

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

\*

COLLISION BETWEEN USCG CUTTER \*

WINSLOW GRIESSER & F/V DESAKATA \* Accident No.: DCA22PM034

OFFSHORE OF DORADO, PUERTO RICO \*

ON AUGUST 8, 2022 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: MK2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

USCG Cutter Winslow Griesser

US Coast Guard Facilities  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Friday,  
August 12, 2022

APPEARANCES:

MARCEL MUISE, Marine Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

■■■■ Investigating Officer  
United States Coast Guard

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of MK2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	
By Mr. Muise	4
By Mr. [REDACTED]	11
By Mr. Muise	12
By Mr. [REDACTED]	15
By Mr. Muise	15

I N T E R V I E W

(12:22 p.m.)

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2  
3 MR. MUISE: This is Marcel Muise with the NTSB. It's 12:22  
4 on August 12th. We're in San Juan, Puerto Rico, interviewing  
5 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Coast Guard Cutter *Winslow Griesser*  
6 regarding an incident on August 8th.

7 MR. [REDACTED] My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I  
8 am the marine investigator for Sector San Juan.

9 MR. MUISE: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] can you give us your full name  
10 and spell your last name?

11 MK2 [REDACTED] Yes. My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED] Last name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

13 INTERVIEW OF MK2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

14 BY MR. MUISE:

15 Q. And what's your position on the FRC?

16 A. To my understanding, I'm doing the MK2 position. I'm fairly  
17 new to the asset, so I'm still kind of trying to get a full  
18 picture of what my whole responsibility is. Right now I've been  
19 focused on qualifications.

20 Q. Okay. Qualifications in what?

21 A. So they gave me a qualification guide on what qualifications  
22 I need from. It'd be EOW, in-port OOD, small boat, small boat  
23 engineer, BTM or BO, depending on what qualification I have, and  
24 pursuit and my (indiscernible) watch are pretty much the  
25 qualifications, to my understanding, that have been assigned to

1 me.

2 Q. Okay. And how long have you been attached to this unit?

3 A. I've been in -- I got to this unit 11th of July this year.

4 Q. And how long have you been in the Coast Guard?

5 A. I've been in 7 years, about 7 years.

6 Q. Prior units?

7 A. I was at a small boat station before here and I was at an 87,  
8 Fort Lauderdale, as a nonrate.

9 Q. Okay. Can you just give us an idea of what happened on  
10 Monday? I don't need a whole lot of detail because we've talked  
11 to some of your shipmates already. But let us know about your  
12 role that day.

13 A. So to my understanding, my role that day, I was responding on  
14 the small boat. In the morning, we got here just when liberty  
15 expired. Tried to get the boat underway a number of times. We  
16 were having issues with it. It's the suction for the water, so it  
17 was a [REDACTED] We prior had like services done on the hull  
18 and everything, but we were having issues starting the engines.  
19 It was [REDACTED]. So we were dealing with trying to  
20 troubleshoot what was the cause of it because it was getting  
21 aerated. So they didn't want us to overheat our engines, both our  
22 engines and our jettors, so we were dealing with it. We're  
23 getting parts from other boats or assistance from other boats, so  
24 to kind of see what we could use to fix it.

25 We probably deal with that from probably like 7 all the way

1 till like noonish. Then once we were able to get it fixed and  
2 finally get going, then we prepped for getting underway. Once we  
3 got underway, past that, pretty much everybody secured the special  
4 sea detail, which is pretty much like securing all the lines that  
5 we had out, all the fenders and everything, storing them properly.  
6 And then after that we went inside. Everybody was pretty much  
7 trying to get settled and getting ready, and then we were on the  
8 mess deck.

9       The assigned watches were already assigned, and we were  
10 pretty much like -- at least it was like myself out on the mess  
11 deck with several of the shipmates that are certainly new to the  
12 asset. And we're kind of trying to get together on what do we  
13 need to work on for our qualification process. And then after a  
14 while we were like sitting down and talking on it. We felt like a  
15 random like, I don't know, or it felt like a random swell. We're  
16 like, this doesn't feel like a random swell. We look out the  
17 window and it's very small windows that we have on the mess deck.  
18 And the (indiscernible) looked choppy like toward that swell,  
19 which just come out of nowhere. And we were all wondering like --  
20 multiple, it's like that didn't feel normal. So once we noticed  
21 that the boat started to come down, we figured, okay, something  
22 did happen. We didn't know what it was.

23       So once we -- I went -- immediately I went up to the bridge  
24 to kind of help out and see, because my instinct is we hit  
25 something or something, so we got to look back and see what

1 happened and what might have happened. So I went up, and then we  
2 noticed that there was a boat. Then I pointed out the direction  
3 of where the boat was because they were trying to locate it  
4 because they turned around. And I pointed the direction. Then I  
5 was tasked, all right, you're getting on the small boat with me,  
6 you're going to be the engineer.

7 They said, all right, we're going to look, see if -- try to  
8 see if there are any people on the water. We located a person.  
9 So I got on the small -- I got the small boat ready, and that  
10 was -- two other shipmates that went with me.

11 We tried to launch on the small boat. The way we turned was  
12 fighting against us because of the swell. It was pushing the  
13 small boat and was having issues for us to launch initially. Once  
14 we were able to catch a break from the swells, we were able to  
15 launch and then approach the person and try to recover them on the  
16 boat.

17 From what I saw, there was one person waving his arms and  
18 swimming towards us. The other person was on the ring buoy face  
19 down. So I got worried the person -- like this person might be  
20 either unconscious or deceased. So once the person got close to  
21 us and we tried to approach him safely -- because there was a lot  
22 of swells, we were trying to make sure that he wouldn't go under  
23 the boat or anything. The individual wanted to have his brother  
24 at the time, the one that was on the ring buoy, bring him on board  
25 first. We were trying to bring him on board. He slipped off of

1 our hands the first time because of the swells and everything.  
2 Then we grabbed him again, brought him on board.

3 Then I talked to the person and then we were, we need you to  
4 bring -- bring you on board now. He was definitely adamant to  
5 bring his brother on board first, so we did that, and then we  
6 brought him on board.

7 Once we brought him on board our boat, I tried to look for  
8 any injuries that he had on. He had a minor concussion and --  
9 what looked like a concussion and bleeding from the back of the  
10 skull. So I noted that. And we got back to the boat and tried to  
11 notch. Once we notched, was told the person -- he's like I  
12 don't -- he told me he only wanted to talk to me because I was the  
13 only one that spoke Spanish out of the boat crew. So I was able  
14 to talk to him and trying to like tell him what the process that  
15 we're doing right now to get him on board, we needed to get him on  
16 board to assess him, put any bandages, and pretty much attend him  
17 and see if there's any further medical attention that we needed to  
18 do to him and we had our qualified EMT coming to assess the  
19 brother.

20 So once when I was able to convince him to go up with me, we  
21 sat him down. We checked him. We put bandages on the back of the  
22 head, cleaned up the blood that he had just to make sure he wasn't  
23 bleeding directly from the ear or there was just running down  
24 blood. We bandaged him up, and I was pretty much talking to the  
25 person and pretty much the person was just telling me like, like



1 pretty much that they didn't see us, they didn't know, they didn't  
2 know what happened, it just all happened so fast. And he was -- I  
3 started to ask questions like his name, what was his age --

4 Q. This is why I asked to talk to you, because you talked to the  
5 survivor. So that's why I'm more curious about what this  
6 conversation was about.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. Yeah. So --

9 A. Yeah. So basically he was telling me about his name, about  
10 what they were doing out there. They were fishing. They always  
11 fished out there. They like always hang out in the Dorado area.  
12 They -- I don't remember too much of the details. He said he had  
13 been fishing for quite some -- a couple years, that he was fishing  
14 out with his brother. And then I asked him information about the  
15 brother as well. It was his older brother. He had told me he was  
16 like 50 years old, 50-ish. And I believe Samuel was 39, from what  
17 he told me. And his brother was Carlos.

18 Mainly the conversation, what we talked about is pretty much  
19 I asked him what he needed and what he felt needed. I need him to  
20 continue conversing with me just because I wanted to make sure he  
21 didn't lose consciousness or give me signs of something more  
22 severe, like he's about to go into have a stroke or convulsion or  
23 anything because of the impact. But mainly he asked me questions  
24 like what happened? Did you guys see us? And I pretty much told  
25 him I wasn't looking out so I like I don't know what happened, I

1 was down in the mess deck or I told him like comedor, which is  
2 like where we eat, and I don't know what happened. I simply was  
3 the person that like got assigned on the boat to pick you up. I'm  
4 picking you up and I'm assessing you right now. I'm here with  
5 you.

6 And then pretty much I tried to be very sympathetic with the  
7 person. Like I told him try to -- he was grieving. I was also --  
8 we were all grieving as well. So like the conversation -- he  
9 didn't ask too much questions. He kind of -- I feel like he was  
10 in that like shock state, so like he was still processing the  
11 situation as well. And I'm pretty sure all of us were at the same  
12 time also processing the situation.

13 As far as that, I did ask him kind of like what he was doing  
14 like to see if like -- kind of what was the picture that we had.  
15 The person gave me two stories, but I didn't take them too  
16 seriously, the details, because he just had a concussion. He  
17 might be confused. But he did give me -- I asked him were you  
18 guys underway, moving the boat? Initially he had told me, yeah,  
19 we were moving the boat and said it was kind of choppy seas out.  
20 And then I asked him like later again, I was like, were you all  
21 like fishing or something? And then he said, yeah, we were  
22 fishing, we were just out here fishing. So that's where I got a  
23 little bit confused of what exactly, what they were doing. But I  
24 didn't focus too much on that. My main concern was like making  
25 sure he was okay to like be there.

1 Like he wanted to talk to his wife. So the lieutenant -- I  
2 forgot her last name, the lieutenant junior grade, she was able to  
3 like give her her phone. I was like type in the phone number if  
4 you remember for your wife. And he was able to call her.

5 MR. MUISE: Okay.

6 BY MR. [REDACTED]

7 Q. Did you hear that conversation?

8 A. What he -- with his wife?

9 Q. Yeah. What he said to his wife initially.

10 A. Yeah. So when he called his wife, he -- first thing that he  
11 said that I'm in -- I've got into an accident. I was out fishing  
12 with my brother. My brother died, Carlos died. And I couldn't  
13 understand what she was saying, but he was saying like, listen to  
14 me, listen to me, like, my brother's dead. And like I don't know  
15 if she was like in the shock of the moment. She -- he was trying  
16 to repeat it. But pretty much it was kind of like that for a  
17 couple minutes.

18 And he was trying to say like, yeah, I'm with the Coast  
19 Guard. I'm on the Coast Guard boat right now, that I'm going to  
20 be taken to a hospital. I don't know what hospital I'm going to  
21 be taken to. And then we told him like as soon as we find out  
22 what hospital we're taking you to, we can call her and give her --  
23 let her know or we can have her meet at the base so they can go  
24 with you in the ambulance. So a lot of -- pretty much that was  
25 the conversation.

1 He called again just to find out. I did not hear anything  
2 that she was talking about. I didn't ask. That was like very --  
3 he was listening to the person. But pretty much the conversation  
4 with his wife was giving her the news and telling her what's  
5 happening right now, he's being transported. And he pretty much  
6 told me like how far away are we from Base San Juan? And I'm,  
7 from what we understand -- like I asked the XO like how far are we  
8 and we're like 45 minutes to an hour away. So that's pretty much  
9 what I would translate to them.

10 And then after that, the captain came out and wanted me to  
11 translate, wanted me to translate, say he was apologizing for what  
12 happened and the tragedy that had happened, and I translated for  
13 the captain. He was definitely in a state where he was like, like  
14 I just don't want to hear it right now. Like he didn't want -- he  
15 didn't care what the captain had to say because obviously a  
16 tragedy happened and he was -- he kept telling me that he's being  
17 (indiscernible) because what we went through with -- what he went  
18 through with his brother and him having to see that, and hearing  
19 that, I -- I don't know how I would respond to that, but he was  
20 definitely holding it, trying to hold it and be cautious and be --  
21 trying to do what he can at that moment.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

23 BY MR. MUISE:

24 Q. Did they say where they were coming from or where they were  
25 going to?

1 A. No. He said they were just fishing out of the Dorado area.  
2 I didn't ask him if there were any specifics. He just said, I  
3 fish around this spot all the time.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I don't know if it was -- I didn't know if he was rec or  
6 commercial. I didn't ask him that question or anything.

7 Q. Did he say that he saw the cutter beforehand?

8 A. He said he was driving the boat. I asked him if he saw us.  
9 He said he didn't.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. So, but he -- that's where the, the story where he told me,  
12 like, yeah, I was driving the boat, but then he was like fishing.  
13 But then I was like, okay. But at no point he mentioned that he  
14 saw us. So I don't know exactly what beforehand was, if he was  
15 trying to move the boat while they were fishing or he was fishing  
16 or they were both focused on the fish and not paying attention or  
17 didn't see the surroundings. But he never said that he didn't see  
18 us. He said that we came out of nowhere.

19 Q. Okay. Were they fishing with nets or lines or poles or --

20 A. I don't know the details of it. I don't -- I couldn't see  
21 what -- he didn't specifically say what they were fishing or how  
22 they were fishing, just said to me they were fishing. And from  
23 what I could see from the gear from the boat, I only saw a couple  
24 fishing rods. I don't know if there was nets or anything, so I  
25 don't know exactly what --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- how they were fishing at the time.

3 MR. MUISE: Anything else, [REDACTED]

4 MR. [REDACTED] No.

5 BY MR. MUISE:

6 Q. Is there anything else you remember that he told you about?

7 A. No. So I only remember pretty much the conversation with his  
8 wife, pretty much what he told me, like he didn't see us and then  
9 like the boat -- things that he said to me that were conflicting,  
10 but like I don't -- so like know what he exactly what time, like  
11 if he was (indiscernible) fishing, I couldn't see. Like I was in  
12 the mess deck.

13 Q. Sure.

14 A. So -- and the conversation with the wife, and then --

15 MR. [REDACTED] Do you --

16 MK2 [REDACTED] Sorry. Go ahead.

17 MR. [REDACTED] No, no. Go ahead. Go ahead, finish up.

18 MK2 [REDACTED] He was pretty much -- the only thing, he just  
19 wanted to talk to me just because I was his first person, the  
20 point of contact, and knew Spanish. The (indiscernible), the  
21 small boat person didn't speak Spanish. So I tried to be  
22 comforting as much as I could. I pretty much told him like,  
23 honestly, like I -- there was a lot of like moments of silence  
24 just because no -- I couldn't think of anything to say or do that  
25 would make anything better, make the situation better. I was

1 already at a bad position, like bad -- already happened.

2 BY MR. [REDACTED]

3 Q. Going back to the fishing rods. You saw one, two fishing  
4 rods?

5 A. I couldn't -- so when I saw it, it's -- the boat was pretty  
6 much like broken in half. From where I sat, I saw one part of it.  
7 I saw the -- so you know when you put it on like the fish hold  
8 part of the boat?

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. That's where I saw it.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. That's all I saw.

13 Q. Do you know if it was a conventional reel, if it was --

14 A. No. I was too far away to --

15 Q. Too far down?

16 A. Yeah. I didn't really much notice too much because my main  
17 focus was --

18 Q. Yeah, was the --

19 A. -- the person.

20 Q. Okay. No, no problem.

21 MR. [REDACTED] I have nothing else. Do you have anything?

22 MR. MUISE: No.

23 BY MR. MUISE:

24 Q. Is there anything else we didn't ask that you think we should  
25 have though?

1 A. No. That's pretty much the only thing that really like that  
2 would be pertinent to it.

3 Q. Are you a boarding team member?

4 A. I was prior boarding team member qualified. I've yet to  
5 finish like transitioning the recertification here just because  
6 the timeframe of the -- once I got here, the range and training  
7 and boards, I haven't gotten to be able to qualify boarding team  
8 member yet here.

9 Q. Are you familiar with the fisheries around here?

10 A. I do not. This is the first time here, first time Coast  
11 Guard wise here.

12 Q. Okay.

13 MR. MUISE: Okay. It's 12:38 and we will secure the  
14 interview.

15 (Whereupon, at 12:38 p.m., the interview was concluded.)  
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: COLLISION BETWEEN USCG CUTTER  
WINSLOW GRIESSER & F/V DESAKATA  
OFFSHORE OF DORADO, PUERTO RICO  
ON AUGUST 8, 2022  
Interview of MK2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22PM034

PLACE: San Juan, Puerto Rico

DATE: August 12, 2022

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Kay Maurer  
Transcriber



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594

# U.S. Coast Guard ERRATA

## Marine Investigation Report

Collision between *Winslow Griesser* and *Deskata*  
DCA22PM034

Page/ Line	Original	Correction	NTSB Disposition of Party Comment
1,3	MK2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	MK2 [REDACTED]	Concur
5/22	and our jetties,	And our Generators,	Concur