed, you've
24 displayed, you can get the lineup. That's great. But then, we'll
25 -- it's designed that -- you know, redundancy for a purpose,

1 essentially.

2 Q. Okay. So, then, we move through evolution four, which is, to
3 completion of job. And then, evolution five, intermediate. So,
4 intermediate is going to be moving up to line up center lead aft
5 and line up center lead forward. That's going to be your position
6 four, and then position one.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And so, that's just putting the lineup, though? That's not
9 actually maintaining? Or is that putting the line up, and then
10 letting the captain take over?

11 A. That is -- so, according to the description, it says, line up
12 through the transom. Trainee operates until completion of job.
13 So, that -- I -- and so, again, I only worked with this individual
14 for a grand total of nine days so far. It was my last week on the
15 hitch before last he came on board. And I can specifically
16 remember an instance. We were the number four boat. We went
17 offshore, and I had worked with him at that point for two or
18 three days. I hadn't seen, really, enough that was comfortable
19 for me to let him drive the boat at the number four spot, because,
20 you know, you never know what's going to happen.

21 But the number four spot essentially is, you come up on the
22 stern of the tanker offshore, run alongside him. If the weather's
23 nice, you can press up on the stern, but if it's not, you know,
24 the current or the wind's bad, you're having to hold about 5 or
25 10 feet off the stern, put a line up, then stretch out. If

1 it's a flood tide, that's nice. If it's an ebb tide, you're
2 really having to watch what you're doing. And I remember clearly
3 that that night, it was -- the water was essentially glass smooth.
4 It was a nice flood tide. So, the job wouldn't be that difficult.
5 But I still said, let me -- I'm going to do this; and then, I
6 might let you sit in the chair for a little bit once we get around
7 the ferries. But he didn't put the line up and he didn't do any
8 real maneuvering in this part of the job. Oh, for the time on
9 board I was with him for the number four spot.

10 Q. That's *Celsius Charlotte*. I got it. Yeah, because that was
11 the one that you said that doesn't look like your actual initials.

12 A. No.

13 Q. And then, intermediate ship assist. And then, so, then,
14 sailings, same thing. And then, you move to advanced, which, my
15 understanding is, advanced is like the captain can't step in; is
16 that correct?

17 A. Yeah. He demonstrates all aspects of ship assists. Does it
18 from start to finish. So, yeah, and that looks like my signature,
19 my initials. But, one, the *Shinshu Maru* and the *Cool Discoverer*
20 should not be there in the first place. Yeah. I apologize that I
21 can't offer more than that.

22 Q. Yeah. That's fine.

23 A. I do -- so, I will say, I do remember, when he got back on
24 board August 1, the morning of August 2, he was already awake, and
25 as soon as I stepped out of my room, he called me over to sign off

1 some things, and that was a hectic morning, so -- I'm not offering
2 this as a horrible excuse, but I do recall signing some thing off,
3 but I don't remember --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- signing three things off in a row like that.

6 Q. Well, I think part of it, too -- part of why we do our
7 investigations is to figure out how to prevent this from happening
8 again in the future. So, I mean, we're all human, right? So, all
9 you can do is, for future ones, just be a little bit more cautious
10 of these, right? I mean --

11 A. Yeah. No --

12 Q. -- that's all you can do. So --

13 A. You can be more cognizant of what I'm --

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. -- putting on if --

16 Q. Yeah, and, I mean, it looks like, unfortunately, some of
17 these are kind of sped through and just, it wasn't being followed
18 the way I think it was intended. So, I mean, it's a good training
19 guide. It's just, it needs to be followed the way that it was
20 meant to be, I guess. So --

21 A. I agree.

22 Q. -- that's just how we learn, right? So, basically, no one
23 was hurt, but now, we can prevent anyone from getting hurt in a
24 similar situation in the future. So, let's see. I did want to
25 ask, also -- I just had a question, and it escaped me.

1 ██████████ Jon, do you have any questions while I try to
2 think of what I had?

3 MR. FURUKAWA: Yes. Let's see.

4 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

5 Q. You know the channel where you guys -- were the accident had
6 it, or where the accident was, what's the name of that channel?

7 It's like a Cut A, Corpus Christi Cut A? Is that --

8 A. So, I'm not entirely sure where the accident actually
9 happened yet. I don't know that information. I've saw a picture
10 of the z-drive coming out of the water the other day, and it was
11 in front of the MODA terminal or nearby, but I'm not sure at what
12 point in the river. I don't even know if they were doing an
13 inbound or an outbound.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But typically, it's, yes, it's -- I call it, there's the
16 jetties, you turn in to Corpus Channel, and then you turn in to
17 La Quinta Channel, and it's going to be right after MODA, and
18 (indiscernible) on the bay. And then, we call the last turn, is
19 just the oxy turn (ph.), and then that'll put us right into
20 Cheniere.

21 Q. Okay. Okay. Yes, because you were the off captain for the
22 *Portland* at that time, right?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. Okay. Go ahead, ██████████.

25 ██████████ I remembered my question. So -- actually, it

1 just escaped me again. What was it? Oh.

2 BY [REDACTED]

3 Q. When you're working through this document -- oh, that's what
4 it was. Is there any time where you talk to the other captains
5 that have signed off on the mates to kind of discuss their
6 progress before trusting them with the position?

7 A. So, in relation to where Josh has signed off, I spoke with
8 him more than the other guys on the dock. Like, I saw there was
9 Robert Grabeire's (ph.) signature, Caldwell's, T Bobs -- or,
10 excuse me, Robert Boughamer's. And I never had any in-depth
11 particular conversations with any of those individuals. And to an
12 extent, even with Josh, it would be, you know, how's he doing?
13 Can he do these spots?

14 And as much as I trust Josh -- he's the one who trained me, I
15 know he's one of the best drivers I've ever seen. And I trust him
16 with my own life. But he will -- just because he does tell me
17 that, I'm not just going to blindly throw somebody in the chair,
18 and that's with all the mates I've worked with, from -- there's a
19 guy named Mason Emard (ph.), who, he could drive the bloat
20 blindfolded. And then, our other mate, Levi (ph.), I know he can
21 drive the boat phenomenally. But when he first started working
22 with me as a mate, I knew he could drive the boat, but I'm just
23 not going to put someone in the chair without being comfortable
24 with him first, knowing they can do that.

25 Q. That makes sense. So, what was your comfort level with Tim,

1 then?

2 A. Again, it was -- I don't want to say it wasn't great, but it
3 was just I hadn't gotten a chance to work with him for that long
4 yet to really develop that kind of rapport to where I -- if I
5 needed to run downstairs for 30 seconds when we didn't have the
6 line up and we're running lightboat, no problem. He could drive
7 the boat straight as good as anyone. But in terms of ship assist,
8 like coming alongside, doing that number two, that number two,
9 *Cool Discoverer*, is the only job I remember doing with him in the
10 back of my mind. I remember that. But again, I was right behind
11 him watching his hands every step of the evolution, you know, the
12 speed, the throttle, how much he had on the controls. You know,
13 that is not something that I take lightly, and I'm not going to
14 just allow someone to, you know, get through.

15 Now, after a certain point, we start to get to know each
16 other. I get to know his habits or tendencies. I correct him.
17 I'll step back slowly and see if they're able to correct their
18 mistakes when they're making mistakes or if they're adjusting as
19 needed. But I just hadn't had enough time with Tim to get to that
20 point of anything other than watching exactly everything he's
21 doing when we were doing ship assists, because I just didn't know
22 him enough at that point.

23 Q. Yeah. Okay. So, how do you feel about the bow position in
24 general, the number one?

25 A. Well, at first, it was to go from learning to have a, you

1 know, 2-mile CPA to driving 10 feet off of the bow. That was a
2 shift to get used to that. You know, with any position, it's
3 never -- I never want to be completely comfortable or, you know,
4 not -- I don't want to say nervous, but, you know, it is what it
5 is. It's a giant bulbous bow on a ship that's coming right at it.

6 Q. (Indiscernible)?

7 A. You know.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It froze up.

9 MR. DUNN: Oh, sorry.

10 [REDACTED] Nope. We're good now.

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q. All right.

13 A. Okay. And I can't lie. It's difficult, but, you know, I --
14 Josh taught me how to drive it well, and I -- you know, I don't
15 want to say it's my favorite thing to do, but, you know, it's part
16 of the job, and you've just got to do it.

17 Q. In your opinion, do you feel that that position's absolutely
18 necessary for the operation?

19 A. Yes, I believe it is necessary for the operation, but if -- I
20 don't believe it's necessary to put the line up in front of MODA
21 like we do. Because at that point in the operation, you're not
22 really needing to speed up. You're needing to slow down. And
23 that's what the number four is there for. And I think putting a
24 line up in the La Quinta Channel would probably be a lot safer,
25 but again, that's just me. I'm not a harbor pilot. But in terms

1 of importance for the evaluation, yes, because once we get to
2 that, once we get past the oxy turn and we're having to spin the
3 ship, the number one and the number four boats are absolutely
4 instrumental for spinning it, and then, you know, stopping that
5 spin whenever we get done with that 180.

6 Q. Okay. So, would it be possible to accomplish it with two
7 tugs on the bow versus the one, or is it like you have just the
8 one center lead forward?

9 A. So, the number two is on the bow, but because of its, because
10 of the number two's position, it's less conducive to spinning the
11 ship. Like, you're not getting as much rotational force on the
12 ship as you are with the number one boat just because of the
13 distance to them. I mean, you can spin the ship with the
14 number two boat on that forward hold truck, but it's going to be
15 much slower, and I just don't think the mechanics would be as
16 smooth as it is with the number one ship -- or, the number one
17 position. Sorry.

18 Q. Yeah. Do you have any recommendations that would be
19 beneficial from preventing something like this happening again in
20 the future?

21 A. You know, I've been racking my mind since I thought about --
22 well, since I heard what happened, and I sadly really couldn't
23 come up with anything other than just -- you know, again, I put a
24 lot of faith into that training program, but I also put a lot
25 of -- a lot of this comes down to like your gut instincts, and

1 that's not something you can easily translate onto a piece of
2 paper that says, I'm comfortable with this guy. But in lieu of
3 that, we have the training program, but clearly, from what I've
4 seen, you know, I could have been much more diligent on watching
5 what I was putting my initials to. But just not getting
6 complacent, and just because someone says, I'm comfortable with a
7 certain part of the job, that doesn't mean they can actually do
8 it. So, you know, the key here is just redundancy and doing it
9 over, and over, and over again. But in terms of, you know, making
10 it better, I mean, I think it has been -- it's a solid program,
11 and, you know, knock on wood, I am a beneficiary of that program,
12 so I can't -- I don't see any massive or major faults with it.

13 Q. How long did it take you to complete it?

14 A. Man. I mean, to be honest, I'm still learning every day.
15 But it took, from start to finish -- you know, I'd have to go
16 look, but it probably took a year, year and a half from start to
17 finish. But that, it wasn't because I just didn't want to learn.
18 It was just, you know, I was working two weeks on/two weeks off at
19 the time, and, you know, it's crazy how fast a year can pass
20 without, you know, checking something and saying, oh, my gosh,
21 like, okay, like, I've got this. And again, some pieces of that
22 program, you're going to finish sooner than others.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. You know. As an example, last -- or, two hitches before
25 last, we -- just by the nature of what day it was, I think I did

1 one number three and zero number ones. It was all twos and fours
2 the whole hitch. And that just kinds of depends on the days, and
3 the times, and the ships. So, you know, if you're training, and
4 you're not getting any ones and threes there, that's just kind of
5 the way the -- you know, it goes.

6 Q. Yeah. I think that's like -- it actually is probably good
7 that it's that way, because you can kind of -- you're not just
8 taking everything at first shot and --

9 A. Oh, yeah.

10 Q. Yeah. That's great. Yeah, I did want to ask, what is your
11 method for the bow position? Do you have your tow line faked out
12 on deck, or are you one of the captains that likes to just go
13 straight from the wheel?

14 A. Do you mean, once I get the lineup, just pull it out?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Okay. I like having it paid out on deck.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Not -- now, I'm not having the full length of line out that
19 I'll normally keep the line at, which is about 150 feet. It'll be
20 about 50 to 75, maybe a little more. But that's just, again, the
21 way I was taught, and I like having it like that so it's not
22 immediately, you know, flying up as soon as we get the lineup.
23 But again, there's nothing wrong with that. That's just the way I
24 personally was taught.

25 Q. Yeah. I see -- we've spoken to a couple of captains now, and

1 I've noticed it's kind of just how your comfort level, which --
2 it's your right. You're the ones holding the license, right? So,
3 it's going to be different for everybody.

4 A. Oh, yeah, that's -- I'm sure some people would swear, you
5 know, no, absolutely, do not pay it out on deck, but some people
6 would say, you know, that's the only way you've got to do it. It
7 was just -- I see nothing inherently wrong with it. Now, I am
8 fully aware, if we have the line paid out on deck, one of -- I
9 hype this to my deckhands every time they go out: It's going to
10 be wet. Watch where you're stepping. Do not step over that line.
11 The second you get that messenger tied off, treat that as your
12 worst enemy. Do not get close to that. And then, we have that
13 choker line, and they stand away from it. But, you know, treat it
14 with the respect it's owed, because that can kill you.

15 Q. Absolutely. So, does that tow line float?

16 A. Yes, it does.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I think. I've never seen it in the water by itself. But
19 whenever we let the line down at the number one and the number
20 four spot, it will go in the water, and it will float. But, you
21 know, if it was just sitting by itself, I think it would, but I'm
22 not sure. I mean, yeah, I have to imagine it would.

23 [REDACTED] Jon, do you have any more questions? No?

24 MR. FURUKAWA: No.

25 [REDACTED] All right. I don't think I have any more

1 questions. I'm going to like stop the recording; and then, if you
2 want to just -- if you have anything for us or any questions, we
3 can chat, as well. So, it is 10:48 on August 18. This concludes
4 our recording.

5 (Whereupon, at 10:48 a.m., the interview was 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 Captain Joseph Dunn

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM035

PLACE: Corpus Christi, Texas

DATE: August 18, 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