

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 BLEASDALE, Lieutenant, Engine 5  
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

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 CWO [REDACTED]: This is Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED], [REDACTED],  
3 with the US Coast Guard, at Tacoma Fire Station 8, conducting  
4 interviews on the ship fire on the *Kodiak Enterprise*. In the  
5 room, I have?

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

9 MR. PETRULAK: Special Agent Nathan Petrulak with ATF, last  
10 name P-E-T-R-U-L-A-K.

11 MR. BLEASDALE: Lieutenant Bleasdale, Tacoma Fire Department,  
12 Engine 5, B shift, last name B-L-E-A-S-D-A-L-E.

13 CWO [REDACTED]: David?

14 MR. FLAHERTY: David Flaherty, last name spelled  
15 F-L-A-H-E-R-T-Y, investigator in charge with the National  
16 Transportation Safety Board.

17 MR. HELLER: Okay. Perfect. And, Lieutenant, can I get your  
18 first name, as well?

19 MR. BLEASDALE: John.

20 MR. HELLER: John. Sorry. No problem.

## INTERVIEW OF BRIAN TACKETT

21  
22 BY MR. HELLER:

23 Q. So, basically, what I'd like to do is kind of initially walk  
24 through your arrival and what you saw in the early stages. I know  
25 there's a lot of firefighting efforts and stuff that took place.

1 Primarily, what I'm interested in is like you as a witness, so  
2 your being close to this before most anyone else was, so your, you  
3 know, what you saw, you heard, you smelled, that kind of thing.  
4 And then, after we get through that portion of it, we may have  
5 some questions about like firefighting techniques, and what was  
6 the wear, and that kind of stuff. But initially, I guess we'll  
7 start with, so, you were on Engine 2?

8 A. Engine 5.

9 Q. Engine 5. Okay.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Engine 5. And you were the officer on the engine?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. Okay. So, what were you initially dispatched to? How did it  
14 come out?

15 A. Yeah. So, we originally dispatched a single company,  
16 electrical smell --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- on the ship. Once we were enroute, it was toned out to a  
19 111, and once we were on the scene coming into the guard shack,  
20 asked the guard there two things: Are there personnel on the  
21 ship, and how many? More or less than 10 persons? And he said,  
22 less than 10. Wasn't sure how many. We come up the ship, and  
23 now, mind, I do not think that I saw any smoke or anything going  
24 on. We went all the way to the bow with the engine just to kind  
25 of look over, and then back. Got on the gangplank.

1 Do not recall if I was met on the dock or we met two  
2 personnel on the ship. But I know that on the deck below the  
3 gangplank is where the initial fire attack was. That's where  
4 there were two individuals with Trident there. Talked to them  
5 briefly. And like, okay, what's going on, try to get a little bit  
6 of information. They had a charged hose line in that hallway  
7 already. Wasn't a great deal of smoke, and the only thing that I  
8 can recall or know that there wasn't is that myself, my partner,  
9 we went in, along with personnel from the ship, maybe 10 feet in  
10 or so. And then, that's when I stopped and said, no, talking to  
11 the personnel on the ship, you guys can't come in. The smoke's  
12 getting a little bit more.

13 Q. Can I stop you real quick?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. So, we have this diagram here, and this one's specifically  
16 for you, so if we need to draw or add things on there. You're  
17 talking about, so you come up the gangplank --

18 A. It's on the other side.

19 Q. Yep, yep. And then, so, when you're saying you are making  
20 entry with the folks from --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- Trident --

23 A. So, where's that --

24 Q. I think it's probably the --

25 (Crosstalk)

1 Q. -- next page (indiscernible). So, this would be the --

2 A. Yeah, this looks like where the gangplank was?

3 Q. Yep, yep. It --

4 A. Coming down here.

5 Q. -- right here.

6 A. Right. So, then, we come down the stairs to here. This is  
7 where location was.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And so, we got in initially probably about here, came back.  
10 Tried to pull that line to see what they had, because it sounded  
11 like it wasn't that far. Unable to pull that back. They brought  
12 another line. That was not successful. Talked about fire  
13 suppression and all that. And it sounded like they didn't have  
14 any, so that's when I called in for our line to be utilized.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And then, that was a 2 1/2 that came up with additional line  
17 that stretches out from there.

18 MR. HELLER: All right. Just real quick, I'm going to --

19 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah.

20 MR. HELLER: -- put a dark blue box around the door you're  
21 talking about here, just for the recording. So, we're putting a  
22 blue box you're indicating you're going through here, okay?

23 CWO [REDACTED]: Okay. And also, for the audio and Davis, we're  
24 looking at the plan of the general arrangement, 01, 02, 03 decks,  
25 and we're --

1 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

2 CWO [REDACTED]: -- talking about the entry on the 01 deck.

3 MR. HELLER: Okay.

4 MR. FLAHERTY: All right.

5 BY MR. HELLER:

6 Q. All right. Sorry to interrupt. Keep going.

7 A. Oh. No, yeah, that's fine. Yeah. So, then, we got the  
8 lines laid out. We did that attack; came down. As I'm looking  
9 here, this has to have been the door that we came into on the  
10 galley, did that initial attack. So, coming back a little bit,  
11 you know, talking to their crews that were there, and it's like,  
12 hey, what's going on? Trying to figure it out. How far are we  
13 in? Are we actually going to make an attack on this or not?  
14 So -- and I don't recall all the specifics on there, but what I  
15 got was, no, there's just some little fire down in the galley  
16 area. No report of any other fire or anything else on the ship.  
17 So, it's like, okay, we can do that. Came down here.  
18 Extinguished that, cooled that down as much as we could spraying  
19 that down.

20 At that time, Engine 3 -- because they were bringing up the  
21 hose, they were setting it up, feeding us hose. Once we knocked  
22 that down and cooled the area a little bit, Engine 3 came in to  
23 relieve us. At that time, it was reigniting, because I was in the  
24 room, reigniting. Bringing the nozzle back in to re-cool that  
25 down. So, at that point, I was thinking, okay, well, there's a



1 lot more heat in here than just some little smoldering fire kind  
2 of thing. We exited then, and I don't know --

3 Q. All right, can I pause --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- pause you there just to get some details about that? Is  
6 that all right?

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. So -- all right. So, you guys, you came down this long  
9 hallway, and it's this side door into what's marked here as the  
10 galley. This is like, you know, a kitchen with the appliances and  
11 stuff like that. Is that what you're talking about?

12 A. I have no clue what was in there.

13 Q. Okay. Right. Sure.

14 A. All I saw -- and once we got to here, it was pitch black. I  
15 couldn't see this.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Couldn't see anything in front -- I have a TIC, and that's  
18 the only way that we were --

19 Q. Got you.

20 A. -- able to travel and see anything, was with a TIC. Other  
21 than that, couldn't see anything.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And that's the only thing that I was using as to where we  
24 were spraying the water, is where I saw heat on the  
25 (indiscernible).

1 Q. Got you. Okay. And so, I'm going to put like a black square  
2 around the door we're talking about here, which is that door into  
3 the galley. And were you seeing actual flames --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- at this point?

6 A. And I've got to correct myself on that one.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Because, yeah, the TIC, we could see that, but -- yeah, flame  
9 definitely was in this area here --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- and it looked like there was just a pile on a countertop.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Just a bunch of stuff piled up there. It's a lot of stuff  
14 burnt at the time that we could see a little bit more into that  
15 area.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And --

18 Q. All right. I'm just going to write, flames, here, then,  
19 because it's going to -- we're talking to a lot of people. I want  
20 to keep it straight. All right.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Flames, okay.

23 A. And I couldn't see the depth on here. As far as I know, this  
24 was only maybe 15 feet, and I didn't see any more flames or  
25 nothing else. It just looked like there was a room that was this

1 size, you know, without the yellow markings, is what it kind of  
2 looked like. And then, just flames on this area here. Trying to  
3 recall if it was this wall or the one above that I thought was on  
4 fire. I thought there was fire behind us. But once we sprayed  
5 with water -- that's with the TIC, because I'm the one with the  
6 TIC. It's like, yeah, that thing's, the whole thing's on fire.  
7 Once we sprayed with the water, it knocked it down pretty quick.  
8 So, then, I would see, oh, no, that's just a wall there. I could  
9 feel it with the door coming around. I could push on that. And  
10 like I said, got into the room at that point. And then, yeah,  
11 once I was exiting, this was burning --

12 Q. So, all the flames you're seeing --

13 (Crosstalk)

14 Q. -- were just through the TIC? You're not able to actually --

15 A. No, we did see --

16 Q. Oh, you could see?

17 A. -- I did see.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yeah. I could see the flames. Once we came into here, flame  
20 on here; and then we knocked it down, and then that's what  
21 reignited into this area here. This was cool. This, I couldn't  
22 see any flame. I just saw it with the TIC on that.

23 Q. Got you.

24 A. And then, along with the ceiling and everything, we were just  
25 looking at heat, and then --

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. -- just spraying wherever there was heat.
- 3 Q. So, when you initially come to this door, how thick is the  
4 smoke? This is the door from the outside in.
- 5 A. I think -- it was dark. There was no lighting. And so, when  
6 we initially went in, like I said, I was with the other crew  
7 members, the --
- 8 Q. Yeah.
- 9 A. -- ship crew.
- 10 Q. Yeah, yeah.
- 11 A. So, first few steps into it --
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. -- obviously, there wasn't much smoke, until I got like 10  
14 feet. And then, it's like, stop. No. You guys can't --
- 15 Q. He's not wearing any --
- 16 A. -- be in here. No.
- 17 Q. Yeah, right.
- 18 A. And that's where I'm thinking, because if he wasn't, I don't  
19 think I was, either.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. So, obviously, there wasn't that much --
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. -- smoke at that time.
- 24 Q. As you get closer to this area, does the smoke change?
- 25 A. Yeah. So, we got to here, stopped, came back out. That's

1 when I didn't get any further until we were doing fire attack.

2 Q. So, when you said you turned around, was that like 10 yards  
3 or something --

4 A. Ten.

5 Q. -- like that?

6 A. Ten feet.

7 Q. Ten feet?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. A couple of steps in there, and it's like, no, this ain't  
11 going to work.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Because originally, they were saying, yeah, you know, it just  
14 kind of made it appear that it was something minor.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And that's original thought on there.

17 Q. Okay. In that initial portion here, before you had your SCBA  
18 on and stuff, did you smell anything associated with the smoke  
19 or --

20 A. Yeah. It smelled like electrical.

21 Q. Smelled electrical. Okay.

22 A. Yeah. And that's whether that's plastic burning, whatever.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. But that's the first thing that I thought. Okay, yeah, and  
25 there's some kind of electrical. Something got warm, whatever.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And then, again, it's like, didn't seem to be a  
3 significant --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- kind of thing, is what I'm getting feedback from --

6 Q. Sure.

7 A. -- them and all this kind of thing, right? Until a couple of  
8 other clues that came in. It's like, now, something ain't right.  
9 Then, you're saying -- because I couldn't pull that line. That  
10 line's got to be way in there or whatever's going on there. I  
11 can't recall if there was water on the floor already or not.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. But there's a lot of different indicators that I know  
14 something's not right.

15 Q. Okay. All right. So, we've clarified, then, back up to  
16 here. So, now, you're in here, you're spraying the flames, you're  
17 spraying the hot wall to the aft of the galley. Was there  
18 anything going on here in the mess room? Did you ever -- this is  
19 like the room with all the seats and stuff. Did you ever --

20 A. Never saw that. Never went into that. That'd have to be  
21 coming in this room here, right? Or that door --

22 Q. It connects --

23 A. -- through those stairs, or where?

24 Q. It connects through a door here to that room, as well.

25 A. Okay. So, there's nothing there.

- 1 Q. Yep.
- 2 A. Okay. And from the TIC, I don't recall seeing any heat in  
3 this area here.
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. Just around in here and that wall there.
- 6 Q. So, the, basically the fore wall and the aft wall of the  
7 galley; is that what you're --
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. Yeah?
- 10 A. And I don't know if there's another wall in there between,  
11 like a serving wall or anything like that, or countertop, or  
12 anything like that. I don't know.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. But it appeared to me that the room was just that size right  
15 there.
- 16 Q. Okay. Yeah, this -- on the plan, at least -- I haven't,  
17 obviously, been in there, but on the plan, this is one --
- 18 A. Wide open.
- 19 Q. But --
- 20 A. Okay.
- 21 Q. -- the galleys would have, you know, big hoods, and stoves,  
22 and all that kind --
- 23 A. Yeah.
- 24 Q. -- of stuff, so you can -- did you go any further in, or did  
25 you stop there in the galley?

1 A. No. That's as far as we went. At that time, a third person  
2 said, I'm running low on air. We've got to go. That's the  
3 transition to Engine 3. And like I said, at that point, I  
4 would -- that was reigniting. Got that knocked down again. Then,  
5 Engine 3 took over at that time.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Don't know whatever -- no, I was never back into that room at  
8 that point.

9 Q. Okay. And the flames that you saw visually, can you describe  
10 what they -- I mean, colors, size --

11 A. Nothing unusual.

12 Q. -- anything like that?

13 A. Nothing dramatic. It looked like there was stuff on the  
14 countertop burning and the stuff in cupboards burning.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. All right. And were there any flames down low, or was it all  
18 on the counters and cupboards?

19 A. It was all up top.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah. Just seemed like something burning, and that's kind of  
22 what I --

23 Q. Got it. Okay.

24 A. Just getting through there.

25 Q. And then, you said this fore wall, this would be the wall



1 separating the galley and the mess, appeared hot on the TIC, but  
2 you didn't necessarily actually see flames on --

3 A. No flame. That's originally, kind of looking at the TIC,  
4 it's like, okay, yeah, that's going on. But once that was hit,  
5 then it cooled down immediately, so --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- there wasn't --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- that much.

10 Q. All right. Was there heat overhead at all with the TIC, or  
11 could you look --

12 A. Yeah. So, we went -- yeah. So, I scanned that whole area.  
13 We were spraying everything, and it looked like everything was  
14 cooling down.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. As we're going, that hallway, there wasn't significant heat  
17 in the ceiling that I noticed with the TIC. On the floor above,  
18 there was. But, see, at that point, it seemed kind of basic.  
19 Okay, yeah, maybe it's a little bit more, but knock that down.  
20 Okay, that should resolve the issue, yeah. That was my  
21 original --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- thought at that time.

24 Q. And so, then, you are relieved and go back out at that point?

25 A. Yeah. So, we're relieved, go back out, get a new bottle, and

1 come up. And then, this time, we're on that main deck.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Here. And I don't recall -- obviously, the timelines -- I  
4 mean --

5 Q. Sure.

6 A. -- we do radio communication. I think I was pretty vocal as  
7 to where I was and what I was doing. So, timeline-wise, it would  
8 be a good way to kind of check that. So, then --

9 CWO [REDACTED] Just --

10 MR. HELLER: Yeah.

11 CWO [REDACTED]: -- just so David can keep up with us. So, when  
12 you came back on, you went to the -- you're pointing to the  
13 02 deck, correct?

14 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah, the gangplank deck.

15 CWO [REDACTED]: Okay. The 02 deck.

16 MR. BLEASDALE: Okay.

17 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

18 MR. BLEASDALE: So, then, we -- I don't know the indicators  
19 on that. Can't recall. But we did fire tac on that side here,  
20 got down. Two in here. See, that doesn't look -- to me, it  
21 looked like there's a room -- because we came in. It looked  
22 pretty much identical to this.

23 BY MR. HELLER:

24 MR. HELLER: This is like a laundry room here.

25 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah, but it didn't look -- that door didn't

1 look like that. It looked similar. Because we came in. Again,  
2 couldn't see anything. But then, with the TIC, we could see what  
3 was going on. Could see a lot of heat, and then I could see the  
4 heat above us, and then cooling down with that as we're going  
5 through. Get into that room, similar situation. Came in to the  
6 right immediately. Knocked down that fire in that area. Pulled  
7 all that down. Spraying. Definitely spraying. Sprayed  
8 everything, all the walls. Anything that I could see on the TIC  
9 that looked like there was any kind of heat, we were spraying  
10 down.

11 Q. Okay. And I know you said that door, it looked a little  
12 different, but is it this general area here that you're talking  
13 about on the 02 deck, or where was that?

14 A. Yeah, it had to have been in that area, but --

15 Q. You came in --

16 A. -- it looked --

17 Q. You came in --

18 A. Yeah. I came in this one here.

19 Q. -- and went straight down to the end of the hall?

20 A. Yeah. And -- yeah. Look. Because there's -- we went on the  
21 right --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- door and sprayed down, and sprayed there for a while,  
24 again, until --

25 Q. All right. I'm just going to make a blue circle --

1 (Crosstalk)

2 Q. -- around that area you're talking about. And maybe the  
3 walls are differently configured than in here, but in this general  
4 area, you encountered a door, went into the right. You saw --

5 A. To the left. Sorry, sorry. Left.

6 Q. To the left? And you saw flames again?

7 A. Yeah. So, that room was involved. We sprayed that down.  
8 And then, I think, at that point, it was like, okay, yeah, this is  
9 obviously way beyond kind of just that room fire. That's what we  
10 originally --

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. -- kind of --

13 Q. And so, on this level, on the 02 deck, when you used the TIC,  
14 you said you saw heat in every direction, or where were you  
15 seeing?

16 A. I think it was --

17 (Crosstalk)

18 A. I'm trying to --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- get that -- I thought it was like somewhat identical --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- to that galley fire. It was like more toward the bow --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- a little bit more heat above us, and sprayed down, and --

25 Q. And were there contents on fire in there, as well?

- 1 A. I don't think we got too far into the room.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. Well, we had to have been, because we were in, and we were  
4 spraying toward the bow. But I couldn't see anything.
- 5 Q. Sure. Okay.
- 6 A. You can't see anything. Hand in front of your face. Can't  
7 see anything. I couldn't even see my (indiscernible) in front of  
8 me if I'm looking. I mean, it was just --
- 9 Q. So, and similar --
- 10 (Crosstalk)
- 11 Q. -- smoke to what you were seeing down on the galley level?  
12 Similar smoke up here?
- 13 A. If not thicker.
- 14 Q. Okay. Maybe even thicker.
- 15 A. If not thicker. And I think that's why we went in, because  
16 it was so thick. And then, what's why we took a tac on that.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. Yeah. So, cooled that down, and then exited. And then, new  
19 bottle, came back. And then, we attacked on this side. Same  
20 thing, came all the way down, and I'm trying to --
- 21 Q. So, we're talking about the port hallway now on this --
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. -- 02 deck still? Okay.
- 24 A. Had to have been in here. If we got all the way to there.  
25 So, we get all the way down to that hallway. Again, black smoke,

1 can't see anything using the TIC, pushing forward. And then, at  
2 the very end, I could see the silhouette of the ship door oval on  
3 fire. That's the only thing I could see, is just that glow from  
4 that area. And then, we attacked that, sprayed water on that,  
5 (indiscernible).

6 MR. HELLER: Okay. And just for the recording, I circled a  
7 black circle of the general area you were talking about, that --

8 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah.

9 MR. HELLER: -- additional.

10 BY MR. HELLER:

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And on there, once you get on the ship, the position that we  
13 were at -- I don't know how far down we were at or what. It does  
14 look different on here. Hot water tanks.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And then, that's what I could hear. I could hear -- didn't  
17 know it at the time, but now, I'm assuming that it was the valves,  
18 pressure relief valves, on the hot water tank, because I could  
19 hear some pressure being relieved. I didn't know if it was any  
20 kind of a line, gas line, any kind of thing like that. And then,  
21 later, on the other attack that I did on there, then I could hear  
22 the boiling --

23 Q. Okay. So, when you were in this --

24 A. -- very (indiscernible).

25 Q. -- when you were doing the attack in this black circle here,

1 you started to hear the valves going on in the space?

2 A. Yeah. So, once I knocked that down --

3 Q. Okay, okay.

4 A. -- then I could hear that going. So, it was a little  
5 concerning as to what was going, what was leaking, because it was  
6 obviously under a lot of pressure. But we stayed there and just  
7 cooled that down as much as possible in that area there.

8 Q. Okay. Was that your -- so, did you come back out again after  
9 that, or --

10 A. Yes. Came back out at that time. I was -- I did rehab,  
11 whatever, for a while there. I think we came back, and I'm trying  
12 to think of a timeline how this worked out. But I came back, and  
13 I know I -- think I came up this stair here to look to see if  
14 there's any extension anywhere, and I must have, right --

15 (Crosstalk)

16 A. -- popped up here, yeah. And then, looked around a little  
17 bit on there. I didn't see anything up on that deck.

18 CWO [REDACTED]: And we're talking the pilothouse when you're  
19 saying, come on up top --

20 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah, whichever --

21 MR. HELLER: The 03 deck?

22 MR. BLEASDALE: Yeah.

23 CWO [REDACTED] The 03 deck?

24 MR. BLEASDALE: So -- because I came up one flight of stairs  
25 there. Didn't see anything with the TIC, and it was visible on

1 the floor. You know, 5 feet up was smoky; a little bit above  
2 that, darker smoke. So, I could visibly walk around there without  
3 using a TIC.

4 BY MR. HELLER:

5 Q. Were you seeing actual flames on this --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- level? No?

8 A. I didn't see any heat --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- didn't see anything. It was just smoke. Kind of walked  
11 through that area, so it would have been -- I'm coming out through  
12 here, look down this hallway, kind of around there a little bit,  
13 not extensively. And then, came back down. Don't recall what  
14 else was going on, but this was like an hour in, to a couple of  
15 hours or so, or more. And then, the last one I came through.  
16 Again, went down here with a nozzle, and then just cooled that  
17 area. Didn't see much heat at that time, but just tried to cool  
18 it.

19 Q. All right, so we're talking about going back to the port --

20 A. Port side, yeah.

21 Q. -- port side of the 02 deck where that black circle was drawn  
22 before.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yeah. So, you know, I'm just kind of --



- 1 Q. Did you ever go down into any of the decks below --
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. -- this? Okay.
- 4 A. Did, yeah, just those two sides, just on that, the galley,
- 5 and then the deck above --
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. -- is all I was on, yeah.
- 8 Q. And just jumping backwards a little bit, too, when you were
- 9 in the galley area, did you -- I know you said you heard like a
- 10 plastic -- or, you smelled a plastic --
- 11 A. Yeah. That's what we could smell just --
- 12 Q. Yeah.
- 13 A. -- just here.
- 14 Q. Did you ever hear any electrical arcing, or --
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. -- sounds like that, or anything, or any machinery sounds
- 17 from in here, or anything like that?
- 18 A. No. Nothing unusual, nothing that is going to make me stop
- 19 and think --
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. -- okay, what else is going on, that kind of stuff. And it's
- 22 like I was saying, the original communication from me didn't sound
- 23 like it was much of a fire.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. And then, yeah, nothing much unusual.

- 1 Q. Okay, and --
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. -- how long did you stay at the scene? Through the end of  
4 the shift, or --
- 5 A. Yeah, 7:00 a.m.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. Yeah, just after 7:00.
- 8 Q. All right, just so I make sure I have the timeline straight  
9 in my head, so, you have the initial attack here on the galley  
10 area; then, you come into, this is the 02 deck, where we have this  
11 blue circle; back out. You checked the, what we're calling the  
12 03 deck, the upper floor here. And then, one time back to the --
- 13 A. No, the three primary --
- 14 Q. Yes. I'm --
- 15 A. -- fire attacks --
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. -- were consecutive.
- 18 Q. And then --
- 19 A. That was on another one, I think.
- 20 Q. All right.
- 21 A. And it could have been when we -- no, it wasn't there,  
22 because I think we were backing out then. And then, the last  
23 thing I did was --
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. -- just cooling down. There wasn't any --

- 1 Q. Got it.
- 2 A. -- fire or anything --
- 3 Q. So, it's --
- 4 A. -- then at that time.
- 5 Q. -- one, two, three, four --
- 6 A. Four. No five.
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 A. Something like that. I think that's what --
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. -- what that was. But I'm fairly confident that the attacks
- 11 that I did on here were verbalized on the radio, so --
- 12 Q. Got it.
- 13 A. -- that'll give you the timeline.
- 14 Q. Yeah. Okay. Perfect. And then, I think my last question,
- 15 then I'll turn it over to the other folks, when you initially
- 16 interacted with the guys from the vessel, and they're in this
- 17 hallway here with you, did they say anything about what started
- 18 the fire, what caused the fire, or what --
- 19 A. Yeah, so, one of the guys said, we were doing hot work
- 20 earlier. I don't think that was the problem. And they were still
- 21 thinking it was some kind of electrical thing in the galley.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. So --
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. -- that's it, and -- yeah.

1 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

2 Q. So, just do a little housekeeping that I failed to do at the  
3 beginning. How long have you been with the Tacoma Fire  
4 Department?

5 A. Twenty-nine years.

6 Q. Twenty-nine years? Okay. And how long have you been the  
7 officer of the truck?

8 A. Engine 5 has only been about a year or so. I've been 15  
9 years as a lieutenant, 16, somewhere in there. Engine 5, newer  
10 station just got built a year or so ago; and then, I came in about  
11 a year as (indiscernible) beginning of last year; and then, I came  
12 in about June last year, somewhere in there.

13 Q. Okay. And do you have any formal shipboard firefighting  
14 training?

15 A. Not really. I did a two-day class in Seattle where they have  
16 that course there. That was maybe six months ago, something like  
17 that. But that's it.

18 Q. Okay. All right. And so, you said there was a pile of stuff  
19 on the counter. Was it --

20 MR. HELLER: In this area.

21 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

22 Q. Yeah, in the galley. I'm just trying to -- did it look like  
23 it was boxes sort of thing, or did it look like possibly  
24 structure, you know, wood paneling or anything that had fallen in?  
25 You understand what I'm saying?

- 1 A. Yeah. So --
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. -- it was just piles of ash --
- 4 Q. Piles of ash. Okay.
- 5 A. -- as far as I could tell just looking at it real quickly.
- 6 And then, when it -- because I wasn't trying to delve into that.
- 7 I'm just looking at fire and heat. And it started reigniting on
- 8 that back wall, coming back at us.
- 9 Q. Okay. So, just to clarify, when you're saying, back --
- 10 A. (Indiscernible) that side.
- 11 Q. Okay. So, the forward wall, that's where all the heat was
- 12 at. And then, did you say, was there any on the deck when you
- 13 first made entry? Was there any heat?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. And that's one of the things that I know, that as we're on
- 17 our knees going through there, didn't feel that heat, which, we
- 18 did on this deck.
- 19 Q. On the 02?
- 20 A. Yeah. That was very noticeable, because --
- 21 Q. Yeah.
- 22 A. -- obviously, you've got a fire underneath, right?
- 23 Q. Sure.
- 24 A. So, that was very noticeable. But this one here, no. It
- 25 seemed, like I say, pretty much cut and dry. Got a fire in the

1 kitchen, knock it down, kind of reignite a little bit, got a lot  
2 of heat, knock it down, should be good. We're looking around.  
3 Nothing else at that time. I'm thinking, okay, something else is  
4 going on here. There, it looked like, you know, like I said, just  
5 kind of 15 x 20 room. Don't see anything else. Using a TIC,  
6 looking all over the place, trying to figure out where everything  
7 is. Looked like it was pretty much cooled down.

8 Q. Okay. And do you recall seeing a door or hatch forward in  
9 that room?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Again, the majority of what I can see is only by the TIC.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Once we knocked that down and I was leaving, I was able to  
15 see Engine 3. I could see who they are within a few feet. I was  
16 passing over the TIC. TIC fell on the floor. I was able to see  
17 that on the floor, pick it up, and then get Lieutenant McAuliffe.  
18 So, there was some visibility at that point --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- for that, yeah.

21 Q. All right. And then, just so everybody'll be clear, I'm  
22 pretty sure I know what a TIC is, but can you tell me what a TIC  
23 is?

24 A. From my own G-Camera.

25 Q. Okay. All right. I was pretty sure of that, but --

1 A. Okay.

2 CWO [REDACTED] -- just -- so, that way, everybody knows. Okay.

3 I think that's all I've got. David, do you have any questions?

4 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah, just a few.

5 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

6 Q. Sir, if you could, just start from the moment you first went  
7 on board the vessel, and just describe everything you saw and did,  
8 and until you then left the vessel, so you have like a nice  
9 chronological order of what occurred.

10 A. Yeah. So, when I came up the gangplank, I can't recall if  
11 there were ship personnel there or not. I got to the floor,  
12 whatever this one is.

13 CWO [REDACTED] The 01.

14 MR. BLEASDALE: 01 deck.

15 CWO [REDACTED] Yep.

16 MR. BLEASDALE: So, got on the 02 deck. The crew must have  
17 met me there. I can't recall. Because we came down the stairs to  
18 the 01 deck. And like I said, I can't -- it doesn't appear to me,  
19 or I'm not thinking, that there was any significant amount of  
20 smoke, because with the crew kind of walking in that area, doing  
21 all that. Attempted to walk in to check the area. Smoke was  
22 starting to accumulate more. We backed out. Assessed their fire  
23 capabilities. At that time, I think I called in that their  
24 systems have failed and that we were going to use our water  
25 supply.

1           So, then, the 2 1/2 was brought up, extended off the 2 1/2,  
2 made fire attack. Fire was knocked down at that time. Reignited  
3 a little bit; knocked down again prior to me leaving. Got a new  
4 bottle. Went up on the 02 deck. Extended out, fought fire on the  
5 02 deck. Knocked that down. Could see that there was heat on the  
6 floor, heat in the ceiling and cooled down that room that had  
7 ignited. Exited. Another bottle. Came back up on 02 deck, and  
8 this time, on the port side. Extended out. Fire toward the bow,  
9 through a doorway. Cooled that area down, extinguished the fire,  
10 exited, and went to rehab. Is that what you're looking for?

11           BY MR. FLAHERTY:

12           Q. Yeah. Now, when you're in the galley, and you initially  
13 extinguish the fire, and then it reignited a little bit, what was  
14 reigniting?

15           A. I have no clue. I don't know. Flames coming up. Not  
16 digging into the pile, not tearing things apart, not doing any of  
17 that. All we're doing is fire attack at that time. I couldn't  
18 see anything other than a pile of ash along the wall to the right  
19 as you enter that doorway. Pile of ash there, or pile of  
20 whatever, burned-up material. And nothing else was visible. Like  
21 I said, we see some visibility when we are leaving, but in that  
22 room, I couldn't see anything visibly standing, and we were  
23 standing at that point in time. So, the heat wasn't that bad,  
24 obviously. But the smoke was still thick enough that I couldn't  
25 see, so -- and with a TIC, you can't see objects, necessarily,



1 that great, depending on the differentiating with heat.

2 Q. Yeah. So, you made it into the galley area, but did you ever  
3 make it into what's the dry store area?

4 A. No. So --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- that's as far as we went in the galley area. And then,  
7 air ran out, so we needed to exit. Never went on that deck again,  
8 never went anywhere beyond that galley area.

9 Q. Okay. And do you recall if the interior of the galley was --  
10 did it have like wooden bulkheads or -- and wooden-type desks --  
11 or, not desks, tables and chairs?

12 A. I didn't see any tables, didn't see any chairs in that galley  
13 area, couldn't recognize any equipment in that galley area,  
14 couldn't recognize anything in that galley area.

15 Q. All right.

16 A. No visibility.

17 Q. And then -- oh, go ahead.

18 A. What's that?

19 Q. Go ahead, finish. I'm sorry. I interrupted you.

20 A. No. So, there was no visibility in that area. I couldn't  
21 even tell it was a galley area. I couldn't tell what it was.  
22 Like I said, just looking at the TIC, just looking at heat that we  
23 were looking at, and spraying on that.

24 Q. Okay. And where was -- from the TIC, can you judge how hot  
25 an area is?

1 A. Yes. And --

2 Q. How?

3 A. There, I wasn't trying to determine that. I was looking at  
4 the pattern, and that's what I was concentrating on, and hitting  
5 that. Heat-wise, as saying it wasn't hot enough that it would  
6 bother me, so that aspect. It was more of the metal that was  
7 retaining that heat that we were seeing. Even when that room  
8 reignited, I was standing up in the room when it reignited.  
9 Flames were maybe less than 10 feet from me as they're rolling up.  
10 It still wasn't extremely hot to me, that I could stand there, and  
11 converse with Engine 3, and telling them that it's reigniting. I  
12 think -- I don't know if I brought the nozzle in and sprayed it  
13 down, or if Hanna (ph.), I think he had the nozzle, if he sprayed  
14 it down. But the heat in there was not that excessive.

15 Q. Okay. And you mentioned the pattern. How would you describe  
16 the pattern of the fire or the heat?

17 A. So, the pattern would just be probably like -- when we  
18 originally went in there, it was -- you couldn't tell. We just  
19 knocked it down. On the reignite, when I was standing up in the  
20 room, it was toward the front on that wall, probably starting in  
21 the corner, whatever you want to call that corner right there.

22 CWO [REDACTED] Starboard corner.

23 MR. BLEASDALE: Reaching out maybe 4 feet, and then rolling  
24 up above, and then reigniting whatever was on that starboard wall  
25 right here on, and to me, I thought they were countertops. Could

1 be whatever else. Something was up there that was chest-high or a  
2 little bit below.

3 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

4 Q. Right.

5 A. And items on that. And then, that started reigniting. So,  
6 it looked like there was material in this area here that just  
7 reignited. Maybe it was cabinets, maybe there were items in the  
8 cabinets, maybe there was cooking oil in the cabinets, maybe --  
9 who knows what. But it was primarily in that area reigniting.  
10 Like I say, it wasn't a tremendous amount of plain heat, but it  
11 was going.

12 Q. Okay.

13 CWO [REDACTED] So, he was pointing in the forward starboard  
14 corner of that galley.

15 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. (Indiscernible).

16 MR. HELLER: Was this door --

17 MR. FLAHERTY: So --

18 MR. HELLER: -- open when you came --

19 MR. BLEASDALE: That door was open --

20 MR. HELLER: Okay.

21 MR. BLEASDALE: -- yeah. Same with the other door that we  
22 went in here, wherever that was. Same with that door over here.  
23 They were all open.

24 MR. HELLER: So, you didn't have to open any doors?

25 MR. BLEASDALE: Didn't open any doors.

1 MR. FLAHERTY: So, essentially -- let's see. So, that would  
2 have been the chiller, or was that more of the -- oh, when you  
3 were entering -- when you were on the -- prior to going into  
4 the -- so, were you in the mess or the galley?

5 MR. HELLER: He's indicating the galley. That door on the  
6 port side of the --

7 MR. FLAHERTY: On the --

8 MR. HELLER: -- hallway, it comes right in directly --

9 MR. FLAHERTY: Right.

10 MR. HELLER: -- to the galley.

11 MR. FLAHERTY: Yeah, I see that.

12 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

13 Q. And then, did you check out the mess area? Did that have  
14 any -- was that involved?

15 A. No. the only room that I went -- I went down the hallway and  
16 into that galley area. I don't know the timeline that we were  
17 there fighting that fire. And I went in maybe 6 feet from that  
18 door off the hallway. That's as far as I got in there. It looked  
19 like that had been knocked down. I wasn't seeing any heat pattern  
20 beyond that in that area. Our air was running low, so we exited.  
21 Only place I went on 01 deck is within 6 feet of that galley door.

22 MR. HELLER: And, David, we've --

23 MR. FLAHERTY: Yes.

24 MR. HELLER: -- got it pretty well marked on this diagram  
25 that we'll get you copies of.

1 MR. FLAHERTY: Okay, thanks. Just one last question.

2 BY MR. FLAHERTY:

3 Q. When you're in the passageway heading towards the galley,  
4 there was a door in front of you? Do you recall that?

5 A. Yeah. Coming on there, just a couple of feet before, don't  
6 recall that.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. Didn't see that. When we got probably, yeah, 15 feet or so  
9 before that galley door, we couldn't see anything. Couldn't see  
10 anything --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- with the TIC, couldn't see anything. Keep pushing  
13 forward, forward. Then, we could see, on the right side is where  
14 the heat was, and then went in that door. Couldn't see anything  
15 beyond that.

16 MR. FLAHERTY: All right, all right. Yeah, that's all the  
17 questions I have. Thank you for your time.

18 MR. BLEASDALE: Yep.

19 CWO [REDACTED] All right. Any other questions? No? Okay. That  
20 will conclude the interview. Time is 10:30.

21 (Whereupon, at 10:30 a.m., the interview was concluded.)  
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 John Bleasdale

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.



Lisa D. Sevarino  
Transcriber