

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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

Accident No.: DCA23FM026

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Interview of: JOHN MCAULIFFE, Lieutenant, Engine 3
Tacoma Fire Department

Tacoma, Washington

Thursday,
April 13, 2023

APPEARANCES:

██████████ Chief Warrant Officer, Marine Investigator
United States Coast Guard

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

NATHAN PETRULAK, Special Agent
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

DAVID FLAHERTY, Captain, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

Representatives, Tacoma Fire Department

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:37 a.m.)

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2
3 CWO [REDACTED] This is Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
4 with the US Coast Guard, a marine investigator, here at Tacoma
5 Fire Station Number 8. The date is April 13, the time is 10:37
6 local, and interviewing the crew that responded to the *Kodiak*
7 *Enterprise* fire. In the room, I have?

8 MR. HELLER: Special Agent Greg Heller with the Bureau of
9 Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, ATF. My last name is
10 spelled H-E-L-L-E-R.

11 MR. PETRULAK: And Special Agent Nathan Petrulak, also with
12 ATF, P-E-T-R-U-L-A-K.

13 MR. MCAULIFFE: And I'm Lieutenant John McAuliffe, Tacoma
14 Fire, Engine 3, B shift. And that's McAuliffe, M-C, capital A-U-
15 L-I-F-F-E.

16 MR. HELLER: (Indiscernible).

17 CWO [REDACTED] There you go.

18 MR. HELLER: You said --

19 CWO [REDACTED]: Is that right?

20 MR. HELLER: -- Engine 3?

21 MR. MCAULIFFE: Yeah, yeah.

22 CWO [REDACTED] Engine three.

23 MR. MCAULIFFE: Well, I always write up an after-action
24 report that I have a printed copy of if you would find that
25 helpful.

1 MR. HELLER: That would be extremely helpful.

2 CWO [REDACTED] And just for a second, David, can you introduce
3 yourself?

4 MR. FLAHERTY: Sure. My name is David Flaherty, last name
5 spelled F-L-A-H-E-R-T-Y. I'm the investigator in charge for the
6 National Transportation Safety Board.

7 INTERVIEW OF JOHN MCAULIFFE

8 BY CWO [REDACTED]

9 Q. Okay. And then, just a little background information from
10 you, Lieutenant. How long have you been on the Tacoma Fire
11 Department?

12 A. About 28 or 29 years. January '95.

13 Q. Okay. And how long have you been the lieutenant on Engine 3?

14 A. Well, seven years? Something.

15 Q. Seven years? Okay.

16 A. About that.

17 Q. And before that, were you the officer on another --

18 A. Yeah, I was --

19 Q. -- engine? I guess, how long have you been -- we'll just --

20 MR. PETRULAK: Yes. I was --

21 Q. -- make it easy.

22 MR. PETRULAK: Since 2007.

23 MR. MCAULIFFE: Okay.

24 MR. PETRULAK: That's when I got promoted.

25 MR. MCAULIFFE: How do you know?

1 MR. PETRULAK: Because you got promoted right after I did.

2 MR. MCAULIFFE: Yeah, okay. There you go.

3 CWO [REDACTED] All right. Also in the room, we have some
4 representatives with the Tacoma Fire Department.

5 BY CWO [REDACTED]

6 Q. Okay. Do you have any shipboard firefighting training?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No.

9 MR. HELLER: Let's switch this out (indiscernible). I'm
10 sorry.

11 CWO [REDACTED] All right, I think that's pretty much for that.
12 Go ahead.

13 MR. PETRULAK: Oh, all right. So, this is a fresh diagram,
14 so we can draw on it and label stuff as necessary, because
15 otherwise, it can be pretty hard to describe. But thank you for
16 this. We'll make a copy of it. If you need it during this,
17 that's fine, too.

18 MR. MCAULIFFE: Okay.

19 BY MR. PETRULAK:

20 Q. So, can you -- I guess we'll start out like, you were
21 assigned to Engine 3. You were dispatched. What was the thing
22 that you were dispatched to, and did it change by the time you got
23 there?

24 A. It was a shipboard fire down at Trident, and I'm reasonably
25 familiar with the facility down there, having been up

1 (indiscernible) and have inspected commercial building inspections
2 of Trident operations. I've never been on their boats, but I am
3 familiar that they have big factory trawlers and ships down there.
4 And so, unfortunately, I was kind of expecting what we had.

5 Q. Okay. So, when you arrived, were you met at the gate by a
6 security guard, or how did it work with getting on the facility?

7 A. The security guard was there --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- and the gate was open, and they just waved us on through.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then, we came up and staged -- do you have a map of the
12 facility?

13 Q. I don't have a map (indiscernible).

14 A. Oh. Well, we just staged, took the first yard hydrant --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- out on the dock. So, we're going through this, and it's
17 the south gate?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. And kind of straight up through. And then, there was a
20 hydrant there, and I figured they probably would want a water
21 supply. Typically, second in job, second-in engine companies
22 typically, not always, but -- is water supply, so we staged there
23 and waited for orders. A few minutes later, we got an order from
24 Engine 5 to deploy a 2 1/2 from Engine 5 up the gangway to supply
25 engine 5's attack line.

1 Q. Okay. So, when you arrived, Engine 5 was already there?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. When you came up and stated, obviously, it's something that's
4 unusual. There's a vessel on fire. But other than that, did you
5 see anything strange happening there: people leaving, cars driving
6 around --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- anything like that?

9 A. Hm-hum.

10 Q. Were there a lot of people gathered around, or was it a
11 small --

12 A. No. 3 o'clock in the morning --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- on a Saturday morning.

15 Q. Yeah. Okay. All right. And so, you're staged there. You
16 get your orders from Engine 5. Just describe to me what happened,
17 I guess, after that.

18 A. So, we moved ahead from that hydrant position, and then went
19 north on the dock, and we (indiscernible) about midship on the
20 port side. No, this is the starboard side I'm looking at here,
21 right?

22 Q. Yeah, probably.

23 A. So, we staged about here, on the other side, obviously, and
24 tried to stay a little bit out of the way, because we weren't
25 water-supplying. We knew one was coming. And then, we took our

1 crew, and we went to the back of Engine 5, and we took 300 feet of
2 2 1/2-inch from Engine 5, and we walked it up the gangway up to
3 the gangway level. Now, I don't know what the nomenclature for
4 this level is here, what deck --

5 Q. So, that would be --

6 (Crosstalk)

7 Q. Let's go to this one here. So, you would come on on this
8 level.

9 A. Right.

10 Q. And this would be the 02 deck.

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. And then, there's like stairs down to -- this is, they call
13 it the 01 deck.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. And this is where I think folks initially made --

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. -- their way through there.

18 A. So, in my after-action report, it refers to the 02 deck as
19 the gangway level.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And then, I just referenced it on there. So, they're --

22 Q. Got it.

23 A. -- below gangway and above gangway --

24 Q. Got it.

25 A. -- decks. So, we came in, and deployed our hose to this

1 hallway, and supplied the attack line that went down this hallway.

2 And then, once that was hooked up and charged --

3 Q. Was it on the -- was it this level, or was it --

4 A. Gangway. So --

5 Q. It was on the gangway level. Okay.

6 A. I'm pretty certain about that. Now, it seemed like, to me,
7 that -- weren't there stairs on the end of this hallway? Was this
8 it?

9 Q. So, based on our discussion with --

10 A. John Bleasdale?

11 Q. -- John that this is where they initially had their initial
12 attack. So, were you at a different --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- hallway?

15 A. So, we supplied their line.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So, I'm a little -- I thought it was the gangway level. But
18 there were stairs at the end of it that went down. Do those go
19 down? Is that what that's showing?

20 Q. Yes.

21 A. So, I must --

22 CWO █████ Well, what you might have done is, from the
23 02 level, you go down a stairwell to the 01 deck. Is that what
24 you're thinking of?

25 MR. MCAULIFFE: Where's the galley?

1 BY MR. PETRULAK:

2 Q. Right here.

3 A. Oh. I must have been --

4 Q. So, from the exterior into here, it's all one level; and
5 then, there are stairs that go down at the end of this to --

6 A. Right.

7 Q. -- another deck below. This is the galley here.

8 A. That's where --

9 Q. This is the mess.

10 A. -- we were. We were in the galley. So, I must have mis-
11 recollected that. And anyway, we were supporting them, right?
12 And hose tending, because it takes a lot of people to move that
13 hose. The coupling gets caught on everything. And they were in
14 fighting this fire in the galley. And then, their bells started
15 ringing, so they had the bulk of the fire out, and we went in and
16 put out hot spots in that that were still kind of on fire in that
17 galley. Shortly thereafter, our bells started ringing, too, and
18 we removed ourselves. And then -- and let's see. We went back
19 down the gangway. We got new bottles. We came right back. We
20 started supporting -- I think ladder one and Engine 2 were inside.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Excuse me. Have you got a minute?

22 MR. MCAULIFFE: It was tough to see and tough to remember,
23 because there was a lot of work going on, and in rapid fashion.
24 It was -- so, let's see. At some point, when we came back, it
25 became clear that this attack line was too short. I think they

1 wanted to take it down --

2 MR. PETRULAK: Okay.

3 MR. MCAULIFFE: -- one more. Is there -- what's below this?

4 MR. PETRULAK: It goes down to a --

5 MR. MCAULIFFE: Down in here?

6 MR. PETRULAK: Yeah. This would be (indiscernible), right?

7 CWO [REDACTED] It goes down into the cargo hold/bow thruster
8 area.

9 MR. PETRULAK: Yeah.

10 MR. MCAULIFFE: So, I never made it down there, but we were
11 supporting the crews that were going down those stairs. And this
12 attack line that we had on there, I think it was 100 feet, and it
13 was too short.

14 BY MR. PETRULAK:

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So, I left my crew up here to continue supporting the
17 interior crews; and then, I went back down the gangway and got
18 more inch and 3/4 from Engine 5. came back up. We shut down that
19 line. We put the two together and extended that line back down
20 there, and they continued firefighting operations.

21 Q. Okay. Good.

22 A. At that point --

23 Q. I guess, before we get too far ahead --

24 A. Sure.

25 Q. -- can I ask a few questions about when you're --

- 1 A. Sure.
- 2 Q. -- in here? So, when you first come in to support with the
3 hose line and all that you were describing, what was the condition
4 of this hallway? What were the smoke conditions in there?
- 5 A. You couldn't see more than about 3 feet.
- 6 Q. Three feet? Okay.
- 7 A. Yeah. It was dark, but it was not untenable heat-wise.
- 8 Q. Okay. And the smoke that you were seeing, gray, dark gray,
9 brown? What --
- 10 A. So, it was -- that's a great question, because it was so dark
11 in there. There were no lights.
- 12 Q. Okay. So, you --
- 13 A. So --
- 14 Q. Yeah.
- 15 A. -- it was just smoke.
- 16 Q. Got you.
- 17 A. But it wasn't pressurized. It wasn't heavy, black smoke
18 moving. It was just smoke.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. And the conditions weren't -- they were tenable.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. It was warm, but not horrible.
- 23 Q. Okay. And then, as you're in the galley here, you said you
24 were putting out hot spots. What kind of -- were you able to see
25 at all, or was it all just with a TIC?

1 A. So, I didn't have my TIC at that time. What I could see was
2 where the spot fires were burning, right? And we'd extinguish
3 those. And after we took over that line, we were in there
4 probably another four minutes or so on that operation before one
5 of the crew's bells started going off; and then, we left.

6 Q. Were there spot fires all around? Was there any particular
7 concentration?

8 A. So, to my -- it looks a lot more wide open than what I
9 remember, and --

10 Q. Well, I think there's -- the galley, I think there's some
11 like commercial --

12 A. Yes, a bunch of --

13 Q. -- kitchen equipment.

14 A. -- equipment and --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- stuff in there.

17 Q. There you go.

18 A. And so, there were only two or three hot spots. He had
19 knocked out most of it. And so, we just applied water to the ones
20 that were still burning.

21 Q. Were those floor-level, on countertops --

22 A. Countertops.

23 Q. -- ceilings? Okay. Mostly countertops.

24 A. Mostly countertops.

25 Q. And I don't know if you were able to see at all. Were you

1 able to tell what was burning or what --

2 A. No. In fact --

3 (Crosstalk)

4 A. -- I wasn't even 100 -- I was mostly sure it was a galley,
5 but --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- it was so dark --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- I couldn't -- it was crowded with equipment, like you
10 would expect a ship galley to be. And there seemed to be a lot of
11 stainless steel surface areas --

12 Q. Appliances and that, yeah.

13 A. -- around and stuff like that.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So, that was -- back up. That was still on the first, right?

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. And then, we came out. We got new bottles. We went back up.
18 We -- up the gangway. We extended that hose, and I think we
19 extended the hose, I think it was Paul Purdy (ph.) on Engine 2 at
20 that point, down below.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Now, this is where it gets a little foggy and confusing for
23 me, but I think they were down there. Then, I came back here, and
24 I was tending this line, and I ducked my head in here. And this
25 goes up, right?

1 Q. So, you're talking about the --

2 A. The stairwell.

3 Q. -- stairwell on --

4 A. Right there?

5 Q. Yeah, on the port side -- I'm sorry, the starboard side of
6 the centerline that would go up to, looks like that would go up to
7 the 02 deck.

8 A. And into a room?

9 Q. I think it's going to come out near this storeroom or into
10 this hallway.

11 CWO [REDACTED] But it should -- what we're referring to, David,
12 is, Lieutenant was on the 01 deck in that main --

13 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

14 CWO [REDACTED] -- passageway, and the ladder well that goes up at
15 the mess deck pots up --

16 MR. FLAHERTY: Right.

17 CWO [REDACTED] -- at the 02 deck, which, when you pop up to the
18 02 --

19 MR. FLAHERTY: Yep.

20 CWO [REDACTED]: -- deck, you should go through -- and like,
21 nobody -- we have not been on it, so we don't know the design, but
22 there should have been either a doorway --

23 MR. MCAULIFFE: There was.

24 CWO [REDACTED] Okay. So, you go through a doorway. Was that
25 door open or closed, do you recall?

1 MR. MCAULIFFE: It was wide open.

2 CWO [REDACTED] Okay, wide open.

3 MR. MCAULIFFE: And my concern was -- and so, I remember it
4 slightly differently.

5 CWO [REDACTED] That's fine, of course.

6 MR. MCAULIFFE: So, I looked up the stairwell, and the door
7 was open, and there was fire floor to ceiling up there, and it --

8 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

9 MR. MCAULIFFE: -- a bellows, right? It was just sucking the
10 air in there, and it was going to town. And my concern was that
11 this fire's going to get up, and then come back down that
12 stairwell, and trap the crews that were down below, and trap my
13 crews. So, I went up there, and I found the latch up at the top,
14 and then closed that door.

15 MR. PETRULAK: So, a door somewhere in this area?

16 MR. MCAULIFFE: Yeah. And so --

17 MR. PETRULAK: I'm just going to make, for the recording, I'm
18 going to make a black circle around the stairwell here that we're
19 talking about.

20 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

21 Q. Just a quick question. How long after you were on board do
22 you think that you saw the fire that was on the next deck above
23 you? What time do you think that was during the response?

24 A. I would say it was probably 45 minutes into this operation.
25 But from the time that we got the alarm at the station, a minute

1 to get out of the station, five minutes to get to the scene. We
2 sat at that hydrant for a couple of minutes while John was sorting
3 out what he had. The first -- we went up and stretched line. We
4 worked through a bottle. That was about another 10 minutes. We
5 were at least a half hour into this, probably 40 minutes,
6 45 minutes. Now, that's a guess.

7 Q. So, you were the only one who noticed that the fire had --
8 from where you were, that the fire was starting to crawl over your
9 head, right?

10 A. No. So, in that hallway that we were in on the 01 deck, you
11 could walk into another hallway and see the stairwell that went
12 up. And at the top of that stairwell was a door, and that door
13 was wide open, and the room that it led to was fully involved, but
14 it had not come down the stairway, and it wasn't over our heads.
15 The conditions in that hallway on the 01 deck were still tenable.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Does that make sense?

18 MR. FLAHERTY: All right. Thank you. Yep, yep, I
19 understand.

20 MR. MCAULIFFE: So, I didn't have an extra line with me to go
21 up there and knock that down, but I just shut the door, because I
22 didn't want it coming back down.

23 MR. PETRULAK: Got it.

24 CWO [REDACTED] And just to clarify, that door shut completely?
25 There was no --

1 MR. MCAULIFFE: It was shut and locked.

2 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

3 MR. MCAULIFFE: And then, I thought, darn it, right? Because
4 we might want back in there; and now, we're going to have to force
5 the stupid thing. But someone had -- there must have been a latch
6 on the knob, a little round doorknob, and I should have checked it
7 before, but -- shortly after that, the crews came up from down
8 below. Their bells were going off, our bells were starting to go
9 off, and we left that level for new bottles. Okay. At that
10 point, we went down, we got new bottles on us; and then, we
11 assisted -- we brought up six more bottles to the gangway-level
12 deck and laid them out for the crews that were up there so we
13 wouldn't have to go so far. And at that point, we were tending
14 hose lines, and at that point, our primary area of operation was
15 up here, moving hoses.

16 MR. PETRULAK: Okay.

17 MR. MCAULIFFE: They were in and out of this area.

18 BY MR. PETRULAK:

19 Q. So, we're talking about the 02 deck?

20 A. 02 deck --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. -- right. So, we were assigned to division one. They had
23 separated that out into division one at that point. Ed Gore (ph.)
24 was the battalion chief in there, and he assigned us to Bambrick,
25 Chief Bambrick, who was down on the 01 deck and attempting to work

1 with the Trident people so we could begin dewater operations,
2 because the boat was beginning to list at that point.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. We took a big pump, a big portable pump, and hauled it up the
5 gangway level from the 01 -- no. From the 01 deck to the 02 deck,
6 up the stairs, and we set it there. And then, it took a while to
7 go off ship, and find hard suction, and get that set up, and it
8 seemed to take a long time. But by the time we had done that, I
9 think the pump was about here, and one section of hose only made
10 it down this hallway, which is the port, because we're on the
11 02 deck, and it's the port side hallway on --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- the 02 deck. And I think Minnie Tanner (ph.) was helping
14 us with that, and Minnie Tanner was on Engine 4?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

16 MR. MCAULIFFE: And she ended up laying it in the hallway in,
17 I don't know, 6, 8 inches of water. It wasn't effective. And
18 then, when we did that, and we fired that thing up, it was so
19 noisy that it killed all communications in division one. You
20 couldn't hear a thing.

21 BY MR. HELLER:

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And then, smoke conditions were here, so we're wearing face
24 pieces and trying to talk, and it was -- it wasn't working.

25 Q. Yeah.

- 1 A. So, back down the ladder we go; and then, we put the pump
2 over, somewhere over here. There's a vent right there that goes
3 out. We put it right next to that.
- 4 Q. Okay. So, that's on the 01 deck on the port side and about a
5 little --
- 6 A. Near this crane --
- 7 Q. -- to behind you?
- 8 A. Yeah, because I had to work around that. It was --
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. -- a pain in the tush. So, then, we got some more hard
11 suction; and then, we went upstairs. We fed that thing. And
12 then, myself, and my driver, and third from Engine 3 took it, fed
13 the hard suction up to the 02 deck, and we took it all the way
14 down to, I think it was -- it was one of these rooms. It was --
15 it felt like this room here.
- 16 Q. Okay. That's --
- 17 A. And when I say, felt like, I mean you couldn't see.
- 18 Q. Yeah.
- 19 A. It's hard to see. And it seemed to open up, right? And it
20 was just before that, and I dumped it in there. It was about 2
21 feet of water.
- 22 Q. Okay, that's the 02 deck, 02-3. Think it's a two-person
23 stateroom.
- 24 A. Yeah. It seemed like it was a bunkroom.
- 25 Q. Sure. So, is your involvement from this point forward

- 1 primarily dewatering --
- 2 A. That was our last --
- 3 Q. Okay.
- 4 A. -- assignment.
- 5 Q. Okay. Did you ever go down on any decks below this? No?
- 6 A. Hm-mm.
- 7 Q. Okay. Were you -- you said you were not actually in the
- 8 mess --
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. -- mess deck? And then, when you were in the galley here,
- 11 when you were suppressing the spot fires you described, did you
- 12 make it any further --
- 13 A. No.
- 14 Q. -- in, any other --
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. -- rooms in? Okay.
- 17 A. The line wasn't long enough.
- 18 Q. And I'm assuming, again, what you were describing, were you
- 19 able to say the condition of these doors? Were they open or
- 20 closed?
- 21 A. No. No idea.
- 22 MR. HELLER: Okay. Anything on that, Nate?
- 23 MR. PETRULAK: Hm-mm.
- 24 BY MR. HELLER:
- 25 Q. Do you know who, if anyone, did make it all the way into like

1 the bow thruster area?

2 A. Yeah. We had crews down there.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. They went down to the bow thruster area, and it was reported
5 clear.

6 Q. Okay.

7 MR. FLAHERTY: Interesting.

8 MR. HELLER: Anything, David?

9 MR. MCAULIFFE: So, I didn't go down there, but I heard that
10 on the radio, and I heard it from afterward.

11 MR. HELLER: Okay.

12 MR. MCAULIFFE: Crews were reporting that.

13 MR. HELLER: Perfect.

14 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

15 Q. So, with the dewatering, how did that go?

16 A. It was frustrating, but, I mean, we made it work, in that
17 we --

18 Q. And then --

19 A. -- we were --

20 Q. Go ahead.

21 A. I thought we were successful in dewatering the 02 deck, but I
22 didn't really think that that 2 feet of water up there was making
23 the boat list. I thought the problem was somewhere else. But I
24 couldn't figure it out.

25 Q. And what time did you leave the scene?

1 A. We were assigned to rehab; and then, we were -- that ended up
2 being our last actual assignment, and then came shift change, and
3 we got -- Engine 3's crew was relieved about 8:50 in the morning.

4 Q. Okay. Well, you were on the 01 deck initially, and then you
5 looked up to the 02 deck, and that's when you saw that the fire
6 was coming close to the top of the stairway or ladder well, and
7 that's when you closed the door. Do you know, were there any fire
8 crews on the 02 deck that you're aware of?

9 A. No. And there was certainly nobody fighting that particular
10 fire at that time.

11 Q. Okay. And let's see. And you never went down to the bow
12 thruster room, or did you go into any other part of the vessel
13 other than what you've already described?

14 A. No. Mainly, we were on the 01 and 02 deck levels.

15 Q. Okay. And during the fire, when you initially got there, did
16 it seem like the smoke was clearing up, and then -- Fire Chief
17 seen the fire on the next deck. Did it look like, on the deck you
18 were on, the 01 deck, did it seem like the fire effect, the smoke
19 and everything, was dissipating?

20 A. Yeah, I thought we were kind of getting a handle on it. But
21 at the time, it seemed like a game of whack a mole. We'd put the
22 fire out in the galley; and then, it would pop out in the deck
23 above, and they had crews up there at some point putting those
24 out; and then, there was fire down below. And in subsequent
25 conversations, it could very well have been that these fires were

1 simply reigniting because of the latent heat of the ship.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. But it seemed like to me that it was being vented or fed from
4 somewhere. We could never get a handle on that.

5 Q. Okay. And just when you entered the vessel, you found all
6 the, what would be considered fire doors or watertight doors, they
7 were all open? Or let me ask it this way. The doors that you
8 encountered that no one else proceeded ahead of you, were they
9 always open or closed?

10 A. The doors were always open when -- the only door that we kind
11 of had to muck with was the galley door, and some junk had fallen
12 behind it. And so, the crews, when they'd come out, the door
13 would want to kind of close. We'd shove it back open again. But
14 other than that -- even the doorway, the one that's -- on this
15 drawing, it's in the 01 deck level, it's got a doorway that goes
16 downstairs. And in the smoke, I didn't see that doorway. I just
17 saw stairs that went down. And the doorway to the 01 deck, I
18 mean, I'm not the most observant guy, but I didn't even see that
19 door, so it must have been wide open. I certainly didn't have to
20 open it.

21 Q. Okay. And --

22 A. Go ahead.

23 Q. Oh, go ahead. Did anyone, any of the fire team members,
24 enter the mess, which was aft of the galley area?

25 A. That, I don't know.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. But there were obviously a lot of other crews on that.

3 MR. FLAHERTY: Right. All right. That's all the questions I
4 have. Thank you.

5 BY MR. HELLER:

6 Q. One just quick follow-up. You mentioned that the lights were
7 off and the galley was hard to see. Was there power anywhere? At
8 the time you arrived, was there any power in this area of the ship
9 at all, any lighting? If you remember.

10 A. Not interior.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. There was no interior light, just what we brought with us.

13 Q. Okay. Okay.

14 A. That's my recollection.

15 MR. HELLER: Yeah. That's helpful. Thank you. Anything
16 else?

17 BY CWO [REDACTED]

18 Q. Do you remember anybody requesting power be secured to the
19 ship at all?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. And when you arrived to the ship, did you see any
22 lights on, any power energized?

23 A. So, I'm going to say that at some point, they fired up the
24 engine. And at that point, the ship was listing, and I was
25 wondering if they were going to fire up some pumps, or some

1 dewatering pumps, or -- I figured somebody knew what they were
2 doing. I didn't pay any attention.

3 Q. Okay. And when they fired the engine up --

4 A. I thought --

5 Q. -- did the lights come on --

6 A. I thought that --

7 Q. -- on this level?

8 A. -- that there were lights down on this deck.

9 Q. When they fired the engine up? That's fine. If you don't
10 remember, you don't remember.

11 A. I don't recall.

12 CWO ██████ Okay.

13 MR. MCAULIFFE: Yeah.

14 CWO ██████ All right. Okay. All right. Well, if there's no
15 other questions, that'll conclude the interview, and the time is
16 11:09 local.

17 (Whereupon, at 11:09 a.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: FIRE ABOARD *KODIAK ENTERPRISE*
NEAR TACOMA, WASHINGTON
ON APRIL 10, 2023
Interview of John McAuliffe

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM026

PLACE: Tacoma, Washington

DATE: April 13, 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.


Li
Transcriber