

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: QUAN JIA WANG, Chief Engineer  
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

LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator  
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

JIMMIN CHANG, Chinese Interpreter  
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

JONI A. POITIER, Attorney  
Moseley, Prichard, Parrish, Knight & Jones  
(On behalf of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*)

I N D E X

ITEM

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Interview of Quan Jia Wang:

By LTJG [REDACTED]

5

By Mr. [REDACTED]

9

By LT [REDACTED]

11

By Mr. Muise

12

I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 LTJG ██████ Coast Guard, NTSB on the line, a Chinese  
3 translator, and a representative for the P&I company, and the  
4 chief engineer of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*. I think we're going to go all  
5 -- we're going to do what we've done, is go around the table,  
6 introduce ourselves, and start the interviews.

7 I am LTJG ██████ ██████

8 MR. ██████ Good morning -- or good afternoon. I'm ██████  
9 ██████ investigator for the Coast Guard.

10 LT ██████ This is LT ██████ ██████ investigator with the  
11 U.S. Coast Guard.

12 LTJG ██████ Please state your name.

13 MR. WANG: Hello, my is -- I'm chief engineer in the *Hoëgh*  
14 *Xiamen*.

15 MS. POITIER: Joni Poitier of Moseley, Prichard, Parrish,  
16 Knight, and Jones. I'm present for vessel interests.

17 LTJG ██████ And the NTSB please?

18 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise with the National  
19 Transportation Safety Board, marine safety.

20 MR. PANAGIOTOU: This is Joseph Panagiotou with the National  
21 Transportation Safety Board, Office of Research and Engineering.

22 MR. CHANG: And this is Jimmin Chang, U.S. Coast Guard  
23 auxiliary Chinese interpreter.

24 LTJG ██████ Okay. Great. So we're going to get started,  
25 sir.

1 (Whereupon, a Chinese language interpreter translated the  
2 questions and answers for Mr. Wang, as required.)

3 INTERVIEW OF QUAN JIA WANG

4 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

5 Q. Just generally ask you on the day of June 4th, when the fire  
6 broke out, just give us a brief overview of what happened.

7 A. Okay. So at about 3:30 that day, I was chatting with the  
8 captain in his office.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So the second mate, the second officer, was saying, you know,  
11 I'm in a rush. So the second mate was in a rush, so I was asking,  
12 what's going on? And he ran up about 100 meters and he turned  
13 around and said, there's a little bit of smoke coming out from  
14 the, the compartment.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So I, I immediately go grab a walkie-talkie and run after,  
17 and I ran over to see what's going on.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So before there's anything to do, the fire alarm go off and  
20 there was an all-ship broadcast at that time. So I was going down  
21 -- started doing inspection, starting from Deck 11, all the way  
22 down to Deck 7, open doors and do inspections.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So then I found out that on Deck 8, the smoke is pretty  
25 strong at that level, and the lights is also out. So I asked the

1 chief mate, the chief officer to turn on the light. And then the  
2 chief mate responded back by saying Deck 8 lights are -- is  
3 already on. And so I, I use communications, a walkie-talkie to  
4 let any crew that's coming to, to that location to bring  
5 flashlights as well.

6 Then I ran over to Deck 7, then when I open the door and from  
7 Deck 7, I saw that there's a small fire on Deck 8, port side aft.  
8 So for the crew nearby, I immediately ordered them to connect the  
9 fire hoses to, to connect them to the -- that location, and bring  
10 whatever firefighting equipment they could get along the way, to  
11 bring it over there.

12 So I was standing there waiting for Firefighting Team 1 and  
13 Team 2 to respond to that location. So just waiting a little  
14 while on the firefighting teams.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So as the, the team -- firefighting teams prepared to get  
17 inside to fight the fire, there was a sudden rush of thick smoke  
18 coming out.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And so I reported up the chain.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But -- so we are told to retreat to the, the upper deck.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So after that I am now no longer in charge. I'm following  
25 instructions to, to close the dampers.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So the captain eventually order the team to, to -- so, so the  
3 captain asked to -- a couple of people stay behind with me and  
4 then a few people will follow him to go down to, to see what's  
5 going on.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So just a little while later the captain told all of us on  
8 the upper deck to actually to get off the vessel, to be on the, on  
9 the dock. So I was almost about to get onto the dock. The  
10 captain actually ordered me to get back with the chief mate to  
11 release the CO2. So the chief mate and I, both I guess, carried a  
12 EEBD and get back on board and try to release the CO2.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So the captain was trying to call us on the walkie-talkie,  
15 but I don't know, we couldn't hear. Maybe the rain, I guess,  
16 damaged the walkie-talkies, so the captain actually come in person  
17 and try to look for us.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So I went to the CO2 room and tried to release the CO2.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So when I was in the CO2 room, I tried to release CO2, I  
22 fail.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Then I went over to the firefighting station.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Then I tried to release CO2 at that firefighting station. So  
2 after I release the CO2, I went back to the CO2 room to check the  
3 pressure, and I see that pressure is -- becomes normal, that is,  
4 it's releasing CO2. Then, following the instruction from the  
5 captain, we are supposed to leave the ship, to get off board.

6 Q. So you did release CO2?

7 A. So I, I just went over and checked the meter, and the meter  
8 indicate that there is pressure, so indicating that it's, it's  
9 working; it's released. So once I saw that, I immediately leave  
10 the vessel.

11 Q. Okay. And then you left the vessel?

12 A. Yes, but is -- the captain is ask me, ask me, I -- ask me, he  
13 (indiscernible).

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And I go to, I go to engine control room to number 2 stop --  
16 fire pump and (indiscernible).

17 Q. What other equipment in the engine room was running during  
18 this time?

19 A. So once, once I started the number 2 fire pump, I immediately  
20 leave, so I don't know what else is running at that time.

21 Q. Okay.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] Do we want to switch to, like,  
23 responsibilities for maintaining the CO2?

24 (No audible response.)

25 LTJG [REDACTED] So whose -- Mr. Chang, I'll probably need you



1 to translate this one.

2 BY LTJG [REDACTED]

3 Q. We want to ask him, whose responsibility is it to maintain  
4 the CO2 system, and when was the last maintenance performed on it?

5 A. Is this from offshore inspection or is regular maintenance?

6 Q. Both.

7 A. So the offshore inspection from, from offshore team is last  
8 year. So for the maintenance, we only check the alarm system.

9 Q. And when, when was the last time the alarm system was  
10 checked?

11 A. I forgot.

12 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

13 BY MR. [REDACTED]

14 Q. He said that, that the fire started on the aft port side. He  
15 said it was, was small. Can you ask him if he has -- can he give  
16 us a description of the flames, the smoke, and the approximate  
17 size?

18 A. So I see it from Deck 7, that there is fire on the port side,  
19 I guess, aft. And I could see this fire falling down from Deck 8.  
20 Because I open the 7 Deck, open the door. This is, this is after  
21 -- it is the port side.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. I see it is, is (indiscernible) tank, I show is -- the car is  
24 fire, and some is falling, is -- fire is jump down Deck 7.

25 Q. Was it, like, a drip, like liquid?

1 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Some, some -- all small, small is fire is,  
2 is jumped down is Deck, Deck 7.

3 Q. Was there, like, smoke?

4 A. Smoke, because if -- when the fire team went to -- is, is try  
5 to in -- go in through Deck 7, now is open is the Deck 8 door.  
6 And there is -- why is smoke -- why, why plenty is smoke -- is the  
7 smoke is not out there? Because the staircase cannot -- it is  
8 staying here.

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. Because (indiscernible) it was too much, it's --

11 Q. Was it, was it, like, a black smoke, white smoke?

12 A. Black, black.

13 Q. Black?

14 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] And it, it was definitely a car that you saw  
16 that was on fire?

17 MR. WANG: So what I saw is actually the car that's on fire.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] What did he say?

19 LT [REDACTED] He saw the cars --

20 MR. [REDACTED] He saw the cars on fire.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. [REDACTED] And the drip, dripping onto another car below on  
23 Deck 7?

24 MR. WANG: So yes, there are cars underneath.

25 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

1 BY LT [REDACTED]

2 Q. Mr. Chang, I'd like to ask him, the lights being out on the  
3 8th deck, if he was to speculate what happened there, could he  
4 just, I guess, speculate or give us his opinion on what happened  
5 to the lights on, on Deck 8?

6 A. So I really don't know. I, I couldn't guess. In theory, all  
7 the lights should be on.

8 Q. Okay. And then also, after he energized the CO2 system,  
9 could he see anything coming out of the vents after that?

10 A. So once, once I released the CO2, I followed the instructions  
11 to retreat, and I didn't -- did not know if, if anything come out  
12 of the vents.

13 Q. Okay. I just have one final question from me, and it's when  
14 he was trying to operate the low-pressure CO2 at the system itself  
15 and it failed, did he specifically notice anything in particular  
16 that failed?

17 A. So what I saw was there's no pressure on the meter.

18 LT [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

19 LTJG [REDACTED] I have one more. So, Mr. Chang, can you ask  
20 him please, he -- when he was on Deck 7 and he opened the door and  
21 he saw the fire on Deck 8, what door was that he opened?

22 MR. WANG: Okay. So I was going down the stairs, and the  
23 stairs next to the elevator, there's a door by the elevator and  
24 the stairs.

25 LT [REDACTED] Elevators on the port or starboard side?

1 MR. WANG: Port side.

2 LT [REDACTED] Okay.

3 MR. WANG: Left side.

4 LT [REDACTED] Okay.

5 LTJG [REDACTED] Mr. Muise with the NTSB, I think we're done on  
6 the Coast Guard side if you want to take over.

7 MR. MUISE: Okay. Thank you.

8 BY MR. MUISE:

9 Q. Chief Wang, this is Marcel Muise. I work for the National  
10 Transportation Safety Board. I just have a few follow-up  
11 questions. On the CO2 system, you selected specifically to Deck 7  
12 and 8, and only Deck 7 and 8, is that correct?

13 A. So yes. That's correct. So Deck 7 and Deck 8 is separate, I  
14 guess, by themselves -- are separate isolation areas.

15 Q. Okay. Does the system only send enough CO2 for that space,  
16 or does all the CO2 go at once? That, that's not the biggest  
17 space. I believe 5 and 6 is actually bigger. Does it dump all  
18 the CO2 at once?

19 A. So I don't know how the system works, but I don't know how  
20 much is actually discharged. I have no idea.

21 Q. Okay. Did he see any frost on the piping or did he hear the  
22 CO2 rushing through the piping that would confirm that it did  
23 release?

24 A. So the instructions is, the captain said we are supposed to  
25 leave the ship right away. So once I started the system, I

1 immediately leave, so I'm not sure. I do not know.

2 Q. Okay. Thank you. About the maintenance, what maintenance  
3 program does the ship use? What software?

4 A. So we, we performing maintenance, starting in February we  
5 were using a new system IPS (ph.), and before that we are using  
6 another system to do maintenance work.

7 Q. So does IPS send data to shore once a day or twice a day, or  
8 is it live?

9 A. I, I didn't know. I am not sure. I do not know.

10 MR. MUISE: Okay. Chief, thank you. I'm glad your crew is  
11 safe. Thanks for answering my questions.

12 Joe, do you have anything?

13 MR. PANAGIOTOU: Yeah, I do have one question. Was he the  
14 crew member that shut off the dampers to Deck 7 and 8?

15 MR. WANG: So according to my company, this is not my job  
16 responsibility, so I do not know who was responsible for doing it.

17 MR. PANAGIOTOU: Okay. Okay. It must have been a previous  
18 one, that the question popped in my head. Never mind. Thank you.

19 LTJG [REDACTED] Gentlemen, are you all good? Mr. Muise?

20 MR. MUISE: We are good. Thank you.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] All right. The Coast Guard is finished. It  
22 is approximately 2:30 on June 6th, 2020, and this ends the  
23 interview with the chief engineer of the *Hoëgh Xiamen*. I think  
24 next we're going to be interviewing the bosun.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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 Quan Jia Wang

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