

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*
*

CAPSIZING OF THE LIFTBOAT *SEACOR*
POWER SOUTH OF PORT FOURCHON,
LOUISIANA, ON APRIL 13, 2021

Accident No.: DCA21MM024

* * * * *

Interview of: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coxswain
United States Coast Guard

Via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday,
April 21, 2021



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Transcript Errata

**TABLE OF CORRECTIONS FOR TRANSCRIPT INTERVIEW WITH: BM2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
RECORDED ON MAY 4, 2021**

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
4	12	BMA	BM "A"
5	17	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
5	20	Jeff Wilters	Melissa Huffman
6	20	Batson Bay	Bastian Bay
7	23	coms	comms
8	11	rounding	routing
8	12	Veritary	Barataria
9	2	mud	Spud
10	11	(indiscernible)	while I station
10	14	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
10	18	Derby Collins	Nerby Collins
10	25	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
11	8	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
11	13	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
11	18	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
12	10	coms	comms
14	16	core man	corpsman
24	19	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
28	5	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
28	18	DM1	BM1
29	1	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
29	4	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
29	11	Glen Harris	Glenn Harris
29	17	UN	unit
31	7	com	comm

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

[REDACTED]

APPEARANCES:

ANDREW EHLERS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

MARCEL MUISE, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CAPT TRACY PHILLIPS, Chair
U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation

LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Member
U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation

MELISSA HUFFMAN, Warning Coordination Meteorologist
National Weather Service
(Via Microsoft Teams)

MICHAEL CENAC, QHSE Manager, Designated Person Ashore,
Chief Security Officer
Seacor Marine

LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation

CMDR [REDACTED] Attorney
District Legal

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	
By Mr. Muise	6, 28, 32
By Mr. Ehlers	16
By Capt Phillips	22
LTJG [REDACTED]	28
By Mr. [REDACTED]	24
By Mr. Cenac	25, 31

I N T E R V I E W

(10:24 a.m.)

1
2
3 MR. MUISE: So, this is Marcel Muise with the National
4 Transportation Board. We are investigating the capsizing of the
5 *Seacor Power*. And, online with us is the -- one of the coxswains
6 from the Coast Guard Station Grand Isle. It's -- I'm sorry it's
7 10:24, Central Time. Folks, can you introduce yourself for us,
8 and spell your name?

9 BM2 [REDACTED] I am BM2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is common
10 spelling. [REDACTED] is [REDACTED]. I
11 joined the Coast Guard in 2008. I have gone off -- well I went to
12 a 378 right out of boot camp, and then to BMA school in 2009.
13 From there I went to my first station in The Great Lakes in
14 Wisconsin, at Station Sturgeon Bay. I made coxswain on 45
15 Response Boat Medium, and the 25 Response Boat Small in 2012. I
16 transferred from there in 2013 to Station Mayport where I
17 recertified as a 45 Response Boat Medium Coxswain, and a 29
18 Response Boat Second-Class Coxswain. And earned other
19 certifications as a Tactical Coxswain, Opposing Forces Coxswain,
20 and a Boarding Officer, and Living Marine Resources Fisheries
21 Boarding Officer. I ended up leaving Mayport and reporting to
22 Grand Isle -- Station Grand Isle in 2017, and again, re earned my
23 certification for the 45 Response Boat Medium in 2017, about two
24 months after I reported. And then for the 24 Shallow Water Craft
25 Coxswain -- earned there and recertified as a Boarding Officer and

1 a Fisheries Law Enforcement Boarding Officer. And I've held those
2 qualifications since then.

3 MR. MUISE: Okay, thanks for that. I have a few house-
4 keeping items -- I didn't want to interrupt you, though.
5 Commander [REDACTED] from District Legal is on the phone. If you
6 need to talk to him at all offline, just say so and we'll take a
7 break and you guys can talk offline. Also, I was going to go
8 around the room here just so that you know who's here and so the
9 transcriptionist can recognize the voices, as well.

10 So, with that, Drew?

11 MR. EHLERS: Yeah, this is Drew Ehlers. I'm the Investigator
12 in Charge for the NTSB for this accident.

13 LTJG [REDACTED] I'm Lieutenant Junior Grade, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with
14 the U.S. Coast Guard.

15 CAPT [REDACTED] Good morning, I'm Captain [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
16 I'm Chair of the Coast Guard's Marine Board of Investigation.

17 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] good morning, with the U.S. Coast
18 Guard.

19 MR. CENAC: Michael Cenac, Seacor Marine.

20 MR. MUISE: And Jeff Wilters (Ph.).

21 MS. HUFFMAN: Good morning, Melissa Huffman with the National
22 Weather Service.

23 MR. MUISE: And District Legal?

24 LCDR [REDACTED] Good morning, this is Lieutenant Commander
25 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with District Legal.

1 MR. MUISE: Okay. Well, sorry for the interruption.

2 CAPT [REDACTED] Can you ask who has the [REDACTED] number?

3 MR. MUISE: Yes. The [REDACTED] Boats (Ph.), is your number [REDACTED]

4 BM2 [REDACTED] That's a negative. Mines a [REDACTED] number.

5 MR. MUISE: Okay. Who is that [REDACTED] -- that is me. You're
6 right. I'm calling in from the -- I'm both online and I'm calling
7 audio --

8 CAPT [REDACTED] Oh, you're calling as well. I get it.

9 MR. MUISE: -- from -- on the conference call number.

10 CAPT [REDACTED] Thank you.

11 MR. MUISE: But, no -- good eye, thank you.

12 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: It was local.

13 MR. MUISE: Boats, sorry again for the interruption. Okay,
14 we have your background, thank you for that.

15 INTERVIEW OF [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

16 BY MR. MUISE:

17 Q. Tell us a little about Station Grand Isle. What is your AOR?
18 What do you have there for resources?

19 A. Sure. Station Grand Isle -- our area of responsibility goes
20 from -- the east side is Batson Bay, to the north -- is up by
21 Lafitte. Then it shoots to the west right in at the -- at
22 Atchafalaya River, and then south 50 nautical miles. And we have
23 the 45 Response Boat Medium, we have two of those, and two of the
24 24 Shallow Water Craft.

25 Q. And on the night of the accident, you were on 45687, is that

1 right?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Okay. So, what I'm going to do now is I'm just going ask you
4 to tell us in as much detail as you can about that case, all
5 right? Just that one day, Tuesday, is fine for now. But I'm
6 going to turn my camera off, and just -- I'm not going to
7 interrupt you. Just, you know, give us as much information as you
8 can. None of us in this room were out there and we're really
9 interested in seeing -- hearing things from your perspective.

10 A. Okay. So I just -- pretty much the entire thing as far as I
11 remember from the case itself?

12 Q. Yes, please.

13 A. From that night? Okay. We ended up -- right before we had
14 received the call and we ended up having that storm blow through
15 the unit, I was down re-tying off one of the 24s that were in the
16 boat slip due to one of the lines slipping. While I was making
17 off that vessel, the weather started to subside a little bit at
18 the unit. It was still blowing right at the parameter for us to
19 be able to respond offshore. I believe it was actually still over
20 the parameters. While we were conducting a risk -- or assessment
21 of the damage of the unit, ended up hearing the SAR alarm go off.
22 So I ended up running back to the station where the commanding
23 officer was standing outside coms and informed us that there was a
24 vessel capsized offshore of Fourchon with approximately 17 people
25 in the water and that we needed to get both 45s underway and in

1 route to that position.

2 We all met down at the 45s. I had my crew light off the
3 boat, make preparations, get underway. The other 45 crew made
4 preparations, get underway. Ended up conducting a SAR with my
5 crew. I had myself and three others on board with me. We ended
6 up coming back with a medium risk and a high gain. Once we ended
7 up leaving the unit, we heard over the radio that there was winds
8 over 45 knots out by the capsized vessel. So I ended up calling
9 the commanding officer and informing him that there is reports of
10 winds over our parameters and requested a waiver for us to
11 continue on. He ended up rounding up the waiver, and we continued
12 to push on. Made our way outside of Veritary Pass (Ph.), drive
13 about a mile off shore, and then we turned west and started
14 heading in the direction of the last known position of the vessel.

15 We got approximately three miles from the unit and came
16 across a tug that was calling in a capsized vessel, a small tender
17 vessel that was capsized. We ended up stopping and conducting a
18 drifting search pattern around the vessel. Received -- we were
19 able to pull the state members off of that vessel as the other 45
20 came up on scene with us. We conducted a drifting search pattern
21 of the area and passed it to sector, and then got word from my
22 commanding officer to continue on to the known distress case --
23 known other capsized vessel. So we passed the position of the
24 tender vessel and continued on.

25 We ended up getting on scene at 1848 - I believe it was the

1 exact time of us being on scene - and saw that it was the lift
2 vessel capsized, not fully flipped over. The mud bars it had
3 were -- appeared to be laying down into the mud, and the vessel
4 was sitting at about 80 degree angle. If you had 90 being
5 straight up into the air, it was at about an 80 to possibly even a
6 70 degree laying over. And we were able to see that you had four
7 crewman still on the back of the vessel toward the stern leaned up
8 on the first deck. You still had eyes on the props, or the
9 shafts, and the screws sticking up out of the water. And made the
10 approach with the 687 alongside as close as I possibly could. We
11 got approximately 35 to 40 feet away from the vessel.

12 I informed my crew that if they were to go out onto the back
13 deck that they needed to put on heavy-weather harnesses which they
14 used to clip into D rings on the 45. I asked one of them to go up
15 to the bow of our vessel and try to call out to the people that
16 were onboard the capsized and to let them know that we were not
17 able to get any closer, and that if they felt safe to get into the
18 water to try to get in the water. Once they were away from the
19 wreckage that we would be on scene with and to pull them out of
20 the water.

21 We were approximately there for about 20 minutes before one
22 crewman ended up making his way down off of the first deck into a
23 little pocket and slowly was able to work himself away from the
24 vessel. Once he got away from the vessel we were able to come up
25 alongside him. While were alongside we had two crewman down in

1 the recess of the 45. One trying to throw a heaving line to him,
2 was not able to get it to him -- or get it close enough to him so
3 we ended up using our expanding boat hook to reach out to him,
4 having him grab ahold of it and brought him alongside. And as
5 they brought him onto the 45, into the recess, noticed that there
6 was a extreme amount of blood in the bottom of the recess. And as
7 we had the crewman laying on the deck, we were able to see that he
8 had approximately a seven inch laceration through his abdomen
9 area. We were able to get him out of the recess onto the back
10 deck, and I had the engineer grab the first aid kit
11 (indiscernible) kept the bow into the sea and treat him for his
12 wounds.

13 We ended up contacting -- I ended up contacting the Cutter
14 *Glen Harris* that was on scene letting him know that we were going
15 to have to depart scene and head back to Fourchon with the one
16 crew member due to the injuries he sustained from going in the
17 water and coming to us. We ended up leaving scene, bringing him
18 back safely to Derby Collins (Ph.) Marina where we met with EMS.
19 We were able to get more gauze wraps in case we had to pull
20 anybody else onto the vessel or treat them for any sort of medical
21 -- injuries.

22 We headed back out after sunset. We got back on the scene
23 and the other 45 had taken our position of being up and we sat
24 back behind them. While we sat there listening to the
25 transmissions of the *Glen Harris* -- between the *Glen Harris* and

1 the helo (Ph.) on scene and the other 45, we just sat in position
2 waiting for possibly any crew coming over board or floating
3 towards us. I ended up hearing a transmission that one person
4 ended up going in the water. Sorry, let me back up a little bit.
5 The helo ended up dropping inflatable life jackets down to the
6 crew on board. I don't know exactly how many they dropped down,
7 but they dropped down the life jackets and a radio. And the
8 *Glen Harris* was able to talk with one of the crewmen on board the
9 *Seacor*.

10 While we were on scene, he ended up saying that one of them
11 went in the water, unsure of who it was. We ended up coming up to
12 meet up right behind the other 45 -- between the 45 and the
13 *Seacor*, and the other 45 was between the *Seacor* and the *Glen*
14 *Harris*. And they were the ones that were able to make contact
15 with the person that went in the water. After that point, we had
16 lost communications between the other 45 -- or to where it was
17 very shoddy. Didn't have very good coms between the two 45s. It
18 was mainly between us and the *Glen Harris*. Didn't know anything
19 of the other 45 losing a crewman or them retrieving the other
20 person that went in the water.

21 We were able to keep eyes on the other two crewman that were
22 aboard the *Seacor* with the *Glen Harris* using their spot light
23 shining on it, as we were using our search light to shine on it.
24 Every time we saw a life jacket pop up, ended up shining the
25 search light on it, going over to it, checking it to make sure it

1 was just a life jacket or if there was somebody with it. And then
2 from there, returned back to sit behind the *Seacor* trying to await
3 to see if anybody else went into the water.

4 Approximately around 10:00 was when the crewmen on board the
5 *Seacor* ended up opening one of the doors on the first deck and
6 going inside due to the waves bashing into the side of the *Seacor*
7 vessel. They were able to get out of the waves and the
8 conditions, themselves, but were still being sprayed by the waves
9 coming and hitting directly onto the *Seacor*, and coming in through
10 that door. Ended up losing coms with the two people that went
11 back inside the ship. And we stayed on scene until 2300 to 2315
12 before my crew was fatigued and I was unable to continue the
13 mission due to my crews' fatigued state and ended up bringing them
14 back to Port Fourchon where we moored.

15 Q. Okay, thank you, Boats. I very much appreciate the detail
16 there. I do have a few questions for you.

17 A. Sure.

18 Q. So, when you said the first deck, are you referring to
19 what -- on a Coast Guard cutter would be the 01 deck, or are you
20 referring to the main deck?

21 A. I'm referring to the very bottom deck -- the engineer space.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you. There is a door to the engine room on that
23 boat on the forward side of the structure. Did they -- is that
24 the door you think they went into?

25 A. So the way the vessel was sitting the -- you had jobs -- you

1 had your main working deck area, and then the super structure
2 sitting there and you had the very first deck -- very first space
3 on top of the main working deck area, and there was a door right
4 there toward -- facing towards the stern that was able to see them
5 open and go into.

6 Q. Okay. The waves and swells, were they -- relative to the
7 lift boat, what were they hitting? Were they hitting the
8 underside? Or were they hitting the stern?

9 A. So, once we were on scene there the waves looked -- the
10 vessels was sitting -- it appeared the -- it was leaning towards
11 east south east. So it had the main deck -- working deck leaned
12 over facing towards east south east and you had the waves coming
13 directly in contact with that main deck. And where the survivors
14 were holding onto was pretty much direct contact with them,
15 constantly getting battered by the waves -- the sea state that was
16 coming through.

17 Q. Okay. Thank you. The injured crew member, can -- I know you
18 mentioned a laceration. Is there anything else you can tell me
19 about his injuries? You know, how did he get hurt? Just -- do
20 you take a set of vitals? Or any other symptoms?

21 A. We didn't -- I didn't get vitals. The crewman, he had
22 across -- just underneath his ribs and above his belly button he
23 had a -- it appeared to be a laceration from one side to the other
24 approximately seven inches long. And then it had fat hanging out
25 of it which to me appeared was helping slow down the bleeding

1 that -- the crewmens were able to apply gauze a wrap around his
2 torso area to try to control the bleeding in itself.

3 Q. What's in that first aid kid that you mentioned? Is
4 there -- did you have enough gauze? Is there some oxygen in
5 there? Is there IV fluid?

6 A. No. So it's a basic first aid kit to where it's going to
7 have your large gauze pads to medium sized gauze pads that you can
8 apply to a wound. And the brown wrap that we were able to -- we
9 had two brown wraps that we were able to wrap around his torso
10 area to hold the bandages in place.

11 Q. Do you think you had enough equipment on board to treat that
12 injury?

13 A. For the one member, yes.

14 Q. Okay. What kind of first aid training does -- that your
15 particular boat crew have? Was there -- I understand that
16 everybody has first aid training. Did you have core man on board
17 or an EMT on board with you?

18 A. I did not. We all had first aid -- basic first aid training
19 and CPR.

20 Q. Is there a Coast Guard Patient Contact Report that you had to
21 fill out for this patient?

22 A. There was not.

23 Q. And who did you turn him over to in Fourchon? Do you
24 remember which ambulance it was? What ambulance --

25 A. I do --

1 Q. -- service it was?

2 A. I do not remember the name of the service. I was a little bit
3 more preoccupied trying to just get him to the ambulance and get
4 back out on scene.

5 Q. And that's fine. Any of these questions at all if you don't
6 know, that's fine. Just say so, that's okay.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. Did he have one of the life jackets from the helicopter on
9 him, or was this --

10 A. He did, he did not.

11 Q. This was before the helicopter dropped the life jackets?

12 A. It was before the helicopter dropped the life jackets. He
13 ended up going in the water without a life jacket as he made
14 his -- started to float down towards us. I watched him bob
15 underneath the surface of the water twice and then on the third
16 time we ended up getting him -- getting ahold of him.

17 Q. And what was his level of consciousness? Was he just talking
18 through pain or was he alert? Was he --

19 A. He was -- he appeared alert. Once we got him on board we
20 were able to maintain having a conversation with him from the
21 scene all the way back to Fourchon.

22 Q. Okay. And how far did he have to swim without a life jacket
23 to get to you?

24 A. 40 feet.

25 MR. MUISE: Okay. Not very far then. That's -- I think

1 that's all the questions I have for you right now. I'll pass it
2 onto my colleague, Drew Ehlers.

3 BM2. [REDACTED] Okay.

4 MR. EHLERS: Good morning, folks.

5 BM2. [REDACTED] Good morning.

6 BY MR. EHLERS:

7 Q. I'm going to back up through the timeline a bit and just kind
8 of get some -- see if I can get some additional detail or
9 clarification. Do you know what time the SAR alarm went off? You
10 said you were down at the docks retying some boats. Do you know
11 what time that alarm went off?

12 A. I do not.

13 Q. Okay. Do you know what time you got underway?

14 A. Approximately at 5:30 -- 1730.

15 Q. 1730, okay. How long do you think it took you to go through
16 the guard process and get your crew mustered, get going through
17 the guard process and get underway?

18 A. Three minutes.

19 Q. Three minutes? Okay. You said as you were on your way out
20 you heard a radio transmit -- transmission about 45 knot winds.
21 Where did that radio transmission come from? Who sent that?

22 A. I am unsure exactly who sent that transmission. It was a
23 transmission that came across the radio of winds above 45 knots.

24 Q. Okay. All right. So that wasn't, for instance, sent to you
25 from the station?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. All right. And you said you came across -- upon a
3 capsized vessel. It -- say again what kind of vessel it was?

4 A. It appeared to be one of the smaller commercial tender
5 vessels that they use to check inside the bays. A worker boat --
6 a 25 to 30 foot worker vessel to either check rigs or to pull up
7 alongside of barges and drop off personnel or pick up personnel.

8 Q. Oh, okay. And so was there anyone -- any survivors or crew?
9 I know you said you did a search pattern. Was there anyone
10 visible when you first came across the vessel?

11 A. No there wasn't. The only thing that was visible was a blue
12 catfish floating next to it.

13 Q. What's a blue catfish?

14 A. It's a fresh water catfish.

15 Q. Like, literally a catfish? Okay.

16 A. Literally a catfish.

17 Q. Okay. All right. And how long do you think you spent doing
18 that drift search?

19 A. Ten minutes.

20 Q. Okay. And -- okay. You said that once you got on scene you
21 ordered your crew to don heavy-weather harnesses. When -- were
22 they wearing those harnesses when on scene out on deck?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. And were they wearing those harnesses when they recovered the
25 injured person?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Okay. And --

3 A. When one of my crew members went out onto the back deck they
4 had the heavy-weather harnesses on due to the sea state.

5 Q. Okay. All right. And I think you said that the guy who
6 eventually went in the water was injured. When you first saw him
7 he was in a pocket. Can you explain what you meant by a pocket?

8 A. Yes, sir. So, the pocket would have been -- the way the
9 vessel was sitting, the super structure that --

10 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: Is it a birthday or something? What's
11 going on?

12 A. -- it was the -- basically a wall that was already created on
13 the vessel, itself. But it was a wall, or a shape in the -- a 90-
14 degree shape in the super structure that he was able to get
15 himself in between -- that was between the super structure and the
16 main deck.

17 Q. Okay. All right. Was it -- in the orientation that the
18 vessel was when you arrived, was this shape like essentially faced
19 skyward?

20 A. It was.

21 Q. Okay. Was it connected any way to the decking above it? Or
22 it would've been maybe below it depending on how you -- the
23 orientation?

24 A. So the best way I can put this is if you have a wall with a
25 90 degree turn and then the roof right above would've created a

1 pocket -- so possibly the second deck would've created a pocket
2 with -- it had hand rails that were in view that he was able to
3 hold onto --

4 Q. Okay. I think that --

5 A. -- on the deck.

6 Q. Yea, that's very helpful. How about the others that were on
7 board. Where were they at when you arrived? And did they move
8 around?

9 A. It -- so it appeared there was like a stack that they were
10 huddled around between the stack and the first deck super
11 structure that they were sitting on trying to get themselves
12 outside of, or protect themselves from the crashing waves.

13 Q. Okay. When you say a stack, is it like smokestack? Like --
14 or something like an exhaust?

15 A. It looked like an exhaust stack.

16 Q. I see. Okay. So the survivor that went in the water that
17 you recovered, prior to him going in the water could you see if he
18 was injured or not?

19 A. No I could not.

20 Q. Okay. Do you know if he was -- was he not injured? In other
21 words, did the injury appear to happen when he went in the water?

22 A. I can't speculate on that one, sir. I'm not entirely sure.

23 Q. Okay. That's fair enough. So you go him on board, you
24 treated him, and then proceeded in bound to get him to emergency
25 services. Do you know what time you left the scene?

1 A. Approximately at 1915.

2 UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT: 1915.

3 Q. Okay. And do you know when you got to Fourchon? If you
4 don't know the answer, you just say --

5 A. I don't. I don't know the answer to that.

6 Q. Okay. That's all right.

7 A. It was dark when we got back into Fourchon.

8 Q. Okay. All right. How long do you think you were at Fourchon
9 for?

10 A. Ten minutes.

11 Q. Ten minutes? Okay. And I'm going to keep asking you these
12 questions and you just say if you don't know, but do you know what
13 time you got back to the accident scene?

14 A. I do not know.

15 Q. Okay. That's all right. And one more time question and I'll
16 stop. The next person that went in the water that the other
17 response boat responded to, do you know what time that happened?

18 A. I do not, no.

19 Q. Okay. But it was dark?

20 A. It was dark. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Okay. All right. Now I'm going to ask you some sort of
22 basic administrative questions here. How much sleep did you get
23 the night before?

24 A. Approximately eight hours. Eight to nine hours.

25 Q. Okay. Do you remember what time you woke up?

- 1 A. At 6:30.
- 2 Q. 6:30? Okay. Is that your usual time to wake up?
- 3 A. Usual time is around a quarter to six.
- 4 Q. Okay. And was there any reason that you slept a little later
5 that day?
- 6 A. There was not. I was underway for 5.1 hours the day before.
- 7 Q. Say that -- how much time the day before?
- 8 A. 5.1 hours.
- 9 Q. Okay. What time were you underway the day before? Between
10 when and when? Approximation is fine.
- 11 A. I can pull it up real quick for you, sir. Just give me a
12 quick second.
- 13 Q. Yeah, no worries. I know I'm stealing other people's
14 questions but that's the bulk.
- 15 A. Let's see. We were approximately underway from 1300 to 1900
16 or 1800 that evening. 13 to 18, sorry.
- 17 Q. Okay. Was that your same crew as on the accident day, or was
18 it different crew -- different folks?
- 19 A. Two of them were the same crew.
- 20 Q. Okay. Which two were the same?
- 21 A. My engineer and my break-in crew member. Both MK3s.
- 22 Q. Okay. All right. Did you feel you had had adequate rest
23 before going out on the accident response?
- 24 A. Yes, sir.
- 25 Q. Okay. How about your crew?

1 A. My crew felt they had adequate rest when we did our general
2 assessment risk.

3 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you. Thanks. This has been very
4 helpful.

5 BY CAPT PHILLIPS:

6 Q. Good morning, this is Captain Phillips. Can you tell us --

7 A. Good morning, Captain.

8 Q. Can you tell us about the weather that hit the station before
9 you got underway?

10 A. Sure. We had a -- knew of having some stronger thunderstorms
11 come through that day. Like winds around the 30 knot mark. When
12 it ended up coming through I was actually sitting down at
13 the -- outside our recreational room watching the weather roll
14 through, keeping eye on our access in the -- their moorings. And
15 ended up having winds go from blowing 15 knots to slowly
16 sustaining over 40 knots period and having gusts that were
17 approximately over at 60 knots and possibly even higher with
18 strong rain and heavy flooding due to the amount of -- the
19 direction of the wind blowing the seas into the bay area. It
20 caused the unit to flood and raise the waters at the unit
21 extremely high.

22 Q. Okay. And did I hear you say that you thought the forecast
23 was for 30 knot winds?

24 A. For strong thunderstorms rolling through and to where you can
25 have winds in excess of 30 knots, yes.

1 Q. Okay. And had you checked the forecast, or was that just
2 something you received from somebody else?

3 A. I was looking at Wind Finder -- I was using the app on my
4 phone. And also the Weather Channel app. Seeing that we were
5 supposed to have strong storms coming through.

6 Q. What did Wind Finder predict? Do you remember?

7 A. I do not remember. I've tried to pull the history from it
8 and I'm unable to get it.

9 Q. Okay. Once you got out on scene, how would you categorize
10 the conditions that evening as compared to conditions you've seen
11 elsewhere during your career?

12 A. I would categorize it as -- on the east coast, Florida, when
13 we got strong north-easterly weather storms come through we would
14 get heavy seas with large rollers. And up on the Great Lakes,
15 with the winter storms that we received up there you received some
16 very large waves.

17 It reminded me of a few times that I did have to operate in
18 those conditions that -- due to the swell and the waves. It was
19 more of a washing machine on scene. You had a strong swell that
20 pushed right into the side of the capsized Seacor vessel. And as
21 it made contact with the vessel it was coming off the stern and
22 you were receiving a reflection from those -- that sea state
23 bouncing into the Seacor and coming back off back into the
24 bay -- into the swell itself. So it was making any sort of close
25 approach nearly impossible.

1 Q. Wow. Okay. Looking back on that evening can you think of
2 anything that would've been helpful to have on board the vessel to
3 assist you in that situation?

4 A. One thing that possibly could have been helpful would've been
5 a line-throwing gun. But even then that would've been my crew
6 knowing exactly where I wanted that line to have been shot
7 into -- to where it would've been safe for the crew on board the
8 vessel to grab due to the sea state. Even at that point, it
9 would've been very difficult for them to try to use a line
10 throwing gun to get lines safely to them without possibly
11 jeopardizing the crew that was still on board.

12 CAPT PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you.

13 BM2 [REDACTED] Yes, ma'am.

14 CAPT PHILLIPS: That was a big case. Thanks for being out
15 there that night.

16 BM2 [REDACTED] Yes, ma'am.

17 BY MR. [REDACTED]

18 Q. Good morning. Thank you for your assistance in this. My
19 names [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard. I've got a couple
20 questions about the vessel itself when you finally got on scene.
21 When you got on scene. You said that the props were visible. Was
22 both of them visible or just one? And if so, do you know which
23 one?

24 A. The port-side prop was the only one that was visible, or at
25 least it appeared to be the port-side prop.

1 Q. That's fine. Also you said a couple survivors was resting or
2 in the notch on the super structure as well?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Okay. That's fine. I'm just trying to see how to question
5 this, but, I mean, this -- was this super structure, or the props,
6 did they eventually sink out of sight while you were on scene? If
7 so, how long did it take, approximately?

8 A. The props and the structure itself stayed inside until we
9 were departed from the scene.

10 Q. Which was later that evening when you all finally departed?

11 A. Yes, sir, around 2300.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. I think that's about it. I appreciate
13 it.

14 BM2 [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

15 BY MR. CENAC:

16 Q. Okay, sir. This is Michael Cenac with *Seacor*. First, thank
17 you and your team for all your efforts that night and your
18 service.

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. Just real briefly, a couple questions. Did you have any
21 planned events to go out on the water that evening by yourself or
22 any of your team?

23 A. I had gotten underway for approximately an hour earlier that
24 afternoon for training for a break-in crew member. And we were
25 planning, in the afternoon, to conduct fishery boardings on

1 commercial fishing vessels in the area.

2 Q. Can you recall the weather forecast projections for that
3 afternoon?

4 A For the afternoon around the parts of the storms -- I only
5 remember exactly what the winds were. Just that we had
6 predictions of strong thunderstorms moving through the area to
7 produce winds of 30 knots or greater.

8 Q. These projections, they didn't hinder you or your crew to
9 question going out on the water for the planned boarding fishing
10 vessels?

11 A. That would -- if -- for the time of when we were going to get
12 underway it would've -- I would not have gotten underway for the
13 fishery boardings due to the environment, itself.

14 Q. Okay. Thank you sir. Do you recall how fast this -- the
15 winds increased? Or the weather deteriorated?

16 A. The weather deteriorated within 30 minutes of us starting to
17 see signs of the weather deteriorating.

18 MR. CENAC: Okay. Thank you, sir.

19 MR. MUISE: Melissa?

20 BY MS. HUFFMAN:

21 Q. Hi, [REDACTED]

22 A. Hi.

23 Q. I know you said that you look at Wind Finder and the Weather
24 Channel. Were you aware of anyone who spoke to the National
25 Weather Service? Or was getting a forecast from them?

1 A. No, I was not.

2 Q. Okay. Is it pretty common to use multiple sources of weather
3 information before making decisions?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. What happens when you find conflicts in the weather
6 forecast that you're looking at?

7 A. We discuss either moving the operation to a later date or
8 pushing it off to a later hour until the deteriorating that we had
9 forecasted becomes better. It's -- for us to operate in a
10 deteriorating environment to conduct fishery boardings or training
11 in itself has undue risk. And we'd end up just pushing it onto a
12 later date.

13 Q. Okay. Thank you. And my last question is: what do you do
14 when the weather forecast doesn't match the observations that
15 you're getting?

16 A. End up discussing it with the commanding officer at the unit.
17 And also if the weather that we are receiving is stronger than the
18 forecasted weather we end up passing it up to our sector to let
19 them know if we have limitations in our operations. And to send
20 out an email stating if we have inshore recoveries or if we have
21 offshore coverage or we are outside of the parameters.

22 MS. HUFFMAN: Okay. Thank you, [REDACTED]

23 MR. [REDACTED] No problem.

24 BY MR. MUISE:

25 Q. Also, this is Marcel Muise, again. Just one follow-up. In

1 your com center, do you have one of those NOAA weather radios that
2 alarms when there -- whenever there's a warning?

3 A. No, we do not.

4 MR. MUISE: Okay. I have one more follow-up but I'll save it
5 for last. No? Lieutenant? Captain? [REDACTED] Oh, you do? Go
6 ahead, [REDACTED]

7 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

8 Q. Hey, BM2. I had to step out for a minute. So I apologize if
9 you've already answered some of these questions. But this is
10 Lieutenant Junior Grade [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard. Couple of
11 quick questions. Can you tell me the duty rotation at your
12 station?

13 A. Sure. The duty standards here -- they stand four to eight
14 hour watch and then have a 48 hour liberty with a sliding 72 hour
15 weekend. So one weekend they'll work 72 hours and then the
16 following weekend there -- they'll be off. For this --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- this duty period it was a DM1 -- it was a stand-by
19 coxswain OD and I was standing by as the second coxswain OD or BO.

20 Q. Got you. So your crew members -- was that a fresh crew? Or
21 did anyone already have underway hours on them from earlier in the
22 day?

23 A. The crew I took with me was all fresh. No one was underway.

24 Q. Understood. And when you got on scene did you notice any
25 other good Samaritans in the area?

1 Q. You did have the pre-commissioned *Glen Harris* that was on
2 scene and there were -- there was another OSV. I do not know the
3 name of them. That was a couple hundred yards off the stern. And
4 I didn't see any of the others but I talked to the *Glen Harris* and
5 said that there were other OSVs that were searching down the drift
6 line from the *Seacor* looking for any other survivors.

7 Q. Understood. Were you getting your tasking from the sector?
8 Or were you working through the on-scene coordinator who was the
9 Glenn Harris?

10 A. We received very little tasking from sector. It was more
11 with the *Glen Harris*. Once we did arrive on scene, I asked him if
12 there were any other vessels there and then we ended up pushing in
13 as close as we possibly could to the vessel.

14 Q. Was the draft in the 45? The navigational draft and the
15 safety draft?

16 A. I believe it's three foot six for the draft and for our
17 standing orders, yeah, here at the UN it's six foot.

18 Q. Understood. And I know you have a FLIR capability on the 45.
19 Was your FLIR energized on reporting?

20 A. Not on reporting there. It was not energized. It was -- we
21 energized it once. We came back in -- or came back out after
22 picking up the first survivor.

23 Q. Okay. And were any SLDMBs or DMBs deployed?

24 A. No, there weren't.

25 Q. Did you all have any on board with you?

1 A. No, we did not.

2 Q. Okay. And when the decision was made to medivac the one SAR
3 survivor that you had, was that an on-scene decision that was made
4 by you as a coxswain? Or was that discussion had with the second
5 command center or possibly even the flight sturgeon?

6 A. That was made solely by me.

7 Q. Understood. And my final question: you said you had reached
8 your fatigue hours with your crew and you ended up mooring the 45
9 back up to Port Fourchon. Did you then have a relief crew come
10 back out to pick you up? And did they trailer the 45? Or -- can
11 you just kind of explain how that all worked? The whole situation
12 worked?

13 A. Yeah -- no -- so, we -- I ended up having one hour underway
14 prior that day and once we got back into port we ended up having
15 7.1 hours total underway for us. The -- we didn't have a relief
16 crew come out right then. We had somebody come out and pick up --
17 pick us up and drive us back to the unit.

18 Q. And the 45 stayed moored? Or did you all trailer that and
19 return it to the station?

20 A. No we have to -- you have to leave them moored. The 45s are
21 unable to be trailered. The only time you can put it on a trailer
22 is when you're doing maintenance on them.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And then you have to get craned out for that.

25 LTJG [REDACTED] All right. Thank you for clarifying that. Those

1 are all the questions I have, folks. Thank you.

2 MR. MUISE: Go ahead, Officer.

3 BY MR. CENAC:

4 Q. This is Michael again. I do have one more. Do you recall if
5 there were any other mayday calls or search and rescue ops going
6 on? And how many were there?

7 A. I am unsure. The com center was the ones that were
8 receiving those mayday calls. I was -- like I said earlier, I was
9 downstairs watching the weather. Once one of the lines slipped on
10 one of our smaller 24 assets I ended up putting on rain gear and
11 going out and re-securing it and staying down at the boat slips
12 making sure nothing got damaged.

13 MR. CENAC: Thank you, sir.

14 BM2. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

15 MR. MUISE: Melissa, do you have any follow-ups?

16 MS. HUFFMAN: No, sir.

17 MR. MUISE: Okay.

18 So, folks, thank you for your time today. And we
19 appreciate all the detailed information. I understand it was a
20 hard case, not just that day but the following days, as well.

21 BY MR. MUISE:

22 Q. I had one more question for you. And not to make light of
23 the situation, but in your opinion, what went well for you? If
24 it -- is there a piece of equipment or procedure or some training
25 that you had previously that you were especially thankful for that

1 day? That we could share with other boat crews around the nation.

2 A. Yeah it -- we don't really work with heavy weather here too
3 often, but the heavy-weather harnesses on board the vessel --
4 whenever we do have heavy weather try to get boat crews underway
5 and, you know, have them walk the deck around the 45s in a head-on
6 sea. And then with the following sea walking the decks and how
7 the shifting of the vessel and the change in the environment and
8 how it's -- how the vessels going to react in a head-on sea or a
9 following sea and how you have to know exactly you're attachment
10 points and always maintaining two points of contact on the 45. In
11 that sort of sea state we never -- you never know exactly what
12 you're going to run into. So even though we train very little
13 with the heavy-weather side, the little bit of training that I was
14 able to conduct with the crews prior to this happening was
15 beneficial.

16 MR. MUISE: Okay. Thank you for that information. If you
17 can think of anything else, please reach out to us. You can reach
18 Captain Phillips. Again, thank you.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

20 MR. MUISE: Oh, it is. With that it is 11:20 Central Time.
21 And I will secure the recorder.

22 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: CAPSIZING OF THE LIFTBOAT *SEACOR*
 POWER SOUTH OF PORT FOURCHON,
 LOUISIANA, ON APRIL 13, 2021
 Interview of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Coxswain

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA21MM024

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: April 21, 2021

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.

[REDACTED]

Carolyn Hanna
Transcriber