

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*
*

FIRE ABOARD *KODIAK ENTERPRISE*
NEAR TACOMA, WASHINGTON
ON APRIL 10, 2023

Accident No.: DCA23FM026

* * * * *

Interview of: TIM WHITE, Fire Watch
Valeo Temporary Service

Trident Seafood Facilities
Tacoma, Washington

Thursday,
April 20, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CWO [REDACTED] Investigating Officer
United States Coast Guard

LCDR [REDACTED], Chief of Investigation
Sector Puget Sound
United States Coast Guard

GREGORY HELLER, Special Agent
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives

CAPT DAVID FLAHERTY, [REDACTED], Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY ALTENBRUN, Attorney
Nicoll Black & Feig
(On behalf of Trident Seafoods)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Tim White:	
By CWO [REDACTED]	4
By SA Heller	6
By CWO [REDACTED]	14
By Unidentified Speaker	15

I N T E R V I E W

(2:27 p.m.)

1
2
3 CWO [REDACTED] This is Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED] with the
4 US Coast Guard. Last name is spelled [REDACTED] Today is April
5 20th; the time is 2:27 local.

6 In the room I have --

7 LCDR [REDACTED] Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED] chief of
8 investigation, Sector Puget Sound. [REDACTED].

9 SA HELLER: Special Agent Greg Heller with ATF to assist with
10 the fire investigation, and my last name is spelled
11 H-e-l-l-e-r.

12 MR. WHITE: My name's Tim White, basic spelling. Last name
13 is spelled W-h-i-t-e.

14 MR. ALTENBRUN: Larry Altenbrun, attorney for Trident
15 Seafoods. Last name is spelled A-l-t-e-n-b-r-u-n.

16 CWO [REDACTED] And on the phone we have?

17 CAPT FLAHERTY: David Flaherty. Last name spelled
18 F-l-a-h-e-r-t-y. I'm the investigator in charge for the National
19 Transportation Safety Board.

20 CWO [REDACTED]: All right, Tim. So just for the record, you came
21 here on your free will, nobody coerced to come and talk to us?

22 MR. WHITE: Yes, that is correct.

INTERVIEW OF TIM WHITE

23
24 BY CWO [REDACTED]

25 Q. Okay. And are you a Trident employee?

1 A. No. The paperwork's been in the process for months. Right
2 now I'm from Valeo Temporary Service.

3 Q. Valeo Temporary Service. Okay. And how long have you been
4 with them?

5 A. Since last September, here the whole time.

6 Q. Okay. So you've been with them, but you've been working in
7 this facility --

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. -- the whole time you've been there? Okay. And what is your
10 position?

11 A. Like I was just fire watch.

12 Q. Just fire watch?

13 A. Yes, sir, just that.

14 Q. Okay. All right. And do you do anything else except fire
15 watch?

16 A. Yes, sir. Operate cranes and pretty much just about
17 everything else that needs to be done.

18 Q. Okay. So kind of a fire watch/general laborer --

19 A. Okay. Yes, sir.

20 Q. -- to a certain extent?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 A. Okay. All right. And were you on board the *Kodiak*
23 *Enterprise* Friday, April 7th?

24 A. Yes, sir. I was.

25 Q. All right. And --

1 CWO [REDACTED] All right. I'll give it to you, Greg.

2 BY SA HELLER:

3 Q. Yeah. So, I guess, just to start with, what was your
4 assignment that day? What were you working on or fire watching?

5 A. That day, just fire watch, putting up fire blankets in a
6 stateroom where somebody else was -- Daniel was going to be
7 welding or cutting -- I'm sorry, cutting from above down below,
8 which I had done. And I believe I doubled them up -- well, I know
9 I did. I had the entire section of the stateroom completely
10 covered and coated and wetted down. I actually wetted down the
11 fire blankets inside the stateroom so that he could cut an opening
12 up above.

13 Q. Okay. There's a diagram of the boat in front of you.

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. There's some labels already on here. I just want to make
16 sure they're accurate to what you're talking about. So I don't
17 know how familiar you are with the boat. Do you know where the
18 stateroom was that you're talking about?

19 A. It was below here, page -- this page here where it says job
20 number 2. It was on the port side, port side in front of the
21 wheelhouse down by the skiff, but not on lower half of the bow.
22 It was up mid-section, mid-level.

23 Q. All right. So in here there's a label for job 2 where some
24 cutting was done. Does that look to be about what you are talking
25 about?

1 A. Yes, sir. That looks to be the area.

2 Q. Okay. And then below it there's a stateroom here. Is this
3 the stateroom that you were talking about?

4 A. If that's the stateroom below it, then, yes, sir.

5 Q. Okay. And, all right, so just for the recording, you've
6 identified job number 2, the red mark, and then stateroom 02-0.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. Yeah, that's just (indiscernible), that's just so they can
9 understand what we're talking about on here.

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. Okay. So you mentioned you were in the stateroom and you
12 were doing some preparation. Had that begun before Friday or was
13 that all done on Friday?

14 A. That had -- there had been work done there prior to me being
15 there. Earlier that day, I was up above -- I was up above, up
16 here, with Daniel. And also there's another gentleman that was
17 cutting some pipes up there. And I was watching them and there
18 was -- I was up there watching that gentleman and Daniel had not
19 started doing anything. There were people down below that had
20 chipped foam and stripped plywood off, cut plywood -- or had cut
21 the ceiling out and removed it, chipped out foam. I was not
22 involved in any of this. I was only involved after that was done.
23 I came down and I wasn't -- I chipped out some more foam, because
24 I had -- I wanted to move it further away from where they had
25 stopped. And I hung up the fire blankets in this area.

1 Completely -- they were even on the floor, the walls, and doubled
2 up on the walls.

3 Q. Okay. So, and you said the first thing that you did that day
4 was being up on the deck and doing fire watch for a vent or
5 something there?

6 A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

7 Q. About what time did you start that morning, do you think?

8 A. That day I started at 6 a.m. It was every day.

9 Q. Every day? All right. And then how long were you on this
10 project and when did you move down to the stateroom?

11 A. Hmm. Okay, I was up here (indiscernible) --

12 Q. To the best of your memory.

13 A. Best of memory, it was -- I was up there until after lunch.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Which is at 11 o'clock. And then after lunch, I had moved
16 down here, down to the lower section, and seen what had been done
17 and continued it, cleaned it up -- cleaned up the area, and then
18 hung up the fire blankets.

19 Q. Got it. Okay. You mentioned wetting down the blankets
20 earlier.

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Was that with a hose or with foam or what were you using for
23 that?

24 A. No, no. I was using the water. There was -- I had a water
25 bottle down here, a drinking one. And then there was a working

1 sink in that stateroom. And so I was actually using that instead
2 of using the hose because that would cause too much damage.

3 Q. But there was a hose --

4 A. Oh, yeah. Right -- yeah, right in the doorway.

5 Q. Okay. All right. And so then when he is up there cutting --
6 I think you said it was Daniel, were you -- what were you doing
7 down here? Like --

8 A. I kept wetting down the floor and the walls while I was
9 there. He had cut a small section of decking out there, a little
10 triangle piece.

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. That's when I had stopped him and I grabbed a metal dust pan
13 and taken that -- had stopped him completely, and taken that
14 outside onto the deck because it had been raining, and put it in
15 water. Actually put it in water. And then I came back in, said
16 he could start up again. And as he was cutting again, he had cut
17 approximately two -- okay, each time was approximately 6 inches
18 long by maybe a 4-inch opening, total of -- a total of maybe 14
19 inches by 6 inches opening, but he had done that in two pieces.
20 And each time one piece would drop and stop again, and repeated
21 that process of grabbing it with the metal dustpan and taking it
22 outside onto the deck into water and leaving it there. And then
23 come back --

24 Q. Into the water in the rain or you mean like --

25 A. Oh, there were mud puddles of water out there and it was

1 still raining.

2 Q. Got it.

3 A. So, yes, sir. That was -- it was (indiscernible) day.

4 Q. And then was there some system with you and Daniel where
5 you're communicating up and down?

6 A. I'm very voice (indiscernible). He could hear me with that
7 small opening. No offense.

8 Q. No, no. That's fine. All right. And then was there another
9 fire watch person down in the stateroom as well or was it just
10 you?

11 A. No, just me.

12 Q. All right. You said you've been doing fire watch for how
13 long now, like a few -- since September?

14 A. Here since September, but just background, I have 13 years
15 fishing crab boats. I was engineer, I ran the deck, I was a lead
16 skipper. I've also spent 9 months in a burn ward, so I definitely
17 am fire safety orientated. I have the highest license in the
18 country from OSHA and WISHA. I trained (indiscernible), so I
19 started my training -- I was going to train volunteer fireman at
20 (indiscernible) 47, King County, I'm sorry. Do you want me to
21 stop? That is -- probably that enough?

22 Q. Yeah. No, no, I just was --

23 A. Okay. I'm done. No problem. No problem.

24 Q. -- I was just going to say, in the time that you've just been
25 doing the fire watch have you had to actually use a fire hose to

1 put something out, deal with an issue that -- you know, a fire
2 that started?

3 A. To prevent one? Yes, I have wetted things down to prevent
4 fires and it turned into smoke, (indiscernible) and also the only
5 real -- having to turn anything on like that was during the
6 training that they had --

7 Q. Sure.

8 A. -- here.

9 Q. Got it.

10 A. No, I have done things like that --

11 Q. On the day -- on the 7th, on Friday, did you have to -- other
12 than taking those top pieces out, did you have to spray down any
13 smoking areas or --

14 A. No. No, no, no. I made sure that everything was saturated.
15 I don't care if it's a stateroom or not, if I had gotten in
16 trouble. I had saturated it a lot.

17 Q. So -- all right, so is it fair to say like sort of uneventful
18 fire watching on Friday? Is that accurate?

19 A. Yeah, yeah, very uneventful. I even felt the steel,
20 physically felt the steel. I had stuck around until the end of
21 the day. I believe I was probably the last person. If not me, it
22 was Tony or somebody was --

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. -- the very last person --

25 Q. Yeah, that was actually my next question. So do you know

- 1 when he stopped, finished his work on --
- 2 A. Give or take a minute, 3:30.
- 3 Q. 3:30. Okay.
- 4 A. Before -- give or take, before and after.
- 5 Q. Okay. So then sort of walk me through how the day ends, what
6 you, you know, what you leave there. How does that work?
- 7 A. I know we brought all the hot steel out. I left all the
8 blankets I had continued wetting down. And also when Daniel had
9 come down to the lower deck, I had grabbed him, came in, brought
10 him in there, just had him look at what there was. And I actually
11 physically felt the steel.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. There was no danger, in my opinion.
- 14 Q. And then what time did you leave the jobsite?
- 15 A. I left the boat approximately 4:23, -24, -25.
- 16 Q. Sure. Okay.
- 17 A. You can check the cameras. I'm sure that was close.
- 18 Q. Okay. No, that's great. All right. And then as far as the
19 vessel in general, was there a place that people would stop and
20 use as a break room or eat lunch or hang out? Was there any space
21 like that?
- 22 A. That would be outside the deck, actually outside, a covered
23 area.
- 24 Q. Okay. So did you guys -- did you ever utilize the mess or
25 the galley or the (indiscernible) --

1 A. (Indiscernible), no. No, I did go down there and cleaned it
2 up because they actually thought that we had made a mess, but
3 there was -- we physically cleaned -- Tony Morris and myself --
4 he's a supervisor -- had physically cleaned that entire area
5 ourselves, floors, tables and everything. And then I came in
6 through another time just to see if there was anyone there. There
7 was a welder there, he was on the phone. Nobody was in there
8 eating or anything. It was at lunch and they were on their
9 phones.

10 Q. And this was on Friday or this is just --

11 A. No, it was a random day. I don't remember if that was
12 Friday. I think that was Thursday. But I also did go through
13 Friday to see if anybody was there. It was my last -- it was
14 our -- my final just walking through (indiscernible). So I --

15 Q. Okay. So what -- you said you walked through there toward
16 the end of the day or when --

17 A. Yep, yep, yep. Because we always try to see if there's
18 anyone left on board, make sure everyone's off.

19 Q. So that would be shortly before you left at around 4:25-ish
20 or something like that?

21 A. Yeah, that day there, I just walked down -- yeah, that was
22 it.

23 Q. Okay. So when you walked down there, did you see or hear or
24 smell anything unusual?

25 A. No, sir.

1 Q. No? And did you go into the actual galley or just into the
2 mess where all the seats and stuff are?

3 A. Just in the mess, in the -- not into the -- yeah, into the
4 mess. I'm sorry. I see how it's labeled.

5 Q. Yeah. Yeah, that's like the seating area?

6 A. Yeah, where the tables were.

7 Q. Kitchen, yeah. And then when you said you cleaned the whole
8 area at one point, what area were you talking about? The mess?

9 A. Oh, we just -- we cleaned up the mess hall. We never
10 walked -- we never went in --

11 Q. Have you ever been back in here to the dry stores or the
12 chiller or any of that?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I've never been back there.

16 Q. Any other issues for Friday that I didn't ask you about?
17 Anything out of the ordinary from any other day?

18 A. Not that I recall.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. (Indiscernible) remember.

21 BY CWO [REDACTED]

22 Q. So a question about these two documents. One is labeled
23 Appendix A, Maintenance and Repair Hot Work Policy. Have you seen
24 that before?

25 A. Not until today.

1 Q. Okay. And how about this one, Appendix B, Firewatch
2 Training, have you seen that?

3 A. I've already gone through their classes, but I don't recall
4 this pamphlet.

5 Q. Okay. And classes as in you received --

6 A. Training here whenever we first started, when I had first
7 started here. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. And that's -- it's a course or --

9 A. Yeah. It's approximately between from 6 to 8 hours long.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I've also done multiple other classes here, just to be
12 certified and verified by them for them even though I had the
13 training elsewhere.

14 Q. Okay. All right.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have any questions.

16 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

17 Q. Tim, you -- it sounds like you have a lot of experience in
18 this industry, a lot of experience with OSHA, WISHA, a lot of
19 experience in maritime safety. Would you agree with that?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. What's your opinion of Trident Seafoods and its safety
22 practices?

23 A. Pertaining to sea, I had no idea. I used to deliver them
24 and I don't know of any of it now. But here at port, pretty
25 adamant about it. They're -- try to be a -- they're trying to be

1 on things at all times because things still happen, accidents,
2 (indiscernible) accidents. Other than that -- well, I was -- I
3 just came here to bury family members, found out they were here, I
4 came here. I didn't plan on staying. I've actually intended on
5 staying here. So I wouldn't stay if there's something --
6 somewhere I wasn't comfortable with nor -- uncomfortable with, I
7 wouldn't be here. I was living out of state before I came here.

8 Q. Thank you.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 CWO [REDACTED] David, do you have anything?

11 CAPT FLAHERTY: No, I'm good. Thank you.

12 CWO [REDACTED] Anybody else?

13 Okay. With that, we'll conclude the interview. The time is
14 2:42.

15 (Whereupon, at 2:42 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: FIRE ABOARD *KODIAK ENTERPRISE*
NEAR TACOMA, WASHINGTON
ON APRIL 10, 2023
Interview of Tim White

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM026

PLACE: Tacoma, Washington

DATE: April 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.



Kay
Transcriber