

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ENGINE ROOM FIRE ABOARD THE
STATEN ISLAND FERRY *SANDY GROUND*
NEAR STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK
ON DECEMBER 22, 2022

Accident No.: DCA23FM010

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Interview of: ANTHONY D'ANDRADE, Marine Oiler
Staten Island Ferry

St. George Ferry Terminal
Staten Island, New York

Thursday,
January 26, 2023

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN YOUNG, Senior Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CWO [REDACTED] Accident Investigator
United States Coast Guard

BARRY TORREY, Director of Ferry Operations
Staten Island Ferry

ROBERT BANDEN, Warranty Engineer
Eastern Shipbuilding Group (ESG)

DANIEL J. FITZGERALD, Attorney
Freehill Hogan & Mahar, LLP
(On behalf of Staten Island Ferry and New York City
Department of Transportation)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Anthony D'Andrade:	
By CWO [REDACTED]	5
By Mr. Young	12
By CWO [REDACTED]	16

I N T E R V I E W

(12:48 p.m.)

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3 CWO ██████████ Good afternoon. This is Chief Warrant Officer
4 ██████████ ██████████ Today's date is January 26; time on deck is
5 12:48, and we are located at the St. George Terminal located in
6 Staten Island, New York.

7 Before we begin, sir, just for the record, do you agree that
8 we do record this interview?

9 MR. D'ANDRADE: Yes.

10 CWO ██████████ All right. We'll begin with introductions. I
11 will spell out my name, ██████████

12 MR. FITZGERALD: Good afternoon. Dan Fitzgerald here with
13 law firm of Freehill Hogan & Mahar on behalf of the party in
14 interest New York City Department of Transportation, Staten Island
15 Ferry. Spelling of my last name is F-i-t-z-g-e-r-a-l-d.

16 MR. BANDEN: Robert Banden, Eastern Shipbuilding, warranty
17 engineer. Banden, B-a-n-d-e-n.

18 MR. D'ANDRADE: Anthony D'Andrade, marine oiler, Staten
19 Island Ferry. A-n-t-h-o-n-y, D-A-n-d-r-a-d-e.

20 MR. TORREY: And I'm Barry Torrey, T-o-r-r-e-y, director of
21 ferry operations for Staten Island Ferry.

22 MR. YOUNG: Good afternoon. This is Brian Young with the
23 National Transportation Safety Board, Y-o-u-n-g.

24 CWO ██████████ Very good. Thank you, everyone.

25 So now we'll go ahead and begin the interview.

INTERVIEW OF ANTHONY D'ANDRADE

BY CWO [REDACTED]

1
2
3 Q. Could you begin by explaining or describing your maritime
4 background and experience?

5 A. Okay. My maritime experience, I work 20 years with petroleum
6 tankers in the Caribbean, and 2 years offshore vessels also in the
7 Caribbean before I came to Staten Island Ferry. And I'm here at
8 the Staten Island Ferry just over 2 years.

9 Q. Have you worked on all the different types of vessels here?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. And between the *Sandy Ground* and the *Michael Ollis*
12 ferries, which vessel would you say you have more time or more
13 experience on?

14 A. Well, to be honest, it's only -- I did training on the boats
15 when -- like over a year ago, and it's only like recently I've
16 been on the boats like every week for maybe the last 6, 7, 8
17 weeks. And I think I've spent more time on the *Sandy Ground* than
18 the *Ollis*.

19 Q. I see. So for the past 6 to 7 weeks, you've had more time on
20 board the *Sandy Ground*?

21 A. Yeah. I haven't been on those boats maybe 9 months, 10
22 months from when I did the training --

23 Q. The initial training?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I see. Could you describe the training that you received for

1 the Ollis Class vessels?

2 A. Well, we did 4 days' training, like start off with a training
3 crew that they had on board, chief engineer and marine oilers, and
4 they walk you through the step-by-step process. And that
5 basically like every day for the 4 days.

6 Q. So it was 4 days total of training that you received for that
7 type of vessel?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Does that training also include underway time?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. How many times or how many trips would you say is involved or
12 was involved with your training?

13 A. I think we did -- it was so long, a year ago. A few trips
14 were, if not with passenger -- I can't remember exactly because
15 it's over a year ago, if we had passengers on board or without
16 passengers.

17 Q. I see. Did the training include how to operate and how to
18 monitor and transfer fuel?

19 A. Not transfer fuel but, yeah, monitor. But we never -- I
20 never actually done a fuel transfer like pumping fuel from one
21 tank to the next. No.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Just on the run like monitoring the tank levels and -- yeah.

24 Q. Did the training include valve alignment and operation of
25 fuel valves --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- and lining up valves?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Was there an evaluation process as part of the training to
5 evaluate your knowledge of the systems?

6 A. Yeah. We did the initial, everything from startup. And then
7 after the 4 days, then they did the evaluation. There is a form
8 that I think the chief engineer have it, but -- I think it's the
9 chief engineer will fill out the form.

10 Q. Who would fill out a form based on your completion of
11 training?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Upon completion of the training did you feel confident and
14 did you feel that the training adequate for you to do your job as
15 a marine oiler on board the *Sandy Ground* or the *Ollis*?

16 A. Yeah, I think so.

17 Q. Could you briefly explain, you know, your typical duties and
18 responsibilities as a marine oiler? What does a typical day look
19 like for you?

20 A. A typical day for me, I would come in -- I'm usually startups
21 because we are like in the morning. And you does your routine
22 checks, everything, there is fuel, everything before you actually
23 start up. Clean whichever purifier or fuel oil purifier mostly in
24 the morning.

25 Q. You mentioned checks, you know, you mentioned fuel checks.

1 What does that entail?

2 A. The levels of the storage and the day tanks.

3 Q. Do the checks involve placement of valve alignments or lining
4 up of any --

5 A. For the engines. For the -- on the Barberi Class you have to
6 open the valves for the main engines, and on the Ollis Class then
7 you have to line up the fuel oil purifier. Because once you start
8 the engines, then you got to keep sending fuel from the storage
9 tanks, purified fuel to the day tanks.

10 Q. Are there any valves that you're opening for the -- on the
11 Ollis Class?

12 A. Yeah, a few.

13 Q. Okay. What valves are those?

14 A. The inlet to the purifier from the storage tank, the outlet
15 from the purifier to the day tanks.

16 Q. Okay. And then how -- so what valves would normally be lined
17 up for engine operation?

18 A. On the Ollis Class all of those valves you don't have to
19 (indiscernible) any of those fuel valves. They're already lined
20 up.

21 Q. I see. So valves are already set on there?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. As a marine oiler is some of your duties involve the fuel
24 monitoring and the fuel leveling?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Is that something that you do yourself?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. Could you explain that process, that procedures, what
4 you do in order to monitor and level the fuel?

5 A. Well, we would, basically would monitor it by controlling the
6 returns on the Molinari Classes. There is returns and there is
7 the supply to the day tanks. You -- so would throttle the fuel
8 oil purifier depends if you want more fuel to the tank or, if
9 you're getting too much fuel to the tank, then you would reduce
10 the supply to the -- which -- by controlling the throttle valves.

11 Q. And this is on the fuel oil purifier, you said?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Controlling that?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You mentioned return valves. Is that for the Ollis Class
16 or -- is that what you mean, that those valves are used to --

17 A. The Ollis Class, yes, you either slow the purifier down
18 and -- you could only level the day tanks by controlling the
19 return valves.

20 Q. How about the supply valves to the engines? Are those --

21 A. No, you never throttle the supply valves.

22 Q. From your experience and from what you've seen, is there one
23 marine oiler usually responsible or in charge of that operation or
24 is it two marine oilers?

25 A. Well, with your partner you -- one person usually would do

1 the fuel adjustment just to avoid confusions. Like, you know, if
2 I would say, well, I'll do the fuel oil, so I know exactly what
3 I've done. Just, like I said, just to avoid confusion. So it's
4 usually one person.

5 Q. I see. Is that the same with other shifts, other crews doing
6 a similar --

7 A. Well, I can't say for other guys that I don't work with.

8 Q. I see.

9 A. But ones I like work with, I -- not my regular partner, from
10 the beginning of the watch we would --

11 Q. Establish that?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. Would you say training is different on the other class
14 vessels versus the Ollis Class and how training was, you know,
15 presented to you or --

16 A. Well, we spent more time on the other classes. Like I said,
17 the *Ollis* it was just 4 days.

18 Q. In regards to the lighting and the space and just the area
19 around the fuel manifolds, the FOP, would you say that's adequate
20 for you to perform your duties as a marine oiler?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And in regards to the monitoring of fuel levels, how is that
23 done? Like what do you use to monitor levels?

24 A. Well, there's a screen in the control room where you can
25 monitor the levels of the day tanks. Because the purifier, once

1 you got a purifier running, it's taking from the storage tank and
2 purifying and go to the day tanks.

3 Q. And are those accurate?

4 A. I would say fairly, to my -- you know, I've never actually
5 did like calibration of the tank, so I won't be able to say if
6 it's --

7 Q. I see. Have you experienced or seen any level alarms, tank
8 level alarms, like high or low fuel tank level alarms?

9 A. High.

10 Q. High?

11 A. When we're -- like if we are doing like fueling, sometime you
12 would get the high level alarm.

13 Q. Have you ever seen low fuel tank level alarms?

14 A. No.

15 Q. No? And you were given training materials as part of your
16 training, right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. What did that consist of?

19 A. It's like step-by-step instructions basically for every --
20 your duties, like, yeah, what it entails.

21 Q. I see. And you were given your own personal copy?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know what'll happen to the running engines or
24 the engines that are online and in operation, do you know what
25 would happen if both fuel oil day tank supply valves were closed?

1 A. Fuel oil day tank --

2 Q. Supply valves to your engines.

3 A. Supply valves, fuel oil day tank supply valve, yeah, they
4 would basically starve for no fuel oil. Yeah.

5 Q. How about if it was the fuel oil day tank return valves were
6 closed?

7 A. Then you would get -- back pressure would build up because
8 the fuel have nowhere else to go if all the valves are closed.

9 Q. Would you say there's any difference in, you know, in the
10 fuel operation that you would do on this class vessel versus
11 another class vessel, like Ollis Class versus the other ferry
12 classes?

13 A. Like if we are what?

14 Q. Performing like your leveling, like --

15 A. Like I said, on the Ollis Class the only how you could
16 control the leveling was through the return.

17 Q. I see. Do you know what may have caused the fire on the
18 *Sandy Ground*?

19 A. No. I have no idea.

20 CWO [REDACTED] All right. At this time I'd like to open up
21 questions to the room.

22 BY MR. YOUNG:

23 Q. Good afternoon, sir. My name's Brian Young. I'm with the
24 National Transportation Safety Board. Just one question only. If
25 you were operating on a transit between Manhattan or Staten Island

1 or vice versa and all the engines are running, on the *Sandy Ground*
2 or the *Ollis*, and the level in one of your day tanks starts
3 rising, how would you start lowering the level?

4 A. I -- you can start lowering the level by slowing down the
5 fuel oil purifier because that's what's supplying the fuel to the
6 day tank. That would be the first thing, slow down the purifier.

7 Q. And when you say slow it down, do you mean restrict the flow
8 that's filling that tank?

9 A. Yes. You can do that.

10 Q. Okay. And if you were to continue to restrict the flow and
11 the level continued to rise, what else could you do?

12 A. Well, if -- you could shut down the purifier and monitor it
13 and then start up the purifier again once the level come down to
14 where you think you need to start the purifier again.

15 Q. Okay. And on the other hand, if the level was falling in a
16 day tank, how would you raise that level?

17 A. By advancing the flow of the purifier, speeding up the supply
18 to the day tank.

19 Q. Okay. And is that how you were instructed in your training
20 classes on how to control the levels in the day tanks?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And at any time would you need to operate the return valve in
23 the fuel return system to control the level?

24 A. Your first option would be to slow down the purifier, but you
25 can throttle the returns if you want. But your first option would

1 be try to increase or decrease the flow to the purifier.

2 Q. Would you --

3 A. That should be your first option.

4 Q. I'm sorry. And would you say that the purifier is responsive
5 to your changes in throttling or -- is it very quick to respond or
6 very slow to respond?

7 A. It's very quick to respond. It usually takes but gradually,
8 but -- yeah, quickly no.

9 Q. And is that a similar operation with the Molinari Class?
10 Does it -- do you typically have to control the fuel levels in the
11 same manner?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Is it any easier to control the level on the newer vessels or
14 the older ones or is it all the same?

15 A. The older ones are a little easier.

16 Q. And why is that?

17 A. Well, I would say it's probably safer because you got a
18 relief valve on the return to the day tanks.

19 Q. And what's the purpose of that relief valve? Why does that
20 make that system safer than the newer vessel?

21 A. Because in case there is too much pressure in the line, then
22 the valve relieve to release the pressure. That's basically what
23 it's designed for.

24 Q. And to your knowledge, where would it relieve the
25 overpressured fuel back to? What tank would it direct it to?

1 A. In the storage tank.

2 Q. Storage tank. If you were operating on the *Sandy Ground* or
3 the *Ollis* as an oiler and you were having some issues and you
4 weren't really sure what to do to control the fuel level, is there
5 anybody you could ask questions to, to understand how you might
6 get some assistance?

7 A. You're supposed to ask the chief engineer once you're not
8 sure anything, and don't throttle anything if you're not sure what
9 you do.

10 Q. And have you ever asked any chief engineer for assistance?

11 A. For advice, not really assistance because I usually don't
12 wait till it reach that stage. If I'm not sure anything, I would
13 always ask before throttling anything.

14 Q. And do you have any problem asking for advice or assistance
15 from any of the engineers?

16 A. No, sir. No.

17 Q. Very good.

18 A. They're all willing to assist whenever.

19 Q. Understood. And are you also able to ask any questions to
20 the training chief engineer or training oilers that may have
21 trained you beforehand?

22 A. Yes. You can -- everyone is very cooperative, you know, once
23 you ask. And they're -- they have the knowledge, they would share
24 it with you or, if not, they would refer you to whoever have the
25 knowledge.

1 Q. So you're not afraid to ask any questions; is that correct?

2 A. That's correct. I'm not afraid to ask questions.

3 Q. And do you feel that when you do ask a question, that you are
4 educated and answered in a way that helps you?

5 A. Yes. I think so.

6 Q. Thank you. I don't have any other questions. Thank you for
7 your time today, sir.

8 A. Okay. Thank you very much, sir.

9 CWO [REDACTED] Anyone else have any questions?

10 BY CWO [REDACTED]

11 Q. I just have one, one more question in regards to the labeling
12 and nomenclature used in the engine room. Have you had any issues
13 with how things are labeled on board?

14 A. On the older vessels they're probably fade out or no marks,
15 which they could probably, you know -- but on the newer, like on
16 the Ollis Class, most -- almost everything is labeled.

17 Q. Okay. So you feel confident in your orientation on board and
18 the labeling with all the systems?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay. So before we conclude, I'd like to ask if you agree
21 that -- to be contacted at a later time if I have any follow-up
22 questions?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. And would you like to give any other final remarks or
25 anything to add to the interview?

1 A. No.

2 CWO [REDACTED] All right. Well, that concludes our
3 interview. Time on deck is 1312.

4 (Whereupon, at 1:12 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: ENGINE ROOM FIRE ABOARD THE
 STATEN ISLAND FERRY *SANDY GROUND* NEAR
 STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK
 ON DECEMBER 22, 2022
 Interview of Anthony D'Andrade

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM010

PLACE: Staten Island, New York

DATE: January 26, 2023

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.

Kay Ma
Transcriber

