

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ROBERT CENAC AND *MR. DAWG* COLLIDE
WITH HOUMA TWIN SPAN BRIDGE, IN
HOUMA, LOUISIANA ON MARCH 6, 2022

Accident No.: DCA22FM012

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Interview of: TRAVIS TATE, Captain
Robert Cenac

United States Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit
Houma, Louisiana

Thursday,
March 17, 2022

APPEARANCES:

MARCEL L. MUISE, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DEREK JOHNSTON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit
Houma, Louisiana

CWO [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigating Officer
United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit
Houma, Louisiana

MILES THOMAS
(On behalf of Mr. Tate)

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I N T E R V I E W

(9:45 a.m. CDT)

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2
3 LT [REDACTED] Name is Lieutenant [REDACTED] with Marine Safety Unit
4 Houma Investigations. The date is March 17, 2022. We are
5 currently at Marine Safety Unit Houma in Louisiana. The time is
6 9:45. This is going to be an interview of Travis Tate.

7 Travis, if I could go ahead and have you say your full name
8 and your position?

9 MR. TATE: Travis Philip Tate, tow boat captain. *Robert*
10 *Cenac.*

11 LT [REDACTED] And if I could go ahead and have everybody just
12 introduce themselves around the room, please?

13 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise with the National
14 Transportation Safety Board.

15 MR. JOHNSTON: Derek Johnston, National Transportation Safety
16 Board.

17 CWO [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] U.S. Coast Guard Office, Houma.

18 MR. THOMAS: Miles Thomas. I represent Mr. Tate.

INTERVIEW OF TRAVIS TATE

19
20 BY LT [REDACTED]

21 Q. And again, with your consent, Travis, I'd like to go ahead
22 and record this interview?

23 A. Yes, that's fine.

24 Q. Okay. And again, the purpose of this recording is for the
25 investigation into the bridge allision that occurred with the

1 crane barge *Mr. Dawg*, which was in tow with the vessel, *Robert*
2 *Cenac*, on March 6, 2022.

3 So first, Travis, if you don't mind kind of giving me your
4 background. So tell me a little bit about yourself, what licenses
5 you hold, what type of endorsements that you hold right now.

6 A. I'm 42 years old from Lockport. I have 100-ton master, 200-
7 ton mate, western rivers, and had a tankerman's license, let that
8 expire some years ago. And experience is 23 years. My license
9 was -- I got my license in '01. I think it's the fifth issue --

10 Q. Fifth issue.

11 A. And worked for about three different companies in the recent
12 years. Left for different particular reasons, but none -- first
13 time ever deal with an incident, for sure.

14 Q. Okay. So this is the first marine casualty that you've been
15 involved in?

16 A. Yes, definitely.

17 Q. All right. What type of marine training have you completed?

18 A. Well, the initial class at the technical college to get my
19 license, and then some simulator classes in Houston, refresher
20 courses at *Cenac Marine* some years ago, survival training, CPR,
21 all the general stuff that comes with carrying a license.

22 Q. Okay. And how long have you had your license for?

23 A. I was 21, so 22 years.

24 Q. Twenty-two? And what other companies did you say you worked
25 for in the past?

1 A. I worked at Central Boat Rentals in Berwick, Cenac Towing. I
2 worked for Trailer Brothers, which was a construction company when
3 they was building the Leeville Bridge. And I think that's it.
4 Caillou Island.

5 Q. Okay. And how long have you worked with Caillou Island.

6 A. Thirteen years.

7 Q. Same position?

8 A. Yes. Yeah, I was hired on as captain>

9 Q. Okay. And how long have you been onboard their *Robert Cenac*
10 for?

11 A. I was onboard for -- about two years ago, I was onboard for
12 almost a year, and then I was out for a surgery. And then I've
13 been back onboard for about the last probably close to a year now.
14 I'm not sure exactly on the date.

15 Q. Okay. And what type of schedule do you usually work?

16 A. Seven and seven.

17 Q. Seven on, seven off?

18 A. Seven off, yeah.

19 Q. Okay. And where did you meet the *Robert Cenac* for the
20 voyage?

21 A. We got onboard at -- behind the office that week. We was in
22 between jobs, so we was just standing by behind the office doing
23 spot jobs around town.

24 Q. Okay. And how many trips have you made going through the
25 Houma twin spans?

1 A. Countless? Okay. So frequent --

2 Q. Twenty-two years' worth.

3 Q. Okay. So very familiar with the areas?

4 A. Very much so.

5 Q. Okay. And what type of vessels have you had previous
6 experience in towing?

7 A. So we did some offshore towing to Jacksonville and Miami.
8 I've been up the Ohio River, been to Brownsville, been to Florida,
9 two barges, three barges. One time we had five.

10 Q. What type of barges?

11 A. Some was deck barges, some was crane barges, some was red
12 flag barges. Anything and everything really. Dredge, dredges,
13 dredge pipe.

14 LT [REDACTED] Okay. Do you have any questions -- anyone have any
15 questions to ask right now?

16 MR. MUISE: Go ahead.

17 BY LT [REDACTED]

18 Q. Okay. Next we're going to go into the background of the
19 vessel and some of the standard features you might have on board
20 as well as some of the navigation information, okay?

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. And at any time, if there is anything that you're confused on
23 as far as the questions that we ask, ask for a clarification, and
24 if you don't know, just say you don't know --

25 A. Just don't know. All right.

1 Q. And that's fine.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. Did you know the height of the crane on board the *Mr. Dawg*?

4 A. No, I do not.

5 Q. Okay. So can you walk me through how you normally determine
6 the height of your tow prior to --

7 A. So what I did on this one, I usually compare it to the boat.
8 So the boat is a given, knowing that you're going to fit under the
9 bridge, obviously. So our boat is 39.8. We just call it 40 feet.
10 So I used our height of 40 feet as my, I guess, baseline. And
11 then I used that in comparison to the spuds, which I came up with
12 about 10 feet higher. So that was about 50. And then it looked
13 like the crane was about 10 feet higher than the spuds. So I
14 came up with roughly 60 feet of air draft, I guess you'd call it,
15 and all of the bridges are 72. So just using the years of
16 experience and my, my own judgment, that's what I came up with.

17 Q. So if you don't mind kind of explaining, when you say air
18 draft of 60 feet, where is that starting at? What --

19 A. That's from the water line.

20 Q. From the water line?

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Up 60 feet?

23 A. Correct, correct.

24 Q. Okay. So is that -- do you usually get that information from
25 somewhere or is this your normal process that you'll kind of take

1 an estimate of, you know --

2 A. So a couple of things. The spuds are always a given, as
3 well. On all of these spud barges, they travel up and down the
4 canals, go through tons of bridges. It's always a given that the
5 spuds are always going to fit under the bridge, just as the boat
6 is always going to fit under the bridge.

7 So I took that into consideration, as well, that, well, the
8 spuds will be good, and the crane looks, like I said, about 10
9 feet higher, so the crane will be good, as well. In all the years
10 that I've ever done it, I don't recall one single time ever
11 getting any original form or paperwork from the, from the dock, or
12 anything, giving us an exact height of anything, anything on the
13 barge.

14 Q. Has there ever been a time where you weren't exactly sure if
15 something was going to fit? I mean, do you have a process onboard
16 that, you know, this is who I need to call to get this
17 information, or anything like that?

18 A. No, I mean, not, not really, because it's all -- it always
19 fits. It's always, it's always loaded out, you know, like it
20 should be. It's just grab and go, you know? We just there to
21 pick up the barge and bring it to the next location. That's kind
22 of just what we do, you know?

23 Q. Did the stowage of the crane barge look different from any
24 other time that you've seen them?

25 A. Not at all. Never. It was -- it just looked like any other

1 crane barge. I actually met up with two other boats that had some
2 the next day, and they kind of just looked just like what we have.
3 It's just a crane barge, boomed down, ready to go.

4 Q. And have you ever towed the *Mr. Dawg* before?

5 A. No, no.

6 Q. Okay. So this was the first time with *Mr. Dawg*?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay. And can you tell me a little bit about the *Robert*
9 *Cenac*? Does it have two wheels?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Are they fixed?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Does the vessel have flanking rudders?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Two engines?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Do you know the horsepower in the maker?

18 A. Thirteen-twenty horsepower. And it's a Cummings is the
19 engine.

20 Q. What type of clutches does the *Cenac* have?

21 A. I'm not sure on the gear ratios.

22 Q. Okay. So how do you go forward to reverse on the *Robert*
23 *Cenac*?

24 A. Throttles in the wheelhouse.

25 Q. In your opinion, how does the tug handle overall?

- 1 A. Great.
- 2 Q. Does the tug have a radar?
- 3 A. Yes, two.
- 4 Q. Two radars?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. What range were they set at? Do you remember?
- 7 A. Should have been a half and a quarter, one on a half mile,
8 one on a quarter mile.
- 9 Q. So how do you determine what you're going to put your radars
10 at?
- 11 A. It depends the size of the canal you're in. Like, if it was
12 in the river where it's wide, it'd probably be three-quarters or
13 one mile, but that wouldn't work in the canal. You wouldn't see
14 enough. So you got to zoom it in and scale down.
- 15 Q. Okay. Do you use a charting system
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. What type of charting system do you use?
- 18 A. Rose Point.
- 19 Q. Rose Point? Is there paper charts also on board?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. And do you use the paper charts, as well?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. No? Do you make any updates to the paper charts?
- 24 A. We update it on Rose Point.
- 25 Q. Okay. So everything --

- 1 A. Electronically, yeah.
- 2 Q. -- is updated through Rose Point?
- 3 A. Yes, once a seek --
- 4 Q. Okay. Do you have to -- once a week?
- 5 A. Yeah.
- 6 Q. Do you remember the last update that was made to --
- 7 A. We do it on -- it comes out -- I think the new one comes out
8 on Wednesdays. We have an alarm set on the boat phone, and they
9 send it to us in a e-mail, and then I just save it to the
10 computer, and then it updates to the chart. No, I can't exactly
11 say what date it was in reference to that week. I came on
12 Thursday. Probably didn't update it yet when I was on board
13 because it -- I'm not sure. It should have come up the following
14 Tuesday, which was two days after the incident, so --
- 15 Q. Is the crew that you were with the only crew that is assigned
16 on board the *Robert Cenac*, or do you have another crew that -- you
17 know, when you're not working?
- 18 A. Swaps out, yeah, yeah, we swap out.
- 19 Q. So how do you identify if they've made their chart
20 corrections?
- 21 A. I can go and check, yeah, because it saves it in a file each
22 week that the updates are sent. You just click on the file, and
23 you can see. And it should have been done. I know it was,
24 because we do it routinely.
- 25 Q. Okay. Do you have VHF radios on board?

1 A. Yeah, two of them.

2 Q. Okay. And what channels do you have them sit on?

3 A. That's all situational, as well. That night would have been
4 13 and 23.

5 Q. Okay. Do you have a GPS on board?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Do you have a depth sounder?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Is the vessel capable of autopilot?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No? Do you have any redundant steering systems on board?

12 A. What that means, redundant?

13 Q. More than one steering system?

14 A. No. We have two steering pumps.

15 Q. Two pumps?

16 A. Yeah, yeah.

17 CWO [REDACTED] Well, a lot of times we'll also have them out
18 on the wings, bridge wings, where you can control also -- or on
19 the stern --

20 MR. TATE: Oh, on the stern. I got you. No, we don't have
21 that. Just two pumps, one station.

22 BY LT [REDACTED]

23 Q. Okay. Are you familiar with the towing gear on board the
24 *Robert Cenac*?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Can you describe it to me?

2 A. Inch -- it's one and one-eighth inch of Kevlar face wires,
3 140-feet long. And they was almost a year old. Eleven months was
4 on the tag, so they was definitely in good condition.

5 Q. Okay. So when you go to meet up to pick up a tow, are you
6 always using your towing gear on board the *Robert Cenac*?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. So where do the face wires connect on the vessel?

9 A. They go from the front deck to the barge and then back to the
10 boat. So it's two-part face wires to stainless bits on the boat.

11 Q. Okay. And were you involved in connecting the tug when it
12 took on the barge?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. And can you kind of go through your process for that?

15 A. So when we pulled up, the barges were side by side. So we
16 pulled up to the crane barge, and we dropped off all our rigging,
17 rachets, cables to put the two barges together. That way they
18 didn't have such a long way to carry. We caught a headline, and I
19 went out there and helped the guys put some rigging out, kind of
20 set everything up, and then we had to put the deck barge, which
21 was alongside, in front of the crane, and the guys put all their
22 cables, got everything tight. And then we went behind the crane,
23 made up to the boat to the crane, and then picked up Spuds (ph.)
24 and took off.

25 Q. Okay. And what do you know about the Houma twin spans?

- 1 A. In reference to what? What you --
- 2 Q. The characteristics of the bridge itself.
- 3 A. Like the -- like how it's constructed, and stuff?
- 4 Q. Height, clearance --
- 5 A. Well, I know, yeah, height is 72.8, and then I think it's 150
- 6 wide, if I'm not mistaken.
- 7 Q. Okay. And were you aware of that prior to going under?
- 8 A. Oh, yeah.
- 9 LT [REDACTED] Okay. Is there any questions before we --
- 10 MR. MUISE: About the boat?
- 11 LT [REDACTED] Yes.
- 12 MR. MUISE: Just a few follow-ups there.
- 13 BY MR. MUISE:
- 14 Q. The tip of the -- do you know the beam, how wide, how wide --
- 15 A. Twenty-eight --
- 16 Q. How about the --
- 17 A. Sixty long, twenty-eight wide, and six foot draft.
- 18 Q. Six foot draft? How about the barges? How wide are -- I
- 19 have their lengths. I don't have the beam.
- 20 A. The deck barge was 30. The crane was 60. And I think the
- 21 deepest draft on the barges was on the crane at four feet.
- 22 Q. Four feet? Okay. The GPS antenna that feeds your AIS, do
- 23 you know where that is?
- 24 A. It's on top of the wheelhouse. I know that.
- 25 Q. Right on the center line, right in the middle? It should be

1 programmed into your --

2 A. I don't think it's, I don't think it's in the middle, but
3 it -- the computer has it as an offset to compensate it for not
4 being in the middle.

5 Q. Right, right. So when you're building your tow, do you have
6 to go in there and change the length of the -- in your AIS?

7 A. Oh, yeah, yeah, you change the destination and your tow
8 dimensions, and stuff.

9 Q. Your tow dimensions get changed? Okay.

10 A. Correct, correct.

11 Q. That was my question. The radars, were they blocked at all
12 by the crane barge?

13 A. It was picking up good.

14 Q. The radars, are they -- were they blocked at all by the crane
15 barge?

16 A. it was picking up good, because sometimes you will have
17 something, and it'll interfere with the signal, and stuff, but no,
18 it was --

19 Q. How about visibility? Like, just line of sight. Could you
20 see fine for --

21 A. Not 100 percent. The boom, it reduced it to 70 percent
22 maybe, something like --

23 Q. Okay. You mentioned the charts. Are you familiar with the
24 Army Corps Macy's map books for the Mississippi and the
25 Atchafalaya.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And it's got diagrams of bridges? Is there anything like
3 that for the intercoastal waterway, as well?

4 A. Yeah, you can, you can click -- well, I'm not, I'm not sure
5 about the book itself. I know on the chart, you can click on the
6 bridge and it'll show you the exact bridge, dimensions,
7 structural, all that stuff.

8 Q. In, in Rose Point?

9 A. Correct. Now, whether they have -- I'm not sure about the
10 actual book itself.

11 Q. Okay. That's all I have for now, actually.

12 BY MR. JOHNSTON:

13 Q. I got a couple questions here for you. The 24 hours before,
14 can you kind of just walk us through what you were doing to get
15 ready to get underway --

16 A. You're testing my memory.

17 Q. I know, I know, I know.

18 A. Oh, let me see. Twenty-four hours before, so what we did.
19 Oh, we, we had a job in Bayou Black at the scrapyard. It was just
20 a daytime job, so we left, left at about three that morning. This
21 was the day before, right?

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Left about three that morning, went to Mars in Bayou Black,
24 worked with a couple of other boats, shifted a big derrick barge,
25 and came back to the office light boat (ph.) and that's where we

1 stayed until we got the call for this job at 2100 Saturday night.

2 Q. And when you got back from that job, did you go home or stay
3 at the office?

4 A. No, we stayed onboard.

5 Q. Get some rest?

6 A. We stayed on the boat, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. When did the call come to do the --

8 A. 2100.

9 Q. 2100?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. That was the, yeah, Saturday night.

13 LT [REDACTED] Okay. And we'll go into some of them -- details
14 following up --

15 MR. JOHNSTON: You got it, yeah.

16 LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] did you have anything prior to --

17 BY CWO [REDACTED]

18 Q. Yeah, all the times that you've done that transit, have you
19 noticed just roughly how much does the tide change in that area?

20 A. Not much at all.

21 Q. A couple feet or not even that in that area?

22 A. Inches.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. If you go down towards Dulac or Cocodrie, and stuff --

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- you'll have more drastic tide change, but it's pretty
2 consistent here in Houma.

3 Q. And then you mentioned the radars that are set up on the
4 bridge, and everything, with you. Do you tend to use experience
5 more than sitting there following the radars or a little bit of
6 mixture of both?

7 A. I feel like I'm pretty well-mixed on both of them. I
8 definitely probably use the radar more than other people. But I
9 feel like I'm -- it's kind of situational, but I definitely use
10 them pretty regularly.

11 Q. Okay. And then last question I have for this part was you
12 mentioned that you knew right away what the lengths of the barges
13 are and what their drafts were, and everything. Is that all
14 communicated to you before the pickups or did you determine that
15 when you arrived?

16 A. I determined it when I arrived. Again, it's just experience.
17 I mean, when you see the little deck barge, you know it's a 120 by
18 30, and when I seen the crane barge, I didn't know exactly how
19 wide it was, but I knew it was wider than 54 and that we couldn't
20 bring the barges side by side because that'll put us, like, 90
21 feet wide, or something.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. So just experience. I knew it was more than 54, and it ended
24 up it was 60. So, yeah, but I didn't have anything saying what
25 they was.

1 Q. So when the company receives the job tasks, and everything,
2 do you know if the barge heights, the lengths, the drafts, and all
3 that, are included or --

4 A. I don't know.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I can't say. I would have to assume they was, but I can't
7 say for sure what the office part, you know --

8 Q. What they received?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Thank you.

11 BY LT [REDACTED]

12 Q. Okay. So next we're going to go into some of the incident
13 details or events leading up to that day. So, again, can you just
14 kind of go over where you met the *Robert Cenac* at?

15 A. I was already on board. I got on board that Thursday.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So Saturday night, we was on board just hanging out, watching
18 TV, and getting ready for bed that night.

19 Q. Okay. And can you kind of -- at this point, I was going to
20 let you kind of go ahead and explain --

21 A. The storyline?

22 Q. The storyline, exactly.

23 A. Yeah. So Joel and I was in the room stitching TV just like I
24 said, getting ready. The boat phone rang. It was Little Al. It
25 was 9:00. And he said they had two barges, the *Mr. Dawg* and *MT*

1 26, I think. It was at Eagle dry dock. To pick those up and
2 bring them to LOOP facility in Galliano.

3 And I said all right. I said -- I asked him about if we
4 could even get there since the storm. The marsh is just
5 different. I don't know if you can pass. I hadn't went to that
6 exact location at LOOP in a few years.

7 And he said, yeah, the channel was dredged, barge was ready,
8 everything was good to go as soon as possible. "You all just --
9 you all grab that and head to LOOP." I was like, "All right."
10 And so we get the guys downstairs cranked up, went over there,
11 built tow, like I said earlier, dropped off the rig, and all that
12 stuff, made up the boat, and then we took off.

13 We swapped watch -- it was I think 2349 on the computer is
14 when we swapped watch. Went over the orders. Told them, you
15 know, my -- how I came up with the height, and everything would be
16 good to go, we should fit, no troubles. Swapped out. Went
17 downstairs.

18 I told Devin to go check on the coupling, which is all the
19 cables and ratchets we put together, because after you build it
20 and then you steer on it, they'll get a little loose. So I told
21 him to go back out there, tighten up the rachets, bring the radio,
22 get with Joel, and see if he wants you to stay out there and keep
23 an eye on things, or whatever. And he said all right. And that
24 was pretty much it. Used the bathroom for a minute, and then I
25 went, I went and went to bed. I think that's it. I can't think

1 of anything, anything else.

2 And so I was in bed I guess about 30, 40 minutes, and I felt
3 us, you know, contact the bridge. And I was dumbfounded. I was
4 like there's no freaking way we just hit the bridge. I was --
5 because we shouldn't have. It was -- we wasn't that tall. We
6 wasn't that high. And of course we did. And so, yeah.

7 Q. So if you don't mind continuing on, what happened after?

8 A. So after that, I grabbed my life jacket, and I went upstairs.
9 And the port cable at the coupling had broke from the crane to the
10 deck barge, so the deck barge was swinging around this way. And I
11 asked Joel if he had it under control. He said, "Yeah, I got it.

12 So I went on the deck with the guys. We got the crane barge
13 over to the side and dropped the spuds. That way we'd have
14 something stationary to work with; things wasn't just kind of
15 floating. And then while they was trying to get the deck barge
16 back, I called Houma PD, because I felt like we needed to close
17 the bridge. I didn't know the status of the damage, or whatnot.
18 So that's the first ones -- I think that's the first ones I
19 called. I think I called them before Little Al.

20 But yeah, it was first a government entity, I guess. Called
21 Houma PD, told them about it. Then I called Al. And then I
22 called you guys. And everything after that is a million phone
23 calls. I talked to Bayou Dularge Bridge. I talked to -- I don't
24 know -- must have been four or five different Coast Guard
25 officials. Talked to Mike a few times. I talked to Rene, the guy

1 that works for Sea Level, with the crane barge equipment. I
2 talked to a lot of people.

3 Q. What did you speak with Rene about if you can recall?

4 A. Rene was, Rene was for a crane operator to boom the crane
5 down the rest of the way so we can continue on the -- and
6 eventually it ended up being a few other things. The actual
7 location we was going to, the boom angle on the crane, which was
8 at 30 degrees, and I was told it should have been at 5 degrees,
9 the boom, which wasn't information I had any clue about when we
10 took off, or nothing, but -- the crane operator to come and finish
11 the trip.

12 I don't know. I can't think of anything else we discussed
13 offhand. It's just so much that -- a lot happened, you know?
14 That's, that's what I can remember that I can think that we talked
15 about. Oh, boom damage, which we didn't see any. We talked about
16 that. That was it.

17 Q. Okay. And who had mentioned that -- how was it determined
18 that the boom degrees was 30 degrees, the boom angle?

19 A. So when the crane operator came to boom down so we could
20 continue to voyage, he -- it's the crane operator that told me
21 that, that it was at 30 degrees when they got there. And when he
22 boomed it down for us to continue, he put it down to 5 degrees of
23 boom.

24 Q. So who told you that it's supposed to be at 5 degrees?

25 A. The crane operator.

- 1 Q. The crane operator?
- 2 A. Yeah, yeah, because he's the one that came -- he's the one
3 that knows the boom angle and crane stuff, yeah.
- 4 Q. Okay. Is there any way on board to determine the height of
5 the crane?
- 6 A. On board the vessel?
- 7 Q. Um-hum.
- 8 A. No. The crane operator -- like, the crane will tell you the
9 height off the water from the tip of the boom, but no way on the
10 boat to determine that.
- 11 Q. Okay. So who was the first one, again, to tell you that --
12 to determine the height of that crane?
- 13 A. Determine the height of the crane?
- 14 Q. Um-hum.
- 15 A. It had to be Rene or the crane operator, but they never -- we
16 never communicated the height of it. There was -- we never said
17 numbers of, "It's 70 feet off the water." There was none of that
18 communicated. He just said the angle and --
- 19 Q. But that was afterwards, after the incident?
- 20 A. Yeah, this was after the incident.
- 21 Q. Okay. Were there any problems with the towing vessel that
22 you were aware of?
- 23 A. Uh-uh, no.
- 24 Q. Okay. And then was visibility restricted in any way?
- 25 A. Slightly with the boom and the crane, but no weather, and

1 stuff. It was all clear, good to go.

2 Q. Okay. How much sleep do you think you got prior to the
3 incident?

4 A. We work a six-hour shift, so -- we work six on and six off.
5 So, I mean, I didn't get a solid six hours. Probably four, I
6 guess.

7 Q. And during the previous two hours, what were you doing?

8 A. Nothing. We was just standing by at the office, so ate
9 supper, watched TV. I think we installed a floodlight. Just
10 random standby stuff.

11 Q. Okay. Can you go into your normal watch routine relief that
12 is conducted on board?

13 A. Like conversation?

14 Q. Anything to do with --

15 A. Changing watch?

16 Q. Changing the watch.

17 A. Oh, okay. Yeah, so I usually get up. We change watch on the
18 12 and 1800, and then midnight and 0600. And usually get up about
19 30 minutes early, you know, get ready for watch, eat, restrooms,
20 stuff like that, head upstairs, and then you just discuss what's
21 going on, where are we headed, any -- you know, the barge we have,
22 who's up on watch, current status of what's going on at the boat,
23 anything at the office, traffic around, how many boats they have
24 at the locks, just general stuff like that.

25 And that's all discussed. Like, we'll discuss all that

1 before we actually swap in the chair. And then just swap spots in
2 the chair, fix the radars how you like it, move the computer
3 screen, and that's pretty much it. We'll -- couple of forms on
4 the computer. There's always computer stuff.

5 Q. What type of forms do you usually do?

6 A. We have an "Assuming the Watch" form, which is just really a
7 list of everything that I just said. You just check it off,
8 showing that you talked about this, talked about that -- all kind
9 of stuff (indiscernible) the logbook, which we didn't have -- what
10 we had that night. I did the voyage plan before we took off, so
11 we didn't have that. That was already done.

12 Q. And what is the barge plan? Can you go into --

13 A. The voyage plan?

14 Q. Oh, the voyage plan?

15 A. Voyage plan.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And that's it swapping watch.

18 Q. Okay. What type of information do you have included into
19 your voyage plan?

20 A. That's going to have barge information, boat information,
21 where we going, prevailing weather, locks, bridges, just general
22 stuff, you know, between point A and point B that you may
23 encounter along the way.

24 Q. Okay. And who typically fills out that form?

25 A. It's both of us. I mean, not together at the same time.

1 Like, I filled it out this time, because I was the one -- you fill
2 it out before you leave, before you get underway, of course. So
3 he was in bed. So I'll fill it out, but then when you swap, it'll
4 be reviewed, and then discussed --

5 Q. Do you know if it was reviewed that evening before -- swap?

6 A. It was reviewed, yes.

7 Q. Okay. So Joel reviewed it, then?

8 A. Right, right.

9 Q. Did he have any questions on it?

10 A. Uh-uh. It's all normal, normal stuff. And a lot of it is
11 involved in "Assuming the Watch" form. It's kind of repetitive a
12 little, but yeah, it was good to go.

13 Q. Okay. And did you or Joel during that time, during the swap
14 of the watch, have any concerns with going under the Twin Span?

15 A. Not at all.

16 Q. Okay. So was there any discussion on that at all?

17 A. No. I mean, we just said, you know, good to go.

18 Q. Okay. All right. Is there any company policies describing
19 the watch relief process or procedures that you have?

20 A. I can't recite it. I'm not sure. I know there is, and it's
21 in the form on the computer. Now, exactly what the policy says I
22 can't, I can't tell you, but I know the form is based off of
23 company policy. Put it that way.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you. How long was the swap that you conducted,
25 the watch relief on board?

1 A. Ten minutes, eight minutes, ten minutes, because like I say,
2 I think he assumed the watch at 2349, and then I was off watch for
3 midnight, and the incident I think was 0038, so eight minutes, ten
4 minutes, something like that.

5 Q. Okay. Is there any specific company policy for bridge
6 transits that you've seen?

7 A. I can't honestly say. I know there is.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know if there is any policy that tells you how
9 to verify your vertical or horizontal clearances for any of your
10 tows?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. You had mentioned airgap, I think, in some of our
13 previous conversations, the airgap?

14 A. Oh, yeah, air drafts on the -- yeah, we had talked about
15 that. The -- yes, on the barge plan, it says height of vessel, so
16 I put 40 feet, because it was the height of the vessel, and that's
17 just what you put, the height of the vessel. I had no information
18 on the barge, and even if I did, it's still the height of the
19 vessel, not the height of the tow, or anything like that, you
20 know. So I put 40 feet on there.

21 Q. Okay. So with the airgap, can you describe to me what
22 exactly -- what you consider an airgap to be? Do you know what
23 that is?

24 A. It's from the water line to the top of the mast post, which
25 would be the air draft, they call it.

1 Q. Okay. And if you ever had a concern about not being able to
2 transit through a bridge, who would you call from your company to
3 discuss that?

4 A. I guess I'd call Al or Mike.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah, I'd call one of those.

7 Q. Okay. But there's no specifically policy on who to call?

8 A. It would be Mike or Al.

9 Q. It'd be Mike or Al? Okay.

10 A. Yeah, yeah. It's not a lot of any other -- they in charge of
11 operations, you know, so --

12 Q. So as far as, just to kind of go over this one more time, who
13 had the responsibility of completing the voyage plan? You said
14 it's either one of you can complete the voyage plan?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Usually whoever is on watch is the one to --

17 A. Whoever is on watch before the voyage, you know, starts would
18 do it, and then when you come -- when the other guy comes on
19 watch, you just review it.

20 Q. Okay. How many people were on board?

21 A. Four.

22 Q. Four? And was there anyone else on watch at the time of the
23 incident?

24 A. Yeah, Devin was on watch, yeah, which he ended up -- he was
25 on the barge, and stuff.

1 Q. So Devin and Joel?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. Okay. And do you usually have somebody or is it company
4 policy to have someone out on one of the deck barges as you're
5 going through bridges?

6 A. Right, right, yes.

7 Q. Okay. So you always have somebody out there just --

8 A. Going through bridges, locks. It's common practice for sure.
9 We always out there. That's why we was on 23 on the radio
10 channels, 13 for traffic and 23 for the deckhands out there.

11 Q. Okay. Do you remember what time you left the bridge? So as
12 soon as you conducted the watch relief, did you leave immediately
13 following that?

14 A. Yeah, I went in my room downstairs.

15 Q. Okay. Were there any other passing arrangements made with
16 any other vessels --

17 A. They didn't have nobody around. They had a boat that caught
18 up behind us that Joel, you know, told them to go ahead and stop
19 after everything, but they didn't have any traffic coming through
20 Houma, or anything, at the time.

21 Q. Okay. Were you aware of any current while you were on the
22 bridge at all?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Do you remember what speed you were going?

25 A. Somewheres around three, three miles an hour, two and a half.

1 I know we was running slow for sure, because you just always run
2 slow through Houma, and stuff like that, so about two and a half,
3 three miles an hour.

4 Q. Okay. And does that get logged anywhere?

5 A. No. We don't log down our speed, or anything.

6 Q. Okay. Was the vessel getting set in any particular
7 direction?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. And visibility, again, that night?

10 A. Weather, everything was clear, zero wind.

11 Q. Do you remember the air temperature? If you had to -- was it
12 cool out? Was it hot?

13 A. Oh, probably -- it wasn't hot, because I was out there
14 with -- I guess maybe 70, something like that.

15 Q. Okay. And again, some of these are redundant -- I
16 apologize --

17 A. That's fine.

18 Q. But at any point, did you get a sense that the crane was not
19 stored properly?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. What was the movement of the tow boat upon impact? I
22 know you were in the rack at the time, but you just felt a bump
23 and that was it?

24 A. Right. Yup.

25 Q. Okay. Were there any alarms that were sounded?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. Does the vessel have a safety management system?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Is there any section on bridge transit?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Is there a section in navigation?
- 7 A. Just general navigation?
- 8 Q. Any. If you're unaware, you can say you're not sure.
- 9 A. No, I'm not sure, yeah.
- 10 Q. Okay. And what about is there a section discussing how to
11 make up a tow?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Is there a section or guidance from the company on the amount
14 of horsepower that the towing vessel should have for a certain
15 sized tow?
- 16 A. Not that I'm aware of.
- 17 Q. Do you remember how long ago you reviewed the safety
18 management system on board?
- 19 A. Not that long, because we did a audit -- six months
- 20 Q. And what happens during the audit?
- 21 A. It was for the customer that we was going to work for. They
22 just come and check everything on the boat, make sure pumps work,
23 valves, warning signs, stickers, just go over the boat before they
24 hire it, make sure it's in good shape, no rust, engines.
- 25 Q. Do they ever quiz you on -- or the crew on knowledge of the

1 safety management system?

2 A. Yeah, they'll ask the deck hands, and stuff, sometimes, and
3 we'll have to maybe find a policy for this. So it's usually
4 pretty quick, because everything is in order, you know, so it's
5 easier for them. They just breeze through, look at this, and --

6 Q. Okay. Do you remember what client it was that you did the
7 safety management system review on?

8 A. I think it was for Kirby (ph.), but I'm not sure.

9 Q. Okay. And in your professional opinion, is there anything
10 that should be in the policy that would have or may have prevented
11 the incident?

12 A. I think the companies that load the crane barges need to
13 supply some sort of bill of lading or something that -- this is
14 the height of this, this is the height of that. But I've never
15 seen -- in all my years, I've never seen anybody do that. But
16 maybe you guys, you know, might be something to suggest that --
17 they load a crane on a barge, they need to have some paperwork
18 saying this is this high.

19 Q. Okay. And --

20 A. That way we know what we got. Do you know what I mean?
21 That's just a suggestion.

22 Q. And at any time, if there's -- if someone deems that
23 something is not a safe practice that's being conducted on board,
24 what is the policy?

25 A. They got a stop work authority.

1 Q. Okay. And can you talk to me about the stop work authority?

2 A. It's just anything you see unsafe, sketchy, or not quite
3 sure, just you're free to stop it, whether you're a deckhand,
4 captain, you know?

5 Q. Okay. And then what happens from there?

6 A. You figure out how to resolve the issue, and then once it's
7 resolved, you continue on. You don't get in trouble or, you know,
8 it's nothing held against you.

9 Q. Okay. And have you ever had to employ, in your experience,
10 the stop work?

11 A. I never did.

12 Q. Have you ever seen it conducted?

13 A. Not on board that I was on. I mean, I knows it's used, you
14 know, but we always pretty safe.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Never had to shut nothing down because it was unsafe. We all
17 experienced in what we do, and just go with the job, go with the
18 flow.

19 LT [REDACTED] Any further questions.

20 BY MR. MUISE:

21 Q. Sure. Captain, what's the relationship between Caillou
22 Island and Al Cenac Towing?

23 A. It's the same owner. It's just a different division of
24 boats. So they -- how can you put it? I don't know. It's --

25 Q. Caillou Island is part of Al --

1 A. Well, Al Cenac will be part of Caillou Island.

2 Q. Okay. All right.

3 A. It would be -- Al Cenac is the most recent, and it's just a
4 division that they created to decide, and they just assign a few
5 boats that work for Al Cenac Towing and other boats are Caillou
6 Island Towing.

7 Q. Okay. So your safety management system in all the forms,
8 does that come from Caillou Island?

9 A. Right. And they just, I guess, company-wide they just -- I
10 don't know how they did it, but I guess they just carried it over
11 to the Al Cenac Towing side. Al Cenac will be different because
12 they, they do a lot of red flag tows, and stuff.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So the Caillou Island side -- Al Cenac side will have stuff
15 that Caillou Island side might necessarily not have because
16 Caillou Island doesn't push some red flag tows, and stuff like
17 that. So there will be a slight difference between the two, but
18 basic company policy will still be the same across the board.

19 Q. The same. Okay. I haven't seen the *Mr. Dawg*. Is this --
20 the crane, does somebody drive it on the barge or it is it part of
21 the barge or is it --

22 A. No. So they -- whenever they load them, they'll push the
23 barge -- the boat will push the barge against the dock, and
24 they'll put some wooden mats, sometimes some steel mats. And you
25 just pushing the barge on the dock, and they'll just track the

1 crane from the bank on the mats onto the barge.

2 Q. Okay. So it is a tracked crane --

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. -- and not a fixed pedestal crane?

5 A. Correct. It's not a fixed pedestal. It's a tracked --

6 Q. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for that. So when you're

7 pushing these barges -- again, I haven't seen your voyage

8 plan -- so on the form, is there a spot for you to put things like

9 beam and draft, and air draft for --

10 A. And tow dimensions, and all that.

11 Q. It's all on there? Is air draft on there, too?

12 A. Right. Vessel air draft.

13 Q. But not air draft for each barge?

14 A. No. And that's situational, as well, because we always have
15 a red flag tow, so nothing we ever push is higher than our boat.

16 We always the highest point. So you put vessel air draft, 40

17 feet. Situational. This was different. We had a crane barge.

18 Of course it was higher than the boat. But on that barge plan,

19 it's not the height of your tow, height of your crane, height of

20 the spud. It's the height of your vessel.

21 Q. Do you get written dispatch orders from the company to pick
22 up -- to make up a tow, or --

23 A. Usually not. It depends. Sometimes. Like, with certain red
24 flag tows and barges, we'll get barge numbers, pick up here to go

25 load, go to this dock and discharge, stuff like that. This one in

1 particular, it was just a phone call. We didn't get an e-mail, or
2 anything like that.

3 Q. And did I hear you say you were going to Galliano?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So that's down the intercoastal and then take a right at
6 Larose?

7 A. No. So there's a few ways. There's actually three, I guess.
8 Our barge was 60 feet wide, so we couldn't go down Bayou Lafourche
9 because of the locks in Golden Meadow, they only 57. So you go to
10 Laffite and Bayou Perot, and you can go Turtle Bay and Little Lake
11 and come on the back side of Galliano to get to the LOOP facility.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It's -- by highway, you'd be coming on the -- from the 308
14 side.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. If you're going south on 308, we'd be coming from the left in
17 Galliano. If you go down the bayou, of course you coming down
18 Bayou Lafourche, or you could come down to Houma Nav and go to
19 Fourchon.

20 Q. Right --

21 A. And then come north up the bayou, so that's three ways,
22 technically, to get there.

23 Q. But you were heading past Larose and then take a right?

24 A. Correct. Which ultimately was not the route to go.

25 Q. So if I'm reading this right, and for the record, I'm looking

1 at the NOAA (indiscernible) chart. It looks like the next couple
2 of bridges were the same height, 73 feet? Are these accurate?

3 A. Yeah, they got the West Larose Bridge and the East --

4 Q. And there's another one just past the Twin Spans? Is that
5 another lift bridge?

6 A. Prospect Bridge.

7 Q. And they're all about the same height?

8 A. All standard.

9 Q. Is the chart correct on -- is any of these vertical
10 clearances wrong --

11 A. Not that I'm aware of. They 72 feet, as far as I always
12 knew. They always was. West Larose, on my voyage plan -- I'd
13 have to look at it -- I believe the lowest elevation clearance I
14 had as 36, because that is the lowest point, technically, until
15 West Larose opens the bridge. Then it opens to 72 feet.

16 Q. Okay. And I just lost you here. Just give me -- bear with
17 me. Sorry.

18 A. That's all right.

19 Q. Here we go. That's the intercoastal. Again, I'm not
20 familiar with the area, so just I have a couple questions here.

21 A. If they got the -- if you see a mile marker, it'll be around
22 the 33 for the West Larose Bridge.

23 Q. Okay. Can you tell me what's going on here? And for the
24 record, we're looking at a Google Earth overlay, with AIS data
25 from the Robertson NAC (ph.), actually, courtesy of the Coast

- 1 Guard.
- 2 A. Right.
- 3 Q. Is this Cenac's facility here?
- 4 A. No, this is going to be Eagle dry dock. This is -- all of
5 that commotion is just me moving the boat around, building tow.
6 And I came here.
- 7 Q. Yeah, what's going on here?
- 8 A. Well, I just came out -- it's shallow. All of this over
9 here, going this way I guess would be the red side if you coming
10 in. This is all shallow water, so you got to stay close to the
11 bank this way. And when you come down, you just come around the
12 point and head north into, into Houma Nav.
- 13 Q. Okay. And this is why I was asking you about the antenna
14 position.
- 15 A. Oh, I got you.
- 16 Q. So if your antenna is not centered, so this isn't going to be
17 accurate.
- 18 A. Right.
- 19 Q. So no problems going through that bridge there?
- 20 A. No. Easy peasy.
- 21 Q. And everything else looks -- everything else, this is all we
22 have there.
- 23 A. Right.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Yeah, and then that's all the movement of the boat back and

1 forth after the incident. Yeah, they have a couple of beacons
2 over here. It don't -- it's not, it's not showing them. I don't
3 know if you can zoom, but they have a red, a red beacon somewhere
4 around here, and then a green here. And it shows not to go too
5 far, because this is all mudflat. It's shallow. So you leave
6 here, stay close, and just make the turn going up.

7 Q. Okay. And you build tow here at the dry dock?

8 A. Correct. That's where we built tow, and then that's where I
9 departed, made my turn, came through the bridge, the Houma Nav
10 Bridge, and we swapped watch somewheres in the vicinity of the
11 intersection right there, the Houma Nav/ICW intersection.

12 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

13 MR. MUISE: Derek?

14 MR. JOHNSTON: Nope, I don't have anything else. Thanks for
15 asking.

16 MR. TATE: No problem.

17 BY MR. [REDACTED]

18 Q. You mentioned that you had Devin take the radio and go out
19 and talk to Joel to see if he was needed for lookout?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. Would Devin have been on the barge or on the vessel, stayed
22 on the vessel?

23 A. On the barge.

24 Q. On the barge?

25 A. Right.

1 Q. And that would have been the deck barge all the way forward?

2 A. No, because the deck barge was loaded with I-beams, and I
3 didn't want them on that barge. It wasn't strapped down or
4 anything. The I-beams, they was just kind of stacked.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So he definitely stayed on the crane barge.

7 Q. On the crane barge?

8 A. Crane barge had a lot of space on deck, no hazard, or
9 anything.

10 Q. So if he was maintaining a lookout for Joel at that time,
11 what would have been his job. Would he have been watching for the
12 pillars in the bridge, the --

13 A. All of it?

14 Q. Everything?

15 A. Everything. Just general lookout. Just keep a eye on, you
16 know, the fenders. The height would have been next to impossible,
17 but it was 180-foot boom on the crane, and you know, you can't,
18 you can't, you can't make that -- shoot. I can't think of the
19 word, but --

20 Q. The judgment?

21 A. Judgment with standing on the deck, looking up, and the
22 bridge, like, you can't -- just general lookout, you know?
23 Watching here, watching there, "Cap, you need to turn." Maybe you
24 going a little too far left, stuff like that.

25 Q. Okay. And as far as you're -- it was a great recommendation

1 to have the company -- the two companies let them know about the
2 heights, and stuff --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- when she asked you if there is anything. That's a great
5 recommendation. Now, do you recall seeing any kind of company
6 policy or the SMS, or any of your procedures, where there is a
7 cushion there? Like, if, for example, they said the crane is 70
8 feet and the bridge is 72 feet --

9 A. I don't know elevation. I know on draft, like, as far as
10 groundings, and stuff, I believe it's a two-foot cushion. So,
11 like, if in the chart, a canal says it's ten feet of water, you
12 can't load your barge more than eight. You have to have a two-
13 foot cushion. I can't honestly say about the air drafter. But I
14 do know about the grounding part.

15 Q. The last question I had: Who determined to do alcohol
16 testing? Was that the company calling you or did you make that
17 determination, and when was that done?

18 A. I did that one. We had talked about that one, as well. We
19 definitely was late on doing it. So with everything that was
20 going on, I believe it was 10:40 that we did our alcohol testing.
21 Supposed to be within eight hours. The incident was at midnight-
22 thirty, so 8:30 would have been our threshold, and I did it at,
23 like, 10:40. And I don't have -- I mean, it was just so much
24 going on, with phone calls and just dealing with everything, I
25 just -- I thought about it in the beginning. I'm like, "We got to

1 do alcohol test within this time." And then I thought about it
2 at, like, 10:00. I'm like, shoot, you know, so we did our alcohol
3 test, and --

4 Q. And that was -- was that logged in your logbook, and
5 everything, saying this is the time we conducted the alcohol
6 testing?

7 A. It should have been. I'm not sure if I wrote it or not. I
8 know we have the sort of form was used. It's a tear-off, carbon
9 copy. So a copy can be given, and then we would keep, you know,
10 the yellow page, or green, whatever color it is, on board.

11 Q. And that would have had the time?

12 A. And that would, yeah, definitely have the time. Whether I
13 logged it in the master log I'm not entirely sure.

14 CWO [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

15 LT [REDACTED] Um-hum.

16 BY LT [REDACTED]

17 Q. Okay. Couple last alibis. So this is a picture that I
18 received via e-mail from you. Can you just verify that this
19 is --

20 A. We laughed about it, because he used a ruler. I'm like you
21 don't have to draw engineered -- he took his time drawing us --

22 Q. So who actually drew this, then?

23 A. Devin drew it. So, yeah, it was funny. But -- so this was
24 the boat, and then this is the crane barge that we made up to, and
25 then this is the deck barge with the I-beams in the front. This

1 is the cable that stayed put that he drew, and then this is the
2 one that busted. So when we contacted the bridge, we brought the
3 spud barge towards the cardiovascular place, spudded it down.

4 Q. So if this is the bridge here, it would have been in this
5 format, is that correct?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Okay. All right.

8 BY MR. MUISE:

9 Q. Is the crane, is it chained down at all?

10 A. So they, what they do, they'll boom it down, and they drop
11 the main block and the headache ball, and they'll dog it off to
12 the crane itself. So there will be a long cable coming from
13 underneath the shack where the operator sits, and he'll boom down
14 and connect the hook to that cable, and it just holds the hook
15 from swinging in the wind, or anything like that.

16 Q. Is the hook or the crane itself chained to the barge, though?

17 A. They usually are. I can't recall if I saw it or not.

18 Sometime they'll have some pad eyes, and they'll use big turn
19 buckles.

20 Q. Right. So we didn't break any of those, though, when it hit
21 the --

22 A. Oh, no, no, no, none of that. I can't recall if I seen them
23 or not. I'm sure they was there, because they probably was there,
24 but I can't say if --

25 Q. Did the crane move at all on the barge when it hit the

1 bridge?

2 A. I'm not sure. From my thoughts of it, the way we hit, we
3 didn't hit, like, solid like hitting a tree with a car. It was a
4 slow-down, like it was spring-loaded. So to me it seems it barely
5 caught the bridge, and then the boom kind of came up a little and
6 was like a shock absorber. That's my philosophy on it. So it
7 wasn't just a dead stop from 60 to 0. It was kind of just a
8 gradual --

9 Q. Okay. Thanks again.

10 A. So that's how the impact was.

11 BY LT [REDACTED]

12 Q. Okay. And do you know about how long it took you to, once
13 you broke that face wire to maneuver and get the other barge?

14 A. Ten minutes. It didn't take us along at all.

15 Q. Okay. And do you remember what vessel was behind you at the
16 time?

17 A. No, no. There was -- no, because I hadn't even talked to --
18 we was going so slow, and he was going way faster, so he caught up
19 with us at some point. I don't remember who it was, though.

20 Q. Okay. And do you remember what time the crane operator ended
21 up coming on board?

22 A. Took back off at, like, 12:30. Must have been around 10
23 maybe that morning. I know it took a while.

24 Q. Do you remember his name?

25 A. No. I shook his hand, and he told me, but I don't.

1 Q. Okay. And do you recall who he worked for?

2 A. I don't know for sure. I'm assuming he worked for Sea Level,
3 but I'm not sure.

4 Q. Okay. So after the incident, you were able to secure the
5 deck barge after the face wire broke?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. And then from there, what took place?

8 A. I don't know in the order. I know they had a DOTD guy came
9 out. I was on the phone with him while we was shining the light
10 on the bridge. He was under the bridge kind of trying to look and
11 see. And then I believe that was it after that. We just hung
12 out, and we went back and made up to the barge like it was.
13 Everything was put back just like before. And then we just stayed
14 there, made phone calls, and went through the process.

15 Q. Okay. So 10 a.m., crane operator comes on board?

16 A. Give or take, yeah.

17 Q. And then --

18 A. We finally got it boomed down. That's when he went down to 5
19 degrees. And it was right about 12:30, I think, when we got back
20 underway.

21 Q. And where were you in route to?

22 A. Galliano, LOOP, L-O-O-P, LOOP facility.

23 Q. Okay. Headed down to the LOOP, and then once you got to the
24 LOOP, do you remember what time that was?

25 A. Well, we never got there.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. That was -- because we couldn't get there, because the
3 hurricane had messed -- so that was a whole nother, a whole nother
4 part if you all interested in that part. It's really not related
5 to anything. That's kind of like we went the wrong way and
6 couldn't get there. We had to come back down the Houma Nav
7 instead.

8 Q. Okay. And then you ended up eventually making it over there
9 to the LOOP or --

10 A. No. We ended up giving the tow to another boat, and they
11 went and finished the job while we went and start another job.

12 Q. Okay. So you started another job?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Where was that job?

15 A. Currently, in Taft, in the river.

16 Q. And what discussions did you have about the drug testing?
17 Did you discuss that with Michael or --

18 A. Yeah, I had let him know about that, too, and -- because I
19 think you had said something about it, and I forget where we was
20 at when I talked to him, but he said we was going to do it in the
21 morning. And so that's when we stopped in Larose the next day
22 and --

23 Q. So that was the following day, on the 7th?

24 A. That was the Monday morning, correct. That was the 7th? I
25 think so. Yeah, we left 12:30 -- yeah, that was Monday morning we

1 met the -- we picked up the lady from the dock there in Larose.

2 LT [REDACTED] Okay. I have no further questions. All right.

3 Time right now is 10:50, and this concludes the end of the
4 interview.

5 (Whereupon, at 10:50 a.m. CDT, 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: *ROBERT CENAC AND MR. DAWG COLLIDE
WITH HOUMA TWIN SPAN BRIDGE, IN
HOUMA, LOUISIANA ON MARCH 6, 2022*
Interview of Travis Tate

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM012

PLACE: United States Marine Safety Unit,
Houma, Louisiana

DATE: March 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.



Danielle S. VanRiper
Transcriber