

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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GROUNDING OF VESSEL *JUNGJUK* *

NEAR ANCHORAGE, ALASKA *

Accident No.: DCA23FM033

ON MAY 25, 2023 *

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Interview of: JUNN STEPHENSON, Engineer

Jungjuk

Via telephone

Thursday,
July 20, 2023

APPEARANCES:

DEREK JOHNSTON, Marine Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

██████████, Investigator
USCG Sector Anchorage

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Junn Stephenson:

By [REDACTED]

4

By Mr. Johnston

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. JOHNSTON: Hang on Junn. I think NTSB is going to turn
3 his recorder back on. And we don't have very many questions for
4 you other than we do want to talk about your time out on deck
5 there. So give us a second to just let him turn the recorder back
6 on, and get your permission. Then we'll go on real quick.

7 All right, Junn, the recorder is on. Do I have your
8 permission to record this interview?

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Yes, you have permission to record this
10 interview.

11 MR. JOHNSTON: Thank you.

INTERVIEW OF JUNN STEPHENSON

12
13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q. Okay, Junn, so I see from your work-rest history you got 23
15 years working on, what, a combination of everything, fishing
16 boats, towing vessels?

17 A. Some towing vessels, but mostly big ships.

18 Q. Okay. I see your credential, you're AB Unlimited. So you're
19 filling that position on the *San Luca*, but they tagged you as the
20 engineer or --

21 A. I am --

22 Q. -- an AB?

23 A. Yeah, the engineer.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. AB.

1 Q. So engineering-wise how are you enjoying the new ship?

2 A. I love it. I happened to be there when it was being built
3 also. So I was able to place things where I wanted it, add to
4 things, and get rid of a few things. Yeah, so it's good.

5 (Indiscernible) with this company, yeah. This one's actually
6 turned out a little bit better than the first one.

7 Q. I was going to ask you if you've been on a new ship before
8 because I didn't realize -- and you got lucky and got two. So
9 good for you.

10 A. Sometimes they're worse than older boats. It all depends.

11 Q. Yeah. You definitely have to work out bugs. So speaking of
12 that have you found any either major or minor that needed
13 attention?

14 A. I just, I found a few things with the main engines like where
15 sensors were placed and stuff like that. We had actually it was a
16 recall with Caterpillar. So they had to come out and rebuild all
17 that stuff. Yeah, not too many, not too many problems.

18 Q. Okay. And as far as, as far as reporting discrepancies or
19 getting work done is -- what's the company procedure for that type
20 of stuff?

21 A. There's any kind of discrepancies we have a computerized
22 program for a service request, and we'll put in a service request,
23 and request repairs on whatever is going down.

24 Q. Okay. And then this -- I know this is out of your control,
25 but is management good at responding to your requests or do they,

1 do they give you that, well, not yet, we don't have any money kind
2 of excuses or are they -- it's a new ship, they're on top of it
3 all?

4 A. -- company even with the old vessels they're pretty good
5 about getting what we need. Especially --

6 Q. That's good.

7 (Simultaneous comments.)

8 A. -- out here -- they get it out here pretty quick.

9 Q. Yeah, that's good because the last thing you want is to be
10 broke down somewhere with no support.

11 A. Yeah. Only have so much fishing line and duct tape.

12 Q. Yeah, there you go. Okay. So going back to your work, your
13 work history the day of the incident. Looks like you pretty much
14 do the same routine day in and day out. But looks like you were
15 on watch all morning with, with the captain. And you said you
16 were out on deck, but it sounds like the rest of the deckhands
17 were. So we've seen the barge layout. Where exactly were you and
18 what, what is your typical coming into a landing responsibility?

19 A. Kodiak to the landing I'll get out there, and I'll fire up
20 our hydraulic unit, and get ready to lower the ramp. And then the
21 deckhands will pull the pins out. And at the time of the incident
22 we were pulling the pins out. So I -- I had no visibility over
23 the ramp at all. And as the ramp was going down, that's when we
24 felt the bump, and I thought -- I was -- I thought the ramp
25 actually broke and fell in the water. I don't know. I didn't

1 know what happened actually.

2 Q. Yeah. Is it just on two hitch pins or is there more --
3 because it's a pretty good-sized ramp?

4 A. There's two, two good motors on there, tuggers, and they each
5 have their own cables on them, and we have (indiscernible) chain.
6 It's pretty heavy-duty ramp.

7 Q. Yeah. And how about securing it when you go out in the open
8 ocean? Is it well secured, and there's no chance of it -- you
9 have better chance of losing container than you do to lose that
10 ramp?

11 A. Definitely, yeah. The ramp has pins, and it's locked in.

12 Q. Okay. That's good to know. Because some of your -- I
13 wouldn't call them competition, but some of the other barge
14 operators some of their ramps are not as -- from your description
15 as securely fastened as what we would like. But okay.

16 (Indiscernible simultaneous comments.)

17 Q. Yeah. So when you guys are out on deck how do you
18 communicate with each other? Is it quiet enough that you can just
19 yell and hear each other or you have to talk on the radio?

20 A. We're using radio unless we're on the deck we can hear each
21 other out there pretty much.

22 Q. Okay. What about (indiscernible).

23 A. -- too far away we're using radios all the time.

24 Q. Okay. And then the other deckhands did you hear them say
25 anything about, oh, shoot, watch out, there's a rock or anything

- 1 like that while they were --
- 2 A. We were --
- 3 Q. -- out doing their line handling stuff?
- 4 A. We were all pretty busy just getting ready.
- 5 Q. Was this a landing to the beach and put the ramp down, or are
- 6 you coming alongside the dock to tie up?
- 7 A. Yeah, we were coming to the beach. We're going to --\
8 (Simultaneous comments.)
- 9 Q. -- beach landing?
- 10 A. Yes, sir.
- 11 Q. Okay, yeah, okay.
- 12 A. And then pull off and tie up after but, yeah, we landed on
- 13 the beach, off-load the cargo, and then we moved over to the, the
- 14 dock that they had there.
- 15 Q. Yeah. Okay. So being the responsible engineer, ramp
- 16 operator, just in general having this barge go into the ports that
- 17 you've been to since coming to Alaska, do you feel that the barge
- 18 can maneuver into those ports safely or is it a challenge in every
- 19 port that you go to?
- 20 A. Oh, it is different, and I've been with a few different
- 21 captains, and I'll tell you right now Toby amazes me every time he
- 22 comes into these tight spots.
- 23 Q. Yeah. Okay. Fair enough.
- 24 A. Yeah. I've been with some captains that -- actually, we were
- 25 here (indiscernible) we took out two dredgers one time.

1 Q. Yeah. Well, I don't know if those guys even know what rules
2 of the road mean.

3 A. But they were anchored. They were anchored, and we --

4 Q. Oh.

5 A. -- the captain we had on here kind of, yeah, got worked
6 (indiscernible).

7 Q. Oh, all right.

8 A. Yeah. Yeah, this handles great as far as I can see. I don't
9 know if it's the boat or it's Toby. I don't know which one it is.

10 Q. Well, you would think it's probably a combination of both. I
11 mean, you can have a brand new boat, but if you got somebody that
12 doesn't know what they're doing, it doesn't matter how new it is.

13 A. Doesn't matter what kind of boat it is.

14 Q. Exactly. Okay, well, I just wanted to touch base on what you
15 saw or were doing at the time, and it sounds like you were doing
16 your job and didn't see anything. So, I mean, that's a fair
17 statement, and we'll just, we'll go with that, and that's fine.
18 But just in case Derek's got a couple follow-up questions. I'll
19 go ahead and kick it over to him.

20 BY MR. JOHNSTON:

21 Q. Yeah, just, just one. When the ramp is, is pulled in, how
22 high is it above the deck to the barge?

23 A. What is that ramp, 30, 23 feet? It's a 23-foot long barge or
24 ramp.

25 Q. Okay. And is it -- when it's stowed is it, is it kind -- is

1 it vertical or is it at an angle?

2 A. It's kind of at an angel. What is that about a --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know what -- probably like a
4 70 degree angle maybe. Not full 90.

5 MR. JOHNSTON: Yeah.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. It's -- over the bow a little
7 bit.

8 MR. JOHNSTON: Okay. That was -- that's the only question I
9 have. I'm good.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: And I'm kind of short, and I'm kind of short
11 so at the bottom of the ramp he cannot see anything -- the bottom
12 of the ramp, that's for sure.

13 MR. JOHNSTON: Oh, okay, yeah.

14 MR. STEPHENSON: I wish I had more for you, but that's all I
15 got.

16 MR. JOHNSTON: No, that's a, that's a big help.

17 [REDACTED] do you have anything else? If not, I'll end the
18 interview, and we can --

19 [REDACTED] No, nothing else for me.

20 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

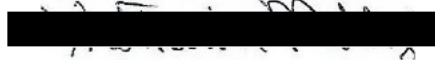
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PLACE: via telephone

DATE: July 20, 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.



Katherine Motley
Transcriber