

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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SHIPBOARD FIRE ABOARD THE *HOËGH*
XIAMEN IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA,
ON JUNE 4, 2020

Accident No.: DCA20FM020

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Interview of: SHILIAN ZHANG, Captain
The *Hoëgh Xiamen*

Jacksonville, Florida

Saturday,
June 6, 2020

APPEARANCES:

MARCEL L. MUISE, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

JOSEPH PANAGIOTOU, Fire and Explosion Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Jacksonville

LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator
U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Jacksonville

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator
U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Jacksonville

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Chinese Interpreter
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

LINDA QIN, Chinese Interpreter

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(On behalf of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:00 a.m.)

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2
3 LTJG [REDACTED] All right. All right. So good morning
4 everyone. Today is June 6th, 2020. It's approximately 11:00 in
5 the morning Eastern Time. We're in Jacksonville, Florida.

6 Present is the U.S. Coast Guard, represented by myself, LTJG
7 Greg [REDACTED] LT Brian [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] our civilian
8 investigator. Could the NTSB please introduce themselves again?

9 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise, M-u-i-s-e, with the
10 National Transportation Safety Board.

11 MR. PANAGIOTOU: This is Joseph Panagiotou,
12 P-a-n-a-g-i-o-u-t-o-u, with the National Transportation Safety
13 Board.

14 LTJG [REDACTED] And is Mr. [REDACTED] on the line -- or Mr. [REDACTED]
15 are you on the line?

16 MR. [REDACTED] Yes. This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the auxiliary
17 interpreter. So let me just translate a little bit what just
18 happened. (Speaking Chinese.)

19 MR. ZHANG: (Speaking Chinese.)

20 MS. QIN: Yeah. He just said that he could --

21 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. Perfect. And --

22 MS. QIN: And just --

23 MR. [REDACTED] So thank you very much.

24 MS. QIN: Just so it's clear --

25 MR. [REDACTED] So I guess if you speak in sentences, I will

1 quickly have you pause and I quickly interpret, and then I'll move
2 to the next sentence?

3 LT [REDACTED] So, Mr. [REDACTED] this is LT [REDACTED] What we're
4 going to do is, we have an interpreter here, and just due to the
5 delays over the phone, we're going to rely primarily on the
6 interpreter here to provide the interpretation. And then at the
7 end, or at any time if there's any discrepancies in the
8 interpretation, which we don't anticipate, feel free to interject.
9 But just due to, you know, interference over the phone and delays,
10 we're going to rely here in Jacksonville on the interpreter who is
11 actually present here, and we'll use you as a backup if that's, if
12 that's clear with you.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. That's fine, and I'll just listen in. All
14 right.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] Perfect.

16 Captain, do you want to introduce yourself?

17 MR. ZHANG: Yes. I'm Captain of *Hoëgh Xiamen*, and actually I
18 have already on board of this ship for nearly 7 months.

19 LTJG [REDACTED] Perfect. And could you state your name for
20 the record please?

21 MR. ZHANG: Zhang, Shilian.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

23 MR. ZHANG: Yeah. And I was born on [REDACTED]
24 That means 51 years old. And actually, I have been as captain
25 since 1994 -- oh, sorry. No, no, no. It's 2007, sorry. I

1 graduated from 1994, and I have been starting my captain's
2 career 2006 -- 2007, sir.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. Great. Ma'am, could you introduce
4 yourself, please?

5 MS. POITIER: Sure. Joni Poitier, partner at Moseley,
6 Prichard, Parrish, Knight, and Jones, and I'm here representing
7 the P&I Club.

8 LTJG [REDACTED] And then, ma'am?

9 MS. QIN: And my name is Linda, Linda Qin. I'm the
10 interpreter.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] Perfect. All right. Without further
12 objection, we'll just -- we'll move to the questioning then.
13 Everyone all right with that? All right. Perfect.

14 INTERVIEW OF SHILIAN ZHANG

15 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

16 Q. So, Captain, obviously there was a fire on board the *Hoëgh*
17 *Xiamen* about -- could you just give us a description of what
18 happened that day and we'll go from there?

19 A. Sir, actually the cargo operation finished, in my mind it is
20 nearly 3:00, around, and then our officer told me sailing time
21 will be 1700 on the same date.

22 Q. And what date was that?

23 A. It's 4th --

24 Q. June 4th?

25 A. -- June. Yes. And in my mind, crew is on the progress for

1 doing the job after cargo operation, for example, to close the
2 ramp, to close the inner ramp, outer ramp, or something like this.
3 And for me, I stay in my office, because just around 3 o'clock, I
4 finish the (indiscernible) away and I make my report, that is.
5 And around 3:30, about -- the reason I said this about is, this
6 means I cannot very clearly to check -- to remember actually time
7 it is.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. And somebody warn us on the walkie-talkie. There's a fire,
10 there's a heavy smoking from the deck house. And another somebody
11 said -- but because it's so urgently, I cannot remember who is
12 this, the one on the walkie-talkie. Because there's a fire on
13 Deck 7 -- Deck 7, Deck 8, like about. Actually, Deck number
14 7/number 8 is the same fire sector.

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And then what happened from then -- what happened after that,
18 Captain?

19 A. Yeah, after that, we go to -- we go outside from our office,
20 and the first thing I saw is the chief officer is running to his
21 deck office and, you know, for the ship's common practice is
22 before cargo operation and after cargo operation -- before cargo
23 operation started, the chief officer should go to the deck office
24 to isolate it, fire detection system in the cargo hold. And after
25 finish the cargo operation, he should back to the office to

1 resume, resume the progress for fire detection system. And that's
2 why he running to deck office.

3 And I follow him and -- to check, because sometimes, you
4 know, I was -- fire detection system can be isolated, but it have
5 a time limit. It's around 10 hours about. If time limit is --
6 how to say it?

7 MS. QIN: Okay. More than that.

8 MR. ZHANG: More than 10 hours, there will be fire alarm. So
9 first we go to check, to check if this fire alarm detection system
10 is on or off. That's the first thing chief officer go to the fire
11 detection system to, to switch down the fire detection system
12 because -- before it's -- the fire detection system for, for the
13 cargo hold are isolated. So that's why he switched it on.

14 Then suddenly, fire alarm. That's -- we're very sure there's
15 a real fire in the cargo hold. And I run to the bridge and called
16 chief mate, go to spot, help us contact on the walkie-talkie. I
17 go to the bridge and warning everybody on the (indiscernible)
18 call, we have a fire alarm in -- on Deck 7/Deck 8, and everybody
19 go to the muster station. And I ordered on the walkie-talkie to
20 ask chief mate to follow the procedure we normally, we did do in
21 the fire drill.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

23 MR. ZHANG: Yeah. The first lesson in my mind is order them
24 to isolate it. This means close all the fire damp to Deck 7 and
25 Deck 8. And then I tried to make a call to local fire rescue --

1 yeah, 911 in my mind. And call on VHF Channel 16 first, and
2 nobody answer. I try on the phone on the bridge, also failed.
3 Then I run back to my office to pick up the phone in my office to
4 try to make a call my agent.

5 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

6 MR. ZHANG: And the DP, with (indiscernible) the list use two
7 phone at the same time, actually, in my mind. But it's failed. I
8 don't know why. Then I have to run back to the bridge to call the
9 Channel 16 again to, to the -- to call somebody. For example,
10 Port Control.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] Um-hum.

12 MR. ZHANG: Nobody answer. And in my mind, the Channel 14 is
13 for the pilot and (indiscernible) back to Channel 14. Still no
14 somebody answer. And actually there's (indiscernible), you go to
15 Channel 13. Attempt call to Channel 13. Actually, this worked.

16 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

17 MR. ZHANG: They replied. I told them we have a fire at the
18 -- on the ship. Our location is Berth Number 20 of Blount Island
19 Terminal, and we have a real fire on deck number 8, actually.
20 Because somebody call on the walkie-talkie, it's deck number 8.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. ZHANG: Yeah.

23 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

24 Q. And then what happened after that?

25 A. After that, the chief mate said, the fire damper already

1 closed, already closed. We are ready to release the CO2 system.

2 And actually, I saw the fire rescue car is coming.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. It's coming, it's coming. Because -- actually, in my mind it
5 is near the -- there's a bridge, there's a bridge. Yeah.

6 Already, already over there. And I ordered ship officer to let
7 the other firemen to check. Maybe we can go inside to have fire
8 detection, and maybe we can do it ourself to put out the fire, but
9 they report it's too much smoke inside. We can see nothing, and
10 there's a light off. And then I go to the light switch board;
11 this light is on, on that decks. Actually, it's on.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And I think maybe sometimes the light is on, maybe it's off.
14 So I switch it off and switched on again. And then they report
15 it's impossible to go inside; for the safety of all of them, come
16 back. The reason I call them back is, first of all, our safety,
17 and second, I see the experienced men, the fire rescue team from
18 shoreside, is coming. They should have much more experience than
19 us.

20 Then, actually, at that time the alarm was sounded. It's a
21 very big noise, and my walkie-talkie, it is very hard to hear very
22 clearly, what did it say by chief mate or some other crew. I
23 cannot hear very clearly. So I running to the fire station, my
24 muster station myself.

25 Q. So you went from the bridge to the muster station?

1 A. Yes. And on the way I ask my chief mate, chief, ask our crew
2 muster together to check all crew were there and all us are safe
3 or not.

4 Q. So where was the muster station at?

5 A. Muster station at that time is in the middle of the ship.

6 Q. Middle of the ship?

7 A. Yes. There's an open area near the basketball place.

8 Q. So the middle top deck?

9 A. Top deck in the middle, yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And actually, I can see very clearly the smoking from the
12 vent coming stronger and stronger.

13 Q. Okay. And you say you saw the smoke; where was it coming
14 from?

15 A. From the vent of -- vent from port and starboard side located
16 ship's aft. Actually, I don't remember which one. It's
17 (indiscernible) I cannot very clearly remember.

18 Q. But it was in the -- it was port and starboard vents aft of
19 the ship?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Thank you. So then what happened next?

22 A. Then chief mate said, we are all safe. We are all together.
23 Captain, what should we do now? And because it's my first time to
24 encounter disaster situation like this, and the first thing I was
25 considering is our safety. And second, I see the fire rescue men

1 are coming. So I order them -- no, no, no. Sorry. I remember --
2 the first mate, because I saw the firemen coming toward the ship,
3 you go down to, to tell the rescue men -- fire rescue men what's
4 going on onboard. And second mate, you bring our fire --

5 Q. Control plan?

6 A. Fire control plan, yes. Let -- show them the fire control
7 plan. And when I go to the, go to the muster station and see the
8 smoke is coming more heavily, so for our safety I order all my
9 crew, so let's go. Follow my chief mate, go down.

10 And at that time, I want to stay on board because I'm the
11 captain. I want -- it's my duty to make sure all -- everybody I
12 save and is gone, so I -- the first thing I want to stay on board
13 and to see what can I do?

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. What could I do at that time? But actually, at that time it
16 is -- problem is same as before, too much noise, out of sight, and
17 heavy rain, heavy rain. And I ask chief mate, what's going on?
18 You talk to this fireman from shoreside. I can hear nothing on
19 the walkie-talkie. So I had to run down myself to deck number 5.

20 When I got down to deck number 5, I see there's three,
21 around, firemen on there. So I, I -- they ask me -- because they
22 have the, they have the firemen fleet with breath apparatus on,
23 and too much noise in the cargo hold. We have some problem for
24 communication. I cannot understand them; they could not
25 understand me. They have only three -- they had only three, three

1 firemen, so I think it's, it's too hard for them to, to fix the
2 fire immediately. So I ask them, can I go back to release CO2
3 system? They said, yes.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. They said, yes. I ordered chief, you and the chief engineer,
6 back to on the ship to release CO2 as soon as possible,
7 immediately. And my chief mate and the chief engineer begin
8 running up. And I told them, before they're gone, please let me
9 know when you are ready. You must get my final order and then you
10 can release. Because for the release of CO2 system is very
11 danger. If there is somebody nearby, they could, could die. I, I
12 told them, you must make sure. But you know, gentlemen, you know
13 that situation. Very -- so urgently, I forgot my, my
14 walkie-talkie. I was -- I cannot hear them very clearly. It is
15 too far away.

16 Actually, at that time, I'm on deck number 5. The chief
17 officer and chief engineer run, run up. I order them -- ask them
18 the situation. I can hear nothing. I can hear nothing. I had to
19 run up. I tell the, the shore firefighters, standby. I go up.
20 So I running up, running up to, to back accommodation deck again.
21 And actually, at that time, the chief officer and the chief
22 engineer are ready, and they're trying to call me on the
23 walkie-talkie at the, at the gate of our low-pressure system room.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. Yes. I say, chief, chief engineer, do it right now. Then

1 chief engineer running to the -- run back to the CO2 room and
2 start all pressing of the -- releasing the CO2 stuff. And
3 actually, at that time, first time to try in the -- in that
4 station fail. It doesn't work. It didn't work.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So we had to make a second step. So the chief mate reminded
7 me, Captain, we can go to Fire Station Number 1. It's much easier
8 for -- make releasing. I say, go. Let's go. So the chief
9 engineer and I, at the same time, running to Fire Station Number
10 1. And the chief engineer started immediately the releasing
11 (indiscernible) and broke something and switched on the valve or
12 something like this, that is.

13 And at that time I saw the chief engineer did the releasing
14 progress, open the valve or something like that. I hear very
15 clearly this -- there's, there's something like sounds -- the, the
16 releasing CO2 works -- worked. And, you know, before I run up to
17 the -- up deck, the local firefighter told us, after you done, you
18 must be back as soon as possible. So for sake of safety, I
19 ordered, ordered the chief engineer and chief officer, so let's,
20 let's down to, to the, to the deck number 5, immediately. So we
21 get down.

22 And after I -- after us back to the deck number 5, at the
23 location nearby the entrance of the staircase, I met the
24 firefighters again. And I told them, I already released the CO2
25 system for that, for that decks. If your guys want to go inside,

1 you must be very careful. That's CO2. They said, okay. And then
2 they ordered us, you all crew, get it away. Ask us, go to the, go
3 to the berth. That is all.

4 Q. Okay. Well, first of all, Captain, I'm glad you're okay.

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. You know, that's very scary, and I understand that. So to be
7 clear, none of your crew were harmed?

8 A. Very lucky. Very lucky.

9 Q. Okay. Yes. So one question I have is, you said when the --
10 after the chief mate turned on the fire alarms, the alarms went
11 off, you had called everyone to fire muster stations, correct?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. And did you have any of your crew try to go into Deck 7 and
14 8? Did they put on fire gear and try to go into Deck 7 and 8?

15 A. After we -- sir, our procedure is, normally if the fire alarm
16 is sounding and there's a (indiscernible) call and to
17 (indiscernible) is fire, all the fire team are the crew. For
18 example, if their duties are for -- is fireman, they should, to go
19 to the place, to take the fire detection --

20 Q. Correct.

21 A. -- firefighter outfit on. They -- yes.

22 Q. So they did try to go into Deck 7 and 8?

23 A. I cannot answer your question like this.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Because they didn't go in order, so the first they should go

1 to the place, take the equipment on.

2 Q. Okay.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Do you understand what I'm trying to ask?

4 MR. [REDACTED] Um-hum.

5 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. So do you guys want to talk
6 specifically more about the order of events here?

7 MR. [REDACTED] I had just one point of clarification. The CO2
8 system, the low-pressure CO2 system, what deck is that located on?

9 MR. ZHANG: On deck number 12.

10 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

11 Q. So I do have one follow-up further about the CO2 system. So
12 I know you said the chief engineer was in the CO2 room, right?

13 A. It's -- when I went back to the accommodation area, I saw the
14 chief engineer is trying to call me on the walkie-talkie in front
15 of the door of the CO2 room. Yeah.

16 Q. Okay. So my question is, who actually released the CO2? Was
17 it the chief engineer?

18 A. Chief engineer.

19 Q. The chief engineer released it from the CO2 room?

20 A. Yes.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

22 Did you have anything, [REDACTED]

23 MR. [REDACTED] When, when the CO2 was released, you said you
24 heard that -- the noise. The pssssh noise. Did you hear anything
25 else? Any, any alarms? Additional alarms or anything? Like a,

1 like a whistle or -- was there any other noises heard other than
2 that pssssh that you explained?

3 MR. ZHANG: At that time stand, stand on -- near the, nearby
4 Station Number 1. Outside that, I don't know. The only sound I
5 can hear at that time is a very big noise, is the fire alarm.

6 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

7 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

8 Q. And where is Fire Station Number 1?

9 A. Fire Station Number 1 is in the aft part, aft part, starboard
10 side of accommodation area, accommodation area.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Actually, it is middle of the ship.

13 Q. Middle of the ship. So it's near the muster station?

14 A. Yes.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Then initially, or in the beginning, the
16 walkie-talkie call for smoke, then the alarm, you said folks went
17 to do the -- to close the dampers. How many closed the dampers?
18 How many, how many people go to close the dampers?

19 MR. ZHANG: I don't know.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. When you released the CO2 system, does
21 it automatically close dampers?

22 MR. ZHANG: I'm sorry? I don't know.

23 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

24 BY MR. [REDACTED]

25 Q. Chief, you -- or sorry, Captain, you said you saw smoke

1 coming out of some ventilation trunk. When you were on the
2 accommodation deck, you looked aft, port and starboard, and you
3 can't really remember for sure, but you did see smoke. Are those
4 ventilation trunks or the area that you might have seen smoke
5 coming from, was that part of a damper that should have been
6 closed?

7 A. Actually, the damper closing progress already I ask chief
8 mate to arrange somebody to do it.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. And what, what's your question you want to ask me?

11 Q. My question is, were you seeing smoke coming out of a
12 ventilation trunk that should have otherwise been closed?

13 MS. QIN: Yes, he says.

14 MR. ZHANG: Yeah.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, okay. When the CO2 was actuated from --
16 when you activated it from the CO2 room --

17 MS. POITIER: And just a point of clarification.

18 MR. [REDACTED] Um-hum.

19 MS. POITIER: I think he said, just based on my recollection
20 of what he said, he saw the smoke before he ordered the dampers to
21 be closed.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

23 MS. POITIER: Just, if you go back and listen.

24 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

25 MS. POITIER: I think in the timeline --

1 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

2 MS. POITIER: -- he -- that's what he said, and then he
3 ordered the dampers to be closed.

4 MS. QIN: Yes.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Right. Right.

6 MS. POITIER: In regards to your question which is, I think,
7 where --

8 BY MR. [REDACTED]

9 Q. I was under the, I was under the impression that it was when
10 you had left -- you were on the bridge. The chief radioed saying
11 the dampers had been closed, ready to release CO2. You could see
12 fire rescue coming. You checked the lights. You couldn't hear
13 over the loud alarms on the bridge with the walkie-talkie, so you
14 went down to the fire station and you saw smoke. That's -- I
15 believe when we go back and listen that's, that's what you, you
16 answered. So my question is, when you saw smoke coming from the
17 aft portion, is it possible that it was coming through vents that
18 should have been closed?

19 A. Yeah, it should be closed.

20 Q. Okay. And obviously, we haven't been able to get on the
21 vessel, and this is something that we're going to look into to see
22 if perhaps systems that were in place, not manual closures, but
23 automatic closures might not have closed fully or functioned
24 properly, which would have allowed both smoke to come out, and
25 when smoke is coming out, if you were to release CO2, it's

- 1 possible that, that could be the same path the CO2 escaped.
- 2 A. Yeah. If the damper not closed tightly --
- 3 Q. Right.
- 4 A. -- then of course the --
- 5 Q. Right.
- 6 A. -- some CO2 will be blow out, yes.
- 7 Q. When we arrived on scene, the ramp was down. Is there any
8 procedure when there's a fire in port to lift the ramp up to close
9 the hull?
- 10 A. For the ramp?
- 11 Q. Yeah, the, the car ramp.
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 Q. The car ramp was down. Could the car ramp being down affect
14 the, affect the -- impact the effectiveness of the CO2? The ramp
15 being down?
- 16 A. If, if the ramp connect to that, that deck, it would of
17 course affect the CO2.
- 18 Q. Right.
- 19 A. Yeah, of course.
- 20 Q. Okay. Was the ramp open or closed?
- 21 A. Closed.
- 22 Q. The one that's inside.
- 23 A. Inside closed.
- 24 Q. Okay. The inside ramp was closed. So to your knowledge,
25 Deck 7/8 would share a common fire -- that was all closed down?

1 A. Actually, this one will be down and finished by chief
2 officer.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Chief officer will ask somebody, for example, ask the bosun
5 to close after all cargo operation --

6 Q. Correct.

7 A. -- finished and the steward also finishes unlashing --

8 Q. Right.

9 A. -- and lashing and the left, they will secure the ramp.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So to your knowledge, that ramp was closed?

13 A. For -- the only thing I -- the only ramp I could see is the
14 stern ramp is still, still, still unopened.

15 Q. So to your knowledge, the only ramp that was open was the
16 stern ramp, to the pier?

17 A. Sorry?

18 Q. The only ramp that was open was the stern ramp to the pier?

19 A. The, the only ramp I can open is the stern ramp, yes.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Do you want to move on to the -- do you have
21 anything else for the time -- for this timeline?

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]

23 Q. The ventilation -- or the smoke detector panel, those, those
24 decks with -- the cargo decks were isolated so that they would not
25 sound an alarm, and you said that lasted for -- if it was left in

1 that condition for over 10 hours, it would automatically go back
2 to being active? The, the fire alarm panel, is that correct?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Is that standard for import cargo loading operations? Cargo
5 loading or discharge, is it standard to isolate the fire alarm
6 panel on that --

7 A. Sir, my answer is, that's a normal practice of our cargo
8 operation. The -- before the start operation, the chief officer
9 should go to the deck office to isolate the fire detection system.
10 If they didn't do this, and there's many false alarm from the
11 deck.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. And actually, at that time we have DP officer and watchman on
14 the decks.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] Right.

16 MR. ZHANG: So that's, that's what I said.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

18 MR. ZHANG: That's why we --

19 LTJG [REDACTED] Yeah. Yeah. It becomes manned.

20 MR. ZHANG: Yeah.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] So they can see it.

22 MR. ZHANG: Yeah.

23 LTJG [REDACTED] So all the vehicles cause the -- okay.

24 BY MR. [REDACTED]

25 Q. How long have you been on board the, the vessel?

1 A. Nearly 7 months or so.

2 Q. Okay. In those 7 months, has there been any maintenance or
3 repairs done to the fire detection system?

4 A. I don't know.

5 Q. Do you know if there has been any -- anybody come on board
6 the vessel to test that system in the past 7 months, the CO2
7 system?

8 A. The only thing I can answer to you is I have been ask
9 shipmate to follow our company's procedure regarding the
10 maintenance or testing all equipment. He in charge.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

12 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

13 Q. So he is -- so the chief mate is designated by the company as
14 being responsible for the maintenance of the fire detection
15 system?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. And is that designated in writing?

18 A. We have a company's maintenance system --

19 Q. Safety management system?

20 A. Yeah, it is called PM -- our company it is called Star IPS
21 (ph.).

22 Q. Okay. And then, so can you describe to me some of the -- I'm
23 going to ask about the cargo procedures now. So is it standard
24 for you to have a crew member on the deck while cargo is being
25 loaded? Do you -- when cargo is -- when cars and cargo is being

1 loaded onto a deck, is there a crew member on that deck while
2 that's happening?

3 A. There should be.

4 Q. There should --

5 A. There should be.

6 Q. Okay. And who's in charge of making sure that someone is
7 there?

8 A. Our chief officer. That's why I said should be.

9 Q. Yeah. And who typically will he ask to do that?

10 A. I don't know.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

12 BY MR. [REDACTED]

13 Q. Real quick, and I'm sorry, I'm going to go back to the fire
14 prevention system for the CO2. Since you have been working on
15 these vessels, have you ever witnessed the testing of a fire -- a
16 CO2 system?

17 A. No, sir.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Sir, no, sorry. I, I cannot remember.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I cannot remember.

22 Q. And that, that's fine. I just want to know if you've ever
23 kind of seen the system go off before and what the sounds were
24 like, what the -- you know, what actually happened.

25 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

1 Q. For -- when was the last time you and the crew did a fire
2 drill?

3 A. Oh, on the 3rd.

4 Q. The 3rd of June?

5 A. 3rd of June, because we have a class, so we're on board did
6 MLC and ISPS and ISM, certificate renew audit. So they asked our
7 crew to did a drill to fire -- make a fire drill, and yeah.

8 Q. And the class surveyor witnessed the fire drill?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. And who is your classification society?

11 A. DNV GL.

12 Q. Okay. And did you, did you pass -- did you receive all those
13 certificates?

14 A. They didn't -- they just ask us verbally. They didn't give
15 us writing --

16 Q. Did --

17 A. -- information. Yeah. You need to do this, that, that --

18 Q. So they did not issue any conditions of class?

19 A. No, no.

20 Q. Okay. Were there any flag state dispensations for the vessel
21 on June 3rd or 4th? Specific things told to you by class -- I
22 mean, excuse me, by your flag state, so Norway? Did the Norwegian
23 flag state give you a dispensation for any equipment not working
24 or any repairs? Anything like that?

25 A. No. No, sir. No, sir. Everything well, sir.

- 1 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.
- 2 BY MR. [REDACTED]
- 3 Q. When was your last port state-controlled exam?
- 4 A. Last ordered state control --
- 5 Q. Well, not just --
- 6 A. -- is (indiscernible) you.
- 7 Q. It was in Jacksonville?
- 8 A. Yeah. Last one is done by you, you, you know --
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. When the -- sorry. You guys come on board because of --
- 11 Q. Last year?
- 12 A. -- on June.
- 13 Q. Right.
- 14 A. Yeah, when we lost steering around a few seconds.
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. That's the last inspection.
- 17 Q. What about a full-scale port state-controlled exam?
- 18 A. What's that?
- 19 Q. An actual port state-controlled exam? Like, a big, lengthy
- 20 -- it's a one to two hour exam where (indiscernible) certificates
- 21 for --
- 22 A. Oh, register -- the inspection was done in June -- the date I
- 23 forget. Three months ago, in --
- 24 Q. Berlin (ph.)?
- 25 A. Yes, sir.

1 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

2 Q. Did they issue any deficiencies during that?

3 A. No, sir. No, sir.

4 Q. Kind of coming back to -- I'm sorry to go back to the cargo
5 operations. Does -- after everyone is done loading the cars, do
6 you have any -- who -- first of all, do you have anyone who's
7 supposed to go check how they've been loaded, and if so, who is
8 that person?

9 A. I don't know, sir. I don't know.

10 Q. Okay. So are you familiar with the ship's cargo securing
11 manual?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I know it.

15 Q. Yeah. And who follows that?

16 A. The cargo operation, including the cargo securing manual, to
17 be followed, should be done by chief mate.

18 Q. Chief mate, okay. And does he -- how does he verify that
19 it's being followed?

20 A. The whole procedure described in the cargo securing manual.
21 They have the standard issue (ph.) in the manual.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. The chief mate must follow this.

24 Q. Okay. And do you know what that procedure is?

25 A. We have proceedings, but I cannot very clearly remember, very

1 detailed information.

2 Q. Right. Okay. So before you were a captain though, you were
3 a chief mate, correct?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. And when you were chief mate, how did you check that the
6 cargo was secured properly?

7 A. Actually, when I start chief mate, we have the company's
8 checklist.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Checklist. The checklist, that include, in my mind, before
11 cargo operation started, we need a meeting with the steward
12 company and make a short meeting after talking about what kind of
13 cargo to be loaded and the cargo size, the cargo -- the weight of
14 cargo, the cargo license to be, to be done.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Something like this. And our -- the ship's (indiscernible)
17 someplace must be careful.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Something like this.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So in your experience, on your ship, did the chief mate use
23 the cargo securing manual, or did he use a checklist from the
24 company?

25 A. We have the company's procedure for this.

1 Q. Okay. Now, does the company's procedure -- where does that
2 come from?

3 A. We have our company's -- what you say, SMS, Safety Management
4 System. They have a checklist regarding the cargo securing, cargo
5 operation, everything inside.

6 Q. Okay. Okay.

7 A. And also, we have Hoëgh Autoliner, because Hoëgh Autoliner is
8 our ship's owner.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Not only ship's -- yes. It is same owner. Because this
11 vessel, owner is OCY, and this vessel was available to charter by
12 the Hoëgh Autoliner.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. This means we have Hoëgh Autoliner's procedure for the
15 securing --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- cargo securing, for the cargo operations.

18 Q. Okay. And what kind of cargo was being loaded in
19 Jacksonville onto the vessel?

20 A. They are all used the cars.

21 Q. Cars?

22 A. The only thing, I'm very sure, is the cars. The, the auto
23 cargo.

24 Q. Okay. Were they brand new cars or were they old cars?

25 A. I cannot remember clearly, sir.

1 Q. Okay. Did you oversee any of the cargo operations in
2 Jacksonville?

3 A. Oversee?

4 Q. Did you watch any of it happen?

5 A. Sometimes I go to bridge wing and -- to check the, the
6 situation with ship alongside.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And I see there's a stevedore doing the job. But for me, I
9 -- for the captain, I sometimes cannot check the cargo operation
10 very clearly.

11 Q. Right.

12 A. Very closely.

13 Q. Right, right. Understood. Did you go look at Deck 7 and 8
14 at all that day?

15 A. No. I did not go there.

16 LTJG ██████████ Okay.

17 BY MR. ██████████

18 Q. I'd like to change topics a little bit and talk about your
19 opinion of your crew, the vessel, et cetera, based on your
20 experience as a master and your experience as a mariner. So let's
21 start with the general condition of the vessel. How would you
22 compare this vessel to other vessels you've been on; was it a good
23 vessel?

24 A. It was a good vessel, sir. It's -- I like this vessel. I
25 like this ship.

- 1 Q. Well, what's --
- 2 A. And also our crew, sir.
- 3 Q. Okay. So that -- about the crew, was it an experienced crew?
- 4 A. Yeah. Very good. Very good.
- 5 Q. Okay. Did you have any personnel issues, any issue with the
- 6 qualifications of the people working for you?
- 7 A. No, sir. It was very good.
- 8 Q. Okay. Did you have any issues with maintenance on board the
- 9 vessel not getting done?
- 10 A. The issues we had with maintenance.
- 11 Q. Right. Did -- was maintenance being done properly and on
- 12 time? Did you have any issues as a master having to --
- 13 A. Sir, for me, I feel our crew doing their job very well, sir.
- 14 Q. Did you have any issues with the company at all?
- 15 A. For the company, no, sir. The company give us very good
- 16 support.
- 17 Q. They were responsive to any issues that arose?
- 18 A. Yes. For example, if we need something, we kept close
- 19 communication, vessel support from the company.
- 20 Q. Okay. Did anything stick out -- the day of the incident, did
- 21 anything stick out to you as abnormal or cause you any alarm prior
- 22 to the sign of smoke?
- 23 A. Can you say again, sir?
- 24 Q. Prior to your knowledge of there being a fire onboard, the
- 25 smoke, was there anything that was abnormal that day? Anything

1 out of the ordinary?

2 A. Everything normal, sir.

3 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

4 LT [REDACTED] Can I ask --

5 BY LT [REDACTED]

6 Q. So obviously you've been sailing a long time. Prior to you
7 being captain of this ship, what types of ships have you normally
8 worked on?

9 A. Before this ship?

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. I have been using Hoëgh Autoliner 10 years, 10 years. Hoëgh
12 Autoliner is -- I -- the vessels are okay car carrier.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 LT [REDACTED] Thank you, Captain.

16 BY MR. [REDACTED]

17 Q. And then back to your crew, it sounds like you had a good, a
18 good crew, very qualified. What about -- as the captain, did you
19 have to deal with any personal issues between crewmen? Was there
20 any arguments, anything like that the captain had to --

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. You got -- okay.

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. All right. And since, since the incident you have, you have
25 come here to stay?

1 A. (No audible response.)

2 Q. Okay. And have you been communicating with your crew?

3 A. Yes. We all stay together for a very long time, and you know
4 the situation until that time. When we arrived at the hotel, I
5 have been tried to let them come down. We are safe now.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. And I talk to them, and if you need -- if they need anything,
8 you can let me know, and also you can tell the, the local agent,
9 something like this.

10 Q. Okay. Has any of the crew, since the incident, since the
11 fire, come to you and stated they have seen or heard or --
12 something regarding the fire?

13 A. Actually, the most topic we -- I've looked on the TV and
14 internet, because we want to know what's going on, on the ship.
15 And regarding other matters, I cannot remember, sir.

16 Q. Okay. So nobody -- no, no officers or crew have come to you
17 and said they noticed something, like, you know, the smoke or the
18 fire, anything like that and -- with the, with the fire since
19 you've been here?

20 MS. POITIER: Did they notice something before the incident?

21 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]

23 Q. Have they come to you since, since the accident, since the
24 fire, have they come to you to talk to you about the fire, saying
25 they may have seen something or heard something that --

1 MS. POITIER: Before the fire?

2 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

3 MS. POITIER: Okay.

4 MR. ZHANG: We have been here already nearly 2, 2 days, and
5 actually there's no any crew come to me, speak some special
6 circumstance he encounter it. They didn't.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

8 MR. ZHANG: No, sir.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

10 MR. ZHANG: The most topic we're talking about the first is
11 the situation on board the ship and regarding the -- some matters,
12 maybe they forget. For example, the walkie-talkie or something
13 else. Their cell phone or something like this. That's, that's
14 only very minor matters to me. Yes, sir.

15 BY MR. [REDACTED]

16 Q. Okay. So just matters of personal, like, phones and
17 walkie-talkies, but nothing regarding the fire?

18 A. No. No, sir. In my mind, no, sir.

19 Q. Just to set the route, where were you headed after
20 Jacksonville? So you were going to leave -- you were planning on
21 leaving at 1500 the day of the incident, June 4th. Where was the
22 vessel headed?

23 A. After Jacksonville, we were going to Baltimore, sir.

24 Q. Okay. In Baltimore, were you unloading or were you loading
25 more --

- 1 A. We are loading more.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. We are loading more cargo, and actually, we have one car
4 loaded it in (indiscernible). And this car should be --- will be
5 discharged to Wilmington, but before arriving, the charter changed
6 their mind. They change the destination after Jacksonville to
7 Baltimore.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. So this car to be discharged in Baltimore. We have one
10 car --
- 11 Q. So discharging one car in Baltimore and loading --
- 12 A. Loading until full.
- 13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.
- 14 BY LTJG [REDACTED]
- 15 Q. And who is the charter for the vessel?
- 16 A. Grimaldi.
- 17 Q. And then what was the previous port to Jacksonville?
- 18 A. Previous port is Freeport.
- 19 Q. Freeport --
- 20 MS. POITIER: Texas.
- 21 LTJG [REDACTED] Texas?
- 22 MR. ZHANG: Freeport, Texas.
- 23 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay, sir.
- 24 MS. POITIER: Can we take just a break?
- 25 MR. [REDACTED] Absolutely.

1 MS. POITIER: Just a five minute -- sorry. I need to call.

2 MR. [REDACTED] It's also been about an hour, so --

3 (Laughter.)

4 MR. [REDACTED] -- we're going to take a break, Captain.

5 MR. ZHANG: Thank you. Thank you.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] It's -- just so everyone on the record knows,
7 it's approximately noon on June 6th, and we're taking a break from
8 the interview with the master of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*.

9 (Off the record at 12:00 p.m.)

10 (On the record at 12:06 p.m.)

11 LTJG [REDACTED] All right. Hello, everyone. It's
12 approximately 12:06 on June 6th, 2020, and we will be resuming the
13 interview with the master of the *Hoëgh Xiamen* about the fire,
14 which occurred on June 4th, 2020.

15 BY MR. [REDACTED]

16 Q. I think I was in the process, Captain, of asking you just
17 about the route prior to port, port that you were headed to
18 afterwards. And we, we got from you that the charter was
19 Grimaldi. Has the vessel been, been chartered by that company
20 your entire time on board?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And have you been on the same relative route? Like, have you
23 been on the same fixed route --

24 A. Yeah, normally fixed route for the --

25 (Cell phone rings.)

1 MR. ZHANG: Can I?

2 MR. [REDACTED] Absolutely.

3 (Off the record.)

4 (On the record.)

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]

6 Q. So been on the same -- I think you were saying the last
7 two -- I was asking if you were on the same run, same loop of --

8 A. Yeah, same route.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. A little bit of difference every time is U.S. port.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. For example, sometimes Jacksonville, but sometimes
13 Jacksonville not (indiscernible).

14 Q. The reason I'm asking these questions, have you had any
15 issues with cargo before? While you've been underway or after
16 ports, has there been any issues with, like, the condition of the
17 vehicle being loaded?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Leaks?

20 A. No, sir.

21 Q. Electrical? Have you had any even small minor issues, fire?
22 Anything like that? Like, before, while you've been on board?

23 A. No, no, sir.

24 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

25 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED] do you have anything else?

1 (No audible response.)

2 LTJG ██████ Turn it over to NTSB.

3 Mr. Muise, are you still there, sir?

4 MR. MUISE: I am.

5 LTJG ██████ All righty. I think the Coast Guard here is
6 done with our line of questioning. If you and the other gentleman
7 from NTSB have anything, please go ahead, sir.

8 MR. MUISE: Okay. I have just a few clarifying questions.

9 BY MR. MUISE:

10 Q. Captain, my name is Marcel Muise. I work for the National
11 Transportation Safety Board, and we investigate major accidents,
12 like this one, alongside the Coast Guard. We'll do our
13 investigation, our own report, but at this point in the
14 investigation we work together. That way you only have to be
15 interviewed once instead of twice, and we share information with
16 each other, but we'll go our separate ways later and produce a
17 separate investigation. Did you have any questions about what the
18 NTSB does?

19 A. No, no.

20 Q. Okay. Just a few follow-ups then, just -- and just to
21 clarify, the internal ramps, the ramp between 6 and 7, that ramp
22 was closed, is that correct?

23 MS. QIN: The ramp of 6 and 7 were --

24 LTJG ██████ Between Deck 6 and 7 --

25 MS. QIN: Oh, between Decks 6 and 7 closed.

1 MR. ZHANG: Between 6 and 7, closed, I'm very sure, because
2 when I go down I, I saw that.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

4 MR. ZHANG: It's closed position, yes.

5 BY MR. MUISE:

6 Q. And that's on the port side, is that right?

7 A. Inner ramp is on port side, inner ramp, between number 6 and
8 the number 7, yes, sir.

9 Q. Okay. And how about between 8 and 9, was that ramp closed?

10 A. I don't know, sir. I, I don't know.

11 Q. Okay. And in Jacksonville, which decks did you load cargo
12 on?

13 A. I don't know, sir. The cargo operation will be in charge by
14 the chief mate. I cannot remember clearly which deck and how many
15 cars or something else to be loaded, sir.

16 Q. Okay. We'll ask the chief mate then. The dampers -- the
17 fire, the fire dampers are all on the, on the upper deck, I guess
18 Deck 12. Do you normally close those after you get underway or
19 right away after cargo is complete?

20 MS. QIN: After or before? What's his question?

21 LTJG [REDACTED] He's asking, do they close the dampers after
22 they finish cargo or after the vessel gets underway?

23 MS. QIN: Oh, okay.

24 MR. ZHANG: Basic procedure for us is after cargo operation
25 and chief mate will make the final decision which damper will be

1 closed or kept opened. That will be decided by the chief mate,
2 sir. So I don't know, sir.

3 MR. MUISE: Do you know, are they the style with the cable
4 that has a cover and you have to do it with a hand crank -- a
5 seaman has to go and hand crank each damper, or is it a different
6 type?

7 MR. ZHANG: Sorry?

8 MS. QIN: A different size?

9 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to know, is the damper closed by a
10 hand crank with a cable --

11 MS. QIN: Oh, manually.

12 LTJG [REDACTED] -- manually, or is there a different way that
13 it --

14 MS. QIN: Oh, okay.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] -- closes?

16 MR. ZHANG: We have two ways. Yeah, one is we just switch on
17 -- switch power, just has the power -- switch --

18 MS. QIN: Button.

19 MR. ZHANG: -- and another one is manually.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

21 MR. ZHANG: Yes. We have two way.

22 MR. MUISE: Okay. And the fans, do you know which fans were
23 running just before the fire? Were they all closed -- or all
24 turned off after cargo?

25 MS. QIN: I can't hear.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to know what fans were turned on.

2 MS. QIN: What fans?

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Yes.

4 MS. QIN: Okay.

5 MR. ZHANG: I don't know.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] He -- okay.

7 MR. ZHANG: I don't know, sir.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Chief mate would know?

9 MR. MUISE: Okay.

10 MR. ZHANG: Yes. Chief mate --

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

12 MR. ZHANG: -- in charge (indiscernible).

13 MR. [REDACTED] Yup.

14 BY MR. MUISE:

15 Q. So a few questions about your CO2 system. Is it one big
16 tank, or do you have many small tanks that you can use?

17 A. We -- it's a big tank, sir.

18 Q. Do you have a CO2 generator on board, or can you not -- or
19 can you, can you refill those tanks on board or not?

20 A. CO2 generator? What, what does that mean?

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Generator?

23 Q. Oh, does it make your own CO2?

24 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to -- does the ship have a way to
25 make CO2 to fill up the -- your fire system?

1 MR. ZHANG: No, no, no, we can't.

2 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

3 BY MR. MUISE:

4 Q. For Deck 7 and 8, do you have more CO2 -- do you have enough
5 CO2 to use it twice, or if you used it once, is it all gone?

6 A. Actually, I don't know, sir.

7 Q. Okay. The -- and Deck 7 is where the mooring decks are, is
8 that right?

9 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to know what deck level the mooring
10 station is.

11 MR. ZHANG: The mooring station on deck number 7.

12 BY MR. MUISE:

13 Q. Seven, okay. Are those doors to the mooring decks port and
14 on the stern, are they normally opened or closed during cargo?

15 A. I don't know, sir. It should be closed.

16 Q. Okay. And on the bridge, can you see -- is there a panel
17 that tells you which doors and which ramps are open?

18 A. We can see from the bridge, yes, sir.

19 Q. How about dampers and fans?

20 A. The damper and the fans, we can see the dampers open or
21 closed and, and regarding the power for, for the motor of the
22 tanks is on or off, I, I don't think so, it can be viewed on the
23 bridge, sir.

24 Q. The -- those indicators for the dampers, the doors, the
25 ramps, was everything working? I know those sensors are sometimes

1 high maintenance, but were, were all of those indicators working
2 so you could see on the bridge?

3 MR. ZHANG: Sir?

4 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to know if the indicating panel --

5 MS. QIN: Yes.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] -- was working for the doors and the -- or the
7 doors and the ramps?

8 MR. ZHANG: Yes. For the, for the ramps, for the door, for
9 some doors, very important doors, for example the water-tight
10 doors. You know, can see from the --

11 MS. QIN: Panel.

12 MR. ZHANG: -- indication panel. Yes, sir.

13 LTJG [REDACTED] And they weren't broken?

14 MR. ZHANG: They are, they are working well.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

16 MR. ZHANG: Working well, sir.

17 MR. MUISE: The -- did we save the VDR, or is that burned up
18 now? The voice data recorder?

19 MR. ZHANG: We have VDR. Yes. We have VDR equipment. It is
20 on the top of the bridge. It is --

21 MR. MUISE: Did it burn up?

22 MR. ZHANG: -- the floor, on the top of the --

23 LTJG [REDACTED] We don't --

24 LT [REDACTED] We don't know at this time. Nobody's been able
25 to -- this is LT [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard. Nobody on scene has

1 been able to get back on board to make any sign -- any sort of
2 effort to salvage documents, grab the VDR, anything like that.
3 They are talking about sending an exploratory team back onboard.
4 I believe, for stability, and it's part of the salvage and
5 firefighting response, and that's, that's being discussed, is the
6 ability to get to the bridge for VDR and any documents.

7 MR. MUISE: Okay.

8 LTJG [REDACTED] Yeah. Potentially if you had -- if you guys
9 are on that CIC call, or you have representatives on there, I
10 think we're going to reach out to our representatives that it
11 would be very beneficial to, to gather that, and if, if it came
12 from both sides, I think that would really help us.

13 MR. MUISE: Yeah. Agreed. Thank you.

14 I have a couple of manager questions as well. Your safety
15 management system, Captain, is it from Grimaldi or from Hoëgh?

16 MR. ZHANG: Can you --

17 MS. QIN: Safety measure --

18 LTJG [REDACTED] Yeah. Who, who draft -- who does your safety
19 management come -- system come from? Hoëgh Autoliners or
20 Grimaldi?

21 MR. ZHANG: Can you say again?

22 LTJG [REDACTED] Yeah. The safety management system --

23 MR. ZHANG: Safety management, yes.

24 LTJG [REDACTED] Yeah.

25 MR. ZHANG: It's from our management company.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] Which is?

2 MR. ZHANG: Hoëgh Technical Management Company, sir, HTM.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. ZHANG: Yes, sir.

5 MR. MUISE: Was anybody from Hoëgh or Grimaldi there in
6 Jacksonville to help you load and direct where to put cars, a port
7 captain or, or somebody that worked with the stevedores?

8 LTJG [REDACTED] Was anyone from Hoëgh or Grimaldi there to
9 help with the loading and dealing with stevedores in Jacksonville?

10 MR. ZHANG: Is after the accident or before accident?

11 MR. [REDACTED] Before.

12 MR. ZHANG: Before, before, yes. They should have somebody
13 from some company come to assist in the ship, which is port
14 captain. I don't know this guy is from Grimaldi or from other
15 company else.

16 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. But he was there?

17 MR. ZHANG: They should have, yeah.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

19 MR. ZHANG: We called port captain, yeah.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

21 MR. MUISE: The port captain, okay. Does Grimaldi give you
22 the loading plan, or does that come from somebody else?

23 MS. QIN: Boarding plan.

24 MR. ZHANG: Sir, actually, this -- regarding the cargo
25 loading plan or discharging plan will be sent by the -- another

1 company which is called -- I forget, because I already left the
2 ship (indiscernible) was loading plan.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

4 BY MR. MUISE:

5 Q. Okay. In your, in your safety management system, is there a
6 different procedure between loading new cars and old cars? Is
7 there any difference in how you load those cars?

8 A. (Indiscernible) the used car --

9 Q. Any --

10 A. -- and the new cars.

11 Q. Is there any additional safety procedures that you do for
12 used cars, or do you treat them the same?

13 A. Sir, yeah, normally for the car to be loaded on board and how
14 to respond for the used car and new car to be in charge by my
15 chief mate.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And -- yeah, I cannot remember clearly, is there any really
18 much difference with, sir.

19 Q. We'll, we'll look at that later. Now, I heard you saying
20 there was no conditions of class. Were there any outstanding ISM
21 nonconformities?

22 A. What's that?

23 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants -- were, were there any outstanding
24 ISM nonconformities?

25 MR. ZHANG: No, sir. No. No.

1 MR. MUISE: Okay. Thank you. Well, and my, my last question
2 is, I understand this is a Chinese ship. Do you know what other
3 sister ships, identical to this one, are in the warehouse?

4 MR. ZHANG: The Chinese ship, what --

5 LTJG [REDACTED] He wants to know, the *Hoëgh Xiamen* --

6 MR. ZHANG: Yes?

7 LTJG [REDACTED] -- what other sister ships are there to her?
8 Do you know of any? Sister ships, like, built the same way.

9 MR. ZHANG: Oh, we have a sister ship, *Hope Singapore*, *Hoka*
10 *Maputu* (ph.).

11 LTJG [REDACTED] And what --

12 MR. MUISE: *Singapore* and what was the second one?

13 MR. ZHANG: Yeah, (indiscernible) *Hoka Maputu*, and *Hope*
14 *Beijing*.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] *Hope Beijing*?

16 MR. ZHANG: Yes.

17 LTJG [REDACTED] And that -- the --

18 MR. MUISE: Okay. Thank you, Captain.

19 MR. ZHANG: That sister ships.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

21 MR. MUISE: Joe, do you have anything, if you're still on
22 board?

23 MR. PANAGIOTOU: I'm still here, but I do not have any
24 further questions.

25 MR. MUISE: Okay. We probably have a couple of follow-up

1 later, Greg, but that's all for now.

2 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay. Then I'll just go around the table and
3 make sure no one has anything else to add, and then we'll conclude
4 the interview with the captain.

5 Mr. [REDACTED]

6 LT [REDACTED] I'm all set.

7 LTJG [REDACTED] Mr. [REDACTED]

8 MR. [REDACTED] No, sir.

9 LTJG [REDACTED] Ma'am?

10 MS. QIN: No.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] Ma'am?

12 MS. POITIER: No.

13 LTJG [REDACTED] All right. Well then, it's approximately
14 12:22 on June 6th, 2020, and this concludes the interview --

15 (Off the record.)

16 (On the record.)

17 MR. ZHANG: No, sir.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

19 MR. ZHANG: Thank you.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] Then this concludes the interview with the
21 master of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*. Thank you, everyone, for
22 participating.

23 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

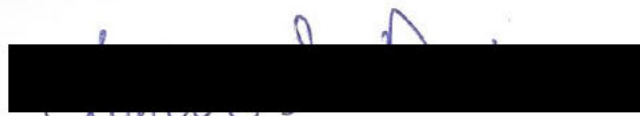
IN THE MATTER OF: SHIPBOARD FIRE ABOARD THE *HOEGH XIAMEN* IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA,
ON JUNE 4, 2020
Interview of Shilian Zhang

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA20FM020

PLACE: Jacksonville, Florida

DATE: June 6, 2020

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.


Linda S. Dehn
Transcriber