

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FIRE ABOARD THE *SPIRIT OF BOSTON*
NEAR THE BOSTON SPORTS DISTRICT
IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS ON
MARCH 24, 2023

* Accident No.: DCA23FM022

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Interview of: THOMAS SWANSON, Galley Manager
City Cruises

Via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday,
April 12, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Lead Investigator
United States Coast Guard

KEITH FAWCETT, Civilian Marine Accident Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator
United States Coast Guard

LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Legal Advisor
United States Coast Guard

ERIC DENLEY, Esq.
On behalf of City Cruises

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:30 a.m.)

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3 MR. FAWCETT: This is a joint U.S. Coast Guard/NTSB
4 investigation with the Coast Guard as the lead federal agency, and
5 we're conducting these interviews under the Coast Guard applicable
6 regulations. Today is April 12th, Wednesday. Time is shortly
7 after 10:30 Eastern Time. We're conducting an interview with
8 Mr. Thomas Swanson and we're conducting this via Teams.

9 And we're conducting this interview, sir, so we can examine
10 the events leading up to the fire aboard the *Spirit of Boston*,
11 which occurred on March 24th, 2023 in Boston Harbor. So what I'm
12 going to do is we'll introduce the Coast Guard team and we'll ask
13 each person to spell their last name for the record. My name is
14 Keith Fawcett, I'm a Coast Guard marine accident investigator.

15 You spell my last name F-as in Frank-a-w-c-e-t-t and I'm part
16 of this First Coast Guard District investigation team.

17 Commander.

18 CDR [REDACTED] Good morning, my name is Commander [REDACTED]
19 I'm the lead investigating officer and welcome and thank you for
20 your time this morning. Last name is [REDACTED].

21 LT [REDACTED] Good morning, Mr. Swanson. My name is Lieutenant
22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm also part of the First Coast
23 Guard investigations team. Thank you for joining us today.

24 LCDR [REDACTED] Good morning, Mr. Swanson, I'm Lieutenant
25 Commander [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and I'm the legal

1 advisor to the investigation. Thanks for being here.

2 MR. FAWCETT: For the record, Mr. Brian Young is the
3 investigator in charge from the National Transportation Safety
4 Board. He will be provided with a copy of this transcript and has
5 asked us to ask some questions. Mr. Swanson, if you'll introduce
6 yourself and spell you last name, your full name and spell your
7 last name, please.

8 MR. SWANSON: I'm Thomas Swanson and S-w-a-n-s-o-n.

9 MR. FAWCETT: And counsel, sir. You're muted, Mr. Denley.

10 MR. DENLEY: Good morning, I'm Eric Denley, D-e-n-l-e-y,
11 counsel for City Cruises. Good morning, Mr. Swanson, it's nice to
12 see you.

13 MR. FAWCETT: Thank you. So Mr. Swanson, memory is a
14 perishable thing and if you remember things differently or want to
15 change or modify the answer to these questions in this interview,
16 please let Mr. Denley know and he can provide us with the updated
17 information. Anything that you recall differently would be fine.

18 Also, we are going to produce a report of investigation and
19 in particular, in regard to the Coast Guard, if you see it and you
20 have any new information or have any like grounds that you think
21 to appeal the investigation, just let Mr. Denley know and he'll
22 let the Coast Guard know. And finally, we use a book called the
23 "Marine Safety Manual, Volume V," it's available by Googling it
24 and Mr. Denley can probably point you to information. So without
25 any other announcements, I'm going to turn it over to

1 Lieutenant [REDACTED] to conduct the interview and thank you very
2 much.

3 INTERVIEW OF THOMAS SWANSON

4 BY LT [REDACTED]

5 Q. Again, good morning, Mr. Swanson, thank you for joining us.
6 I'm just going to go ahead and go through some questions. First,
7 I'd like to start about with your background. How long have you
8 been employed with City Cruises?

9 A. Six months.

10 Q. And what is your title?

11 A. Galley supervisor.

12 Q. And what is your overall -- what do you believe to be your
13 overall responsibilities?

14 A. My overall responsibilities would be overseeing the cooks,
15 the dishwashers, and the food runners in the galley.

16 Q. And have you ever held this position before with another
17 company or outside of the City Cruises?

18 A. I've had a different position, but not the same.

19 Q. Okay. When you were hired by City Cruises did you receive an
20 orientation training or a pre-employment training?

21 A. Yes, I did.

22 Q. Okay. And can you describe to me what that training was?

23 A. The training consisted of modules which we went through and I
24 had to watch some videos, it pertained to multiple different
25 things.

1 Q. Okay. Did any of those things have to deal with how to treat
2 your employees?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Did they deal with how to -- you know, proper galley
5 etiquette or, you know, those types of situations?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did any of them have to do with safety, fire safety on board
8 the vessel?

9 A. No.

10 Q. How long was the orientation, was it a day, was it a week,
11 did it take a long -- I mean, how long was the orientation and
12 training?

13 A. It was up to me on how long I wanted to do it, but each
14 module took a different amount of time.

15 Q. Okay, so it was like at your own pace type training?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Did you do it at home or did you do it like at a
18 company building or on the vessel?

19 A. I had the option to do it at home.

20 Q. And how did they know that you were done with the training?

21 A. There's a website that we all complete the training on.

22 Q. And you have like a -- like a login type so they know exactly
23 where you're at with it?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. Did you receive a certificate when you completed the

1 training?

2 A. Not that I remember.

3 Q. Okay. And were you allowed to act as the restaurant manager
4 prior to completing this training?

5 A. Sorry, could you repeat the question?

6 Q. Yeah. So what I'm trying to understand is so this training,
7 did you complete it before you started acting as the restaurant,
8 as the -- I'm sorry, the galley manager or prior to, you know, did
9 you do it a weekend here acting as the galley manager or when did
10 this training actually occur?

11 A. The training occurred the week that I started.

12 Q. Okay. And do all -- so how many employees do you -- how many
13 members of your staff do you oversee?

14 A. I'd say about 20.

15 Q. And is your primary vessel the *Spirit of Boston*?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Have you ever worked on board the other vessels?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Is there a difference in size of like -- and I don't know,
20 I've never been on the other vessels, so like of the other three
21 -- I believe there's four total dining vessels, is that correct?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay, so I've been on board the *Spirit of Boston*, I'm kind of
24 understanding now exactly how big is the size and the number of
25 employees. How does the *Spirit of Boston* relate to the other

1 three dining vessels, is it the largest, is it the middle, like
2 can you describe to me the complement of people you work with on
3 the other ones?

4 A. There's two big vessels and two small vessels. Yeah.

5 Q. And by big, is the *Spirit of Boston* the biggest of the four?

6 A. There's two that are similar in size --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- and they're big and two that are similar in size and
9 they're small.

10 Q. Okay. And is the other big one, is that the *Odyssey*?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay, great. Thank you. And so these other employees that
13 you manage, do they go through similar training that you went
14 through, orientation training?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And are you -- so once they're hired and they went
17 through their pre -- or their orientation training and the pre-
18 employment training, who is then responsible for the training of
19 them from there on out? So for, say -- I mean, maybe -- I don't
20 know if you guys get first-aid training or do you get, you know,
21 vessel -- you know, vessel training. If you do, who's responsible
22 for providing those trainings?

23 A. I'm not sure.

24 Q. Okay. Have you received any training since you've -- since
25 your orientation training?

1 A. I have received training that pertains to my position.

2 Q. And what kind of training is that?

3 A. How to manage people in the galley, how to cook, stuff like
4 that.

5 Q. Okay. Have you ever received any training on how to -- have
6 you ever, while employed with City Cruises received training,
7 received firefighting or fire response training?

8 A. No, I was hired as a galley supervisor.

9 Q. Okay. So as the galley supervisor, is there fixed
10 firefighting and firefighting equipment in the galley?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And who, in your -- under your purview or under your umbrella
13 per members is trained in how to use that, use that equipment?

14 A. Sorry, just repeat it.

15 Q. Okay. And I believe -- so there's a fixed firefighting
16 system above the -- I'll call it the fryolator and then there's
17 also some other fire extinguishers that are located in the galley.
18 Has any of your crew received training on how to use that
19 equipment?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. In the event of a fire in that area, as the
22 supervisor, what would be your expectations of your crew to
23 respond to that fire?

24 MR. DENLEY: Objection, calls for --

25 MR. SWANSON: You're asking me --

1 MR. DENLEY: Yeah, it calls for speculation, but you know, to
2 the extent that -- you know, I think you testified earlier that
3 you haven't been trained in firefighting, so you know, to the
4 extent that you have a -- I guess, have an opinion, you can answer
5 that question. Maybe you can repeat the question.

6 LT [REDACTED] Yeah, of course. And I can rephrase it.

7 BY LT [REDACTED]

8 Q. So as the galley supervisor, if there -- as the galley
9 supervisor, have you been trained in what to do if there's a fire
10 in the galley?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. At any time of your employment or when you're on board
13 the vessel, have you ever worked when the marine crew is not on
14 board?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And when the marine crew is not on board, who is in charge?

17 A. Usually, the last person off the boat.

18 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen or are you aware of any City
19 Cruises policy that describes your duties during an emergency
20 while on board the vessel?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Are you aware or have you seen any policies, company -- City
23 Cruises company policies that outline your, now I mean your galley
24 staff's responsibilities to respond to during an emergency on
25 board the vessel?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Have you ever taken part in any -- as one of the captains had
3 stated we previously talked to that they call maybe a pre-cruise,
4 a pre-cruise brief, have you ever taken part in any of those?
5 With the captain?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Has any of your crew or any of your galley members taken
8 part, that you know of, in these pre-cruise meetings?

9 A. I can't say.

10 Q. Are you aware if there's any fire blankets on board the
11 vessel?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And where is that located?

14 A. Right before the galley where the swinging doors are.

15 Q. Okay. And I don't want to -- I believe it's asked and
16 answered, but have you ever received training on how to use a fire
17 blanket?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Do you know if any of your crew has received training that
20 you specifically know of?

21 A. No.

22 Q. While operating or while working in the galley, do you have a
23 -- what's your main -- what's your mode of communication? If you
24 needed to get in touch with the master, how would you do it?

25 A. Via walkie-talkie.

1 Q. Okay. And do you communicate with him often?

2 A. The captain?

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. No.

5 Q. Who else do you communicate with, with the walkie-talkie?

6 A. Only marine crew, and the kitchen has one.

7 Q. Okay. Can you talk to me a little about -- so we know who
8 you manage or you supervise. Who is your supervisor?

9 A. My direct supervisor is Lance Washington.

10 Q. And what is Lance Washington's title?

11 A. Sous chef.

12 Q. Right. And does he work on board the *Spirit of Boston* with
13 you, as well?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And can you explain to me how that like -- what are you -- so
16 you're responsible, as the galley supervisor, what types of things
17 are you -- and I can go through a list, maybe, and you can say yes
18 or no, but -- so what is his responsibility, who does he manage
19 besides yourself?

20 A. He oversees the galley supervisors.

21 Q. How many galley supervisors are there?

22 A. Four.

23 Q. And what are their -- how is it broken down? I know the
24 *Spirit of Boston*, the galley isn't -- it didn't appear to me to be
25 that large, but I know there's a lot of working parts and it's a

1 very intricate system, but can you explain to me the four
2 different galley supervisors and their responsibilities, if you
3 know them?

4 A. Well, as a galley supervisor, we all have the same duties, we
5 just work different shifts.

6 Q. Oh, okay. Understood, understood. So how many galley
7 supervisors are on at one time?

8 A. Usually one supervisor and one sous chef or it could be two
9 of each.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. It all depends.

12 Q. Oh, understood. Thank you for clarifying that. And what's
13 your relationship with the restaurant managers? Like how does
14 communication -- so do you know when to prep the food, do you know
15 when to clear the food or do they help you, assist, do they help
16 you along with the process of the cruise?

17 A. There's not much communication between us.

18 Q. How do you know when to bring the food out?

19 A. We have a documented sheet that we get before the cruise so
20 we know when all -- when everything's taking place.

21 Q. Okay. And that also goes for clearing of the food?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. And are there any companies or -- are there company
24 policies or procedures on how to do this? How do you know what to
25 do or at least, how do you know what to tell your employees that

1 you supervise what to do?

2 A. My first week, I was trained on how to clear the buffet. I'm
3 assuming --

4 Q. And was that -- sorry, go ahead. I apologize.

5 A. I said, as I assume, the rest of the crew would have been
6 trained.

7 Q. And that training is just word of mouth or, you know, how it
8 used to be done or is that -- or is it you go through an actual
9 manual for training?

10 A. No, it's a "teach the trainer."

11 Q. Okay. And from there, you then -- you know, if you get a new
12 employee underneath your supervision, how do you train them what
13 to do?

14 A. If I had a trusted employee, I would have them show. If not,
15 I would personally show them myself.

16 Q. Okay. Have you had new employees?

17 A. No, I'm considered the new one.

18 Q. Okay, okay. What is your -- what is your -- is there a
19 company policy that you've seen with regards to disposing of the
20 Sterno cans that are used to warm the food?

21 A. No.

22 Q. As the supervisor, how do your employees dispose of those?

23 A. They're supposed to take water to the site of where the lit
24 Sternos are, they're supposed to put the Sternos out in water and
25 they're not supposed to dispose of them in the trash until they

1 are cool.

2 Q. Okay. And whose responsibility is that? Does the front
3 house, front-of-the-house staff do that or is it solely for the
4 galley staff to do it?

5 A. It's on the buffet attendants, the galley staff.

6 Q. Okay. And is there ever a case that you've had where another
7 employee outside of your staff has done that?

8 A. I don't recall.

9 Q. Are they -- okay. Thank you. And then once they're disposed
10 of, do they just go into the regular trash?

11 A. Into the galley trash.

12 Q. Into the galley trash, okay. Have you ever extinguished one
13 yourself?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you did this using the water in the bucket?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Have you ever tried to blow one out?

18 A. I don't remember.

19 Q. Okay. I never really dealt with a Sterno, I'm just trying to
20 see like how hard is it to like actually extinguish it, I've never
21 dealt with it, but I appreciate your honesty with that, thank you.
22 Were you on board the night of the 24th?

23 A. Yes, I was.

24 Q. Of March. You were. Can you walk me through -- you don't
25 have to go through your whole day, I kind of just want to kind of

1 see, so from the point of say you began or you gave the orders to
2 begin to start cleaning up the buffet, can you walk me through
3 that and then until when you departed the vessel?

4 A. I'm not sure what happens when they -- I was not personally
5 there to clear the buffet, so I'm not sure how they cleared it
6 that night. I know everything got brought back properly and the
7 food came back, they wiped down the buffets properly. I went, I
8 checked the buffets, made sure that everything was cleaned. I
9 took the trash that night with -- I took the trash up, down the
10 pier, and said bye to CeeCee (ph.), let her know the food was
11 still in the -- in the warmer, just to throw it out by the end of
12 the night and that is all that I remember.

13 Q. Okay. When did you hear about the fire?

14 A. The following day.

15 Q. Did anybody tell you anything about it or how did you find
16 out about it?

17 A. I found out on Twitter.

18 Q. Oh, okay. Are you familiar -- have you ever worked in that
19 area in which the fire started? Do you know where the fire
20 started?

21 A. I'm not sure where the fire started.

22 Q. Okay. So just forward of the cold prep is a service area or
23 it's also called the pantry, to where there's -- there's a coffee
24 machine in there and there's -- you know, there's linen and the
25 trash and some other possible -- or not possible, glass kind of

1 holders. Are you familiar with the area now that I've explained
2 it to you?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And what is this area primarily used for?

5 A. The front of the house uses it for coffee and tea.

6 Q. Would this be the same -- so then there's a trash can in
7 there, would this be the same trash can that the Sternos would get
8 thrown out in?

9 A. No. That would not be the galley trash.

10 Q. Okay. So just so I really -- I really kind of want to
11 understand how these Sternos are disposed of. So a galley member
12 brings up a bucket to where the Sterno is, puts the Sterno in the
13 bucket of water there until it gets cool, then transports it back
14 to the galley area and puts it in the galley trash?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Now, we also know that on this night, on the night of
17 the 24th, there was a Sterno that was being used to keep the
18 coffee warm in that service station, so it wasn't -- that Sterno
19 was not outside of there. Do you know if your galley staff
20 would've disposed of that Sterno specifically in there on that
21 night?

22 A. Coffee and tea is not my job, they should have not touched
23 that, either.

24 Q. Okay. Great, thank you. Has any one of your crew ever asked
25 you about fire response or firefighting in the galley?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Have ever been on board when a fire drill was taking place?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Have you ever -- since the fire on the *Spirit of Boston* on
5 the 24th, have you received any correspondence from, whether it's
6 the national or your regional manager regarding any policy changes
7 or change to the vessel? Regarding fire safety.

8 A. I don't recall.

9 LT [REDACTED] Okay. I have no further questions at this time,
10 I'm going to go ahead and hand it over to Mr. Keith Fawcett.
11 Thank you very much, sir, I appreciate your time.

12 BY MR. FAWCETT:

13 Q. Hey, Mr. Swanson, some questions for you based on what you
14 talked about and some other questions. You mentioned you learned
15 about the fire on Twitter. Talk about that for me.

16 A. I worked on the *Spirit of Boston* that night, I left probably
17 10:30 p.m. I got home, I did what I had to do, and there was --
18 the next day, like probably 12:30 and it was our -- it was on
19 Twitter posted, like Boston Pops news.

20 Q. Did you see any Twitter posts or Facebook posts from members
21 of the crew that were aboard that --

22 A. No.

23 Q. And then expand a little bit, you talked about, you know,
24 what you -- your background related to City Cruises Boston, talk
25 about your restaurant experience that you've had.

1 A. My experience?

2 Q. Yeah, in other words, have you worked at restaurants?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Talk about that for me. Just where you worked.

5 A. I worked at Burger King, I worked as a dishwasher and I don't
6 wish to speak more about it.

7 Q. Like, when you worked at Burger King, did they give you any
8 fire safety or fire prevention training as part of your job?

9 A. I'm not sure why you're asking me about that.

10 Q. Well, I'm trying to compare, just Mr. Swanson, like
11 basically --

12 A. You're asking me about a job, you're not asking me about City
13 Experiences anymore, you're asking me about Burger King.

14 Q. Correct.

15 A. So can we move back to City Experiences?

16 Q. Well, I'm going to ask the question, sir, so I'm going to ask
17 you if when you worked at another restaurant environment, did they
18 give you fire training or fire prevention training, training of
19 any kind?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And could you describe that?

22 A. No, I don't remember.

23 Q. Did they show you how to use a fire extinguisher?

24 A. I don't remember.

25 Q. Did they show you how to use a pull station to operate a fire

1 suppression system in a cooking area?

2 A. I do not remember.

3 Q. And then there's a training presentation called "Learning the
4 Ropes." Is that what you completed at home, this multi-module
5 course on your own time?

6 A. I don't remember the name of it.

7 Q. And do you recall anything about that presentation as to what
8 to do in case of a fire?

9 A. I don't remember.

10 Q. And then in that same orientation, did they tell you how you
11 could report unsafe conditions to management by an e-mail?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you recall what they told you to do?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Was it to send an e-mail?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And if I said you could send that to safety@entertainment
18 [cruises.com](mailto:safety@entertainment), would that ring a bell?

19 A. I don't recall.

20 Q. And you've been working with the company for 6 months, do you
21 remember the last safety drill that you were involved with on the
22 *Spirit of Boston*?

23 A. No.

24 Q. How about the *Odyssey*?

25 A. I don't remember.

1 Q. Did anybody tell you what you do in a safety drill?

2 A. No.

3 Q. So you mentioned a walkie-talkie that the galley has, there's
4 one walkie-talkie for the galley and it's on the same channel,
5 radio channel as the marine crew, would that be correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And then where is that walkie-talkie kept and who wears it?

8 A. Sorry, what was it?

9 Q. So the walkie-talkie for the galley --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- does someone wear it?

12 A. It gets kept in the galley, the front-of-the-house manager
13 will charge it for us when we need to and then she'll bring it to
14 us so we have one.

15 Q. And then where do you keep it in the galley?

16 A. Usually, Eddie will be there -- one of the supervisors will
17 have that with them.

18 Q. And then do you have any idea like when you -- when is that
19 turned off? In other words, is it turned off when the marine crew
20 leaves or is it just turned off when the cruise is over?

21 A. I'm not sure.

22 Q. And then could you tell me who Eddie Garcea is?

23 A. He's the sous chef upon the *Spirit of Boston/Odyssey*.

24 Q. And was he on board the accident date, March 24th?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You mentioned another gentleman, Mr. Washington, was he on
2 board that day, also?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And then we're looking for any kind of help you can give us
5 about what might have started the fire, so I'm going to ask you
6 about a few things. Do you know if any of the vessel crew used an
7 electronic vaping cigarette?

8 A. You're asking does anybody on the boat use one?

9 Q. Yes, correct.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And did you see anyone charging electronic devices? And when
12 I say galley, what I'm saying is not on the dining room floor,
13 anywhere aft of that line where you enter the galley area, did you
14 see anybody charging any kind of electronic devices and that would
15 include cell phones, tablets, vaping cigarettes, anything
16 whatsoever that could help us maybe find the potential source of
17 the fire?

18 A. I don't recall.

19 Q. Where do people charge cell phones?

20 A. I don't know. I charge mine before I leave for work.

21 Q. Did you look into the wait station, that's the area ahead of
22 the food prep area, cold food prep area, did you see anything in
23 that area that night that might've been charging?

24 A. I don't recall.

25 Q. And there was a witness that, on the dock, said -- I'll ask

1 because you had already left before the fire started, correct?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. The food warmer in the cold prep area, that big vertical, you
4 know, it's got two things, was that in use on the accident date,
5 March 24th, based on what you know?

6 A. No.

7 Q. So it was not in use?

8 A. It was not in use.

9 Q. Just checking to make sure I don't have any other questions
10 for you. So in the galley, would you expect somebody in the
11 galley, if they saw a fire, to use the fire blanket?

12 A. I can't say what someone else would do.

13 Q. Would you use it if you saw a small fire in the galley?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And if you saw a small fire and you didn't feel in danger,
16 would you use one of the portable fire extinguishers that were
17 close by in the galley?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Have you ever seen a fire in a restaurant that you've worked
20 at?

21 A. No.

22 Q. And then just to be clear, and I'll call it a standard
23 operating procedure, there are all kinds of standard operating
24 procedures, there's some for like operating the vessel itself,
25 from the marine side. Is there some kind of book that I would go

1 to that explains the standard operating procedure for the galley
2 operations?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Is there a hazard and analysis guide for galley operations?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 MR. FAWCETT: That's all I have. Thank you very much, you've
7 been very patient.

8 Commander [REDACTED]

9 BY CDR [REDACTED]

10 Q. Hello. Yeah, I have one follow-up. Have you ever, in your
11 experience, used any type of firefighting equipment, even if it's
12 in personal life, such as a fire extinguisher or a fire blanket or
13 a fire hose?

14 A. No.

15 CDR [REDACTED] Okay, that's all I have.

16 MR. FAWCETT: Thank you very much.

17 Mr. Denley.

18 BY MR. DENLEY:

19 Q. Yes, I just have a couple questions for you and I also
20 appreciate your time, thanks for being here. So, you know, we're
21 here because of the fire that occurred on the *Spirit of Boston*, so
22 just to be clear, you were not on board the *Spirit of Boston* when
23 the fire occurred, correct?

24 A. No.

25 Q. And are you aware where the fire started on board?

1 A. No.

2 Q. And are you aware if any of the galley employees were on
3 board when the fire started?

4 A. I was the last galley employee to leave that night.

5 Q. So you made sure that you were essentially -- you ensured
6 that all of your tasks and all of your cruise tasks were completed
7 for the night?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And your last job for the day was taking out the trash?

10 A. After I took out the trash, I made sure everything was clear
11 and made sure everybody left and then I left.

12 Q. And so as part of making sure that everything was clear, did
13 you sort of inspect the galley spaces and those spaces that you
14 were responsible for?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did you see any hazards or did you -- were you aware of any
17 equipment that was not working properly?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Were you aware of any, I guess, hazards or anything that was
20 out of usual on the night of the fire before you departed?

21 A. No.

22 Q. And were you aware -- you know, you commented about kind of
23 what the standard procedure was for the disposal of a Sterno. To
24 your knowledge, did that process happen that night or were you
25 aware that your crew deviated from their standard procedure at

1 all?

2 A. To my best knowledge, the crew would've put the Sternos out
3 in the proper procedure that night.

4 Q. And then following along that proper procedure, it was then
5 your job to take the trash out, which you did.

6 A. Yes, it was -- the trash was removed from the boat that
7 night.

8 MR. DENLEY: Thank you, I don't have any further questions.
9 I appreciate your time.

10 MR. SWANSON: Thank you.

11 MR. FAWCETT: Lieutenant [REDACTED]

12 BY LT [REDACTED]

13 Q. Mr. Swanson, thank you, I just have -- just kind of one basic
14 overall question. We haven't really touched much on what the
15 capabilities of -- so in the galley, what type of -- we know that
16 you have, is it a fryolator or a fry station, is that -- so what
17 are the cooking capabilities of the *Spirit of Boston*?

18 A. We have four ovens and two fryers.

19 Q. Okay. And where, relationship-wise, are the ovens on board
20 the vessel? I know they're in the galley, but like the forward
21 bulkhead, the side, I'm just trying to get an overall layout of
22 the kitchen in there.

23 A. It is on the wall that you go outside to, to the back deck,
24 so it's in the back of the boat, on the back wall.

25 Q. Okay. And that's where the ovens are and the fryolators,

1 along that same wall?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. And the fryolators are protected by a fixed
4 firefighting system, is that correct?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And do the ovens have any type of fixed firefighting or
7 anything?

8 A. Not to my knowledge.

9 Q. Okay. And then are there instructions on how to -- so just
10 so I'm aware, so the fixed firefighting is specifically over the
11 top of the fryolator, correct? If you're aware. If you're not, I
12 just --

13 A. I'm not, you lost me.

14 Q. Okay, so if we're looking at the fryolator, and we've
15 discussed fixed firefighting for the fryolator, I just want to
16 make sure, so the fixed firefighting is specifically affixed above
17 the fry station, correct? It's not in like the bulkhead overhead
18 or behind it or whatever, specifically for that area?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay. And are there instructions on how to utilize that?

21 A. No.

22 LT [REDACTED] I have no further questions, thank you. Thank
23 you very much for your time, Mr. Swanson.

24 BY MR. FAWCETT:

25 Q. Mr. Swanson, Mr. Fawcett again. You know, Mr. Denley asked

1 you a question about the sequence of events that took place
2 towards the end of the cruise and what you would do and he used
3 the word standard procedure. Are there standard procedures or a
4 checklist or is it something that someone told you what to do in
5 your training?

6 A. In regards to what?

7 Q. Well, the steps he talked about, in other words, making sure
8 the galley was secure and making sure you did a walk-through,
9 making sure you took the trash out, is there a standard procedure
10 or is there a checklist or did someone, when you were being
11 trained, say this is what you do?

12 A. I was taught how to do it.

13 Q. So in other words, it was a training, a person-to-person
14 training, on-the-job training, someone showed you what to do?

15 A. Yes.

16 MR. FAWCETT: And thank you very much, sir, that's all the
17 questions. Anybody else on the line before we conclude the
18 interview?

19 MR. DENLEY: I do just have like a follow-on, Mr. Fawcett.

20 MR. FAWCETT: Go ahead, sir.

21 MR. DENLEY: Thank you.

22 BY MR. DENLEY:

23 Q. So Mr. Swanson, you know, just to be clear, you've been asked
24 a lot of questions about, you know, the galley and firefighting
25 systems in the galley, but just to be clear, to your knowledge,

1 none of the galley personnel were on board at the time of the
2 fire, is that correct?

3 A. I was the last galley person to leave.

4 Q. And to your knowledge, were you aware whether the galley
5 caught fire or not?

6 A. I already said I was not sure where the fire took place.

7 MR. DENLEY: Thank you. No further --

8 MR. FAWCETT: Anyone else?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. FAWCETT: Mr. Swanson, thank you very much for your time
11 and taking your time out of the day. The time is 11:17 a.m.
12 Eastern Standard Time, and we are concluding the interview. Thank
13 you, sir.

14 (Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the interview concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FIRE ABOARD THE *SPIRIT OF BOSTON*
NEAR THE BOSTON SPORTS DISTRICT
IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
ON MARCH 24, 2023
Interview of Thomas Swanson

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM022

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: April 12, 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.



Karen D. Martini
Transcriber