

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: SHERMAN TURQUOISE, Welder
Sound Resource Group

Trident Seafood Facilities
Tacoma, Washington

Thursday,
April 20, 2023

APPEARANCES:

CWO [REDACTED], Investigating Officer
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)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:47 a.m.)

1
2
3 CWO [REDACTED]: This is Chief Warrant Officer [REDACTED]. The
4 date is April 20th; the time is 11:47. We are at Trident
5 facilities investigating the fire on board the *Kodiak Enterprise*.
6 My last name is spelled [REDACTED]

7 In the room I have --

8 SA HELLER: Special Agent Greg Heller with ATF. My last name
9 is spelled Heller, H-e-l-l-e-r.

10 MR. TURQUOISE: Hi. I'm Sherman Turquoise. My last name is
11 T-u-r-q-u-o-i-s-e.

12 MR. ALTENBRUN: My name is Larry Altenbrun. I'm the attorney
13 for Trident Seafoods. My last name is spelled A-l-t-e-n-b-r-u-n.

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

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

18 CWO [REDACTED] All right, Sherman. So just to clarify, you've
19 come voluntary, you haven't been coerced to come and talk to us;
20 is that correct?

21 MR. TURQUOISE: Yes.

22 CWO [REDACTED] Thank you.

INTERVIEW OF SHERMAN TURQUOISE

23
24 BY CWO [REDACTED]

25 Q. All right. And are you an employee with Trident?

- 1 A. Yes, Trident.
- 2 Q. Trident? And how long have you been with Trident?
- 3 A. About 3 weeks now.
- 4 Q. Three weeks?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And what is your position?
- 7 A. Combo welder.
- 8 Q. Combo welder?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. And what is a combo welder?
- 11 A. Basically weld and (indiscernible).
- 12 Q. Okay. And do you have any certifications?
- 13 A. No, just like just with the company.
- 14 Q. Okay. And what certification with the company?
- 15 A. Like just the welding.
- 16 Q. So they put you through tests or --
- 17 A. Yeah. Yes. We do tests and stuff, because I didn't go to
- 18 school for welding. I learned it (indiscernible).
- 19 Q. All right. Okay. How long you been a welder?
- 20 A. About 8 years.
- 21 Q. Eight years?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Okay. And on Friday, April 7th, were you on board working?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Okay. And and what were you -- what was your job?

1 A. Welding, (indiscernible) like for fuel lines and -- Thursday,
2 like I (indiscernible).

3 Q. Okay. So on this print here, where -- or maybe this one
4 might be --

5 A. I was by the dryer vent.

6 Q. Oh, you were at the dryer vent?

7 A. Yeah, by the dryer vent.

8 Q. Okay. So you were working on the dryer vent, so that was job
9 4 on this plan here. Okay. So dryer vent.

10 Okay. So can you just tell me when you showed up to work
11 what -- how'd it go? I mean, just walk me through the process
12 before you start welding.

13 A. We usually set up like -- just set up the welding machine and
14 lay out some fire blankets and stuff so like, like sparks don't go
15 anywhere or anything like that.

16 Q. Okay. So before you get to that, is there any other stuff
17 that you do? So before you start welding, right, so you said you
18 showed up to work --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- I'm guessing you grab your gear that you need?

21 A. Yeah, my tools and stuff.

22 Q. Okay. And then so you walk from like the tool room?

23 A. No. I left it on the boat.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. So do you go straight to the boat, grab your stuff, and just
2 start working?

3 A. I just keep them ready like because after shift I just take
4 them all apart and put them in my section.

5 Q. Okay. So before you start welding is there -- because you're
6 welding on this dryer vent, was there -- is there a shipyard
7 competent person that tells you that it's okay to work, not work?
8 How do you know that that vent is safe to work on?

9 A. Because my boss tells me like -- because he checks it first
10 before I do work.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah, like he inspects it first, like it's okay to weld on,
13 if it's okay to grind and stuff. That's the stuff I ask first
14 before I do anything else.

15 Q. Okay. Is there any documentation in that area to say that
16 it's safe or not?

17 A. Oh, yeah. The hot work permit? Yeah. It was around that
18 day.

19 Q. Okay. So there's a hot work permit?

20 A. Yeah. Actually the first (indiscernible) date was right on
21 there and the time they checked it and everything.

22 Q. Okay. And when you're working in a quasi -- because that's
23 kind of considered a hazardous space there, is there any
24 documentation on the atmospheric conditions?

25 A. I ask first like is it okay to work on it. He gave me an

1 okay, and then that's why I started on -- like start cleaning off
2 the paint and stuff off of it.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah. Or, no, I used a grinding wheel. I was using a Tiger
5 Paw, a buffer wheel.

6 Q. A buffer wheel?

7 A. Yeah, to like the paint off so it won't spark or anything
8 (indiscernible).

9 Q. Okay. All right.

10 BY SA HELLER:

11 Q. Okay. So you were working on -- on that diagram you have
12 it's labeled job 4. I think I -- (indiscernible) that portion
13 labeled, but it was on the -- where on the vessel? I guess we're
14 talking on the bow?

15 A. It's right there.

16 Q. So on this here, would it be on this deck here that's labeled
17 03?

18 A. Job 3? Yeah, I was right here on the corner.

19 Q. Right on the corner, okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Can you -- on this one here, can you make a circle or
22 something with this blue pen as to where you were doing that work
23 generally?

24 A. I was right here.

25 Q. Okay. All right. And what was the job? What were you

1 trying to accomplish?

2 A. Like a vent where you open and close it.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah. It was just like small tacks, like welding tacks in
5 there.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. (Indiscernible) and just put it on there.

8 Q. Okay. So had it already been -- had something already been
9 cut off of it?

10 A. Yeah. They cut it off with a Sawzall.

11 Q. Was that done on Friday or was that a different day?

12 A. That was on the -- not that day, it was like Wednesday or
13 Thursday. Because I was on (indiscernible) doing the fuel lines
14 (indiscernible) because I was down there. They already cut it
15 with a Sawzall.

16 Q. So when you started on Friday, the portion was already cut
17 off --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- and you were going to tack weld something else onto it?

20 A. No, I kind of like looked at it, then I told him is it okay
21 if (indiscernible). He said yeah, and so I just did like -- I
22 just cut it and then straighten up. Then I waited till they
23 finished with that piece. That was around right after lunch.
24 Then I just put it on there and just tack it on. And I was done
25 around 2.

- 1 Q. Okay. So you completed work around 2 o'clock on that job?
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. Okay. I'm not sure I fully understand the work that you were
4 trying to do. If it's a -- what did it look -- what did the thing
5 look like? Do you want to --
- 6 A. You have a picture of it there.
- 7 Q. Yeah.
- 8 A. No, not that one. That one.
- 9 Q. Okay. Yep. Uh-huh. I see it, yep.
- 10 A. Yeah. Okay. I was working on that.
- 11 Q. Okay. Got it. And had a portion of that been cut off
12 already?
- 13 A. Yeah, it was already cut off.
- 14 Q. Okay. So the portion that wraps around and is going back
15 down had been cut off?
- 16 A. Yeah. It was already cut off.
- 17 Q. Okay. And so then what were -- you were adding something
18 back on there, a new valve or a new piece?
- 19 A. Yeah, a new piece that sort of like opens and close. Sort of
20 like --
- 21 Q. Okay. Like with a flap?
- 22 A. Yeah, sort of like that piece right there.
- 23 Q. Okay. So you're referencing a different photograph of a
24 similar valve that has a piece that flaps open or shut?
- 25 A. Yeah.

- 1 Q. Okay. And so on Friday, did you weld on that new piece?
- 2 A. Yeah, I just weld it on.
- 3 Q. Okay. And then were you done with the project on Friday?
- 4 A. Yeah. I was done Friday.
- 5 Q. Did you use -- so you used a welding tool?
- 6 A. Yeah, the welding tool.
- 7 Q. Did you use any other tools in that process, grinding or
- 8 cutting?
- 9 A. The welding tool I used was a TIG. It don't make sparks or
- 10 anything like that.
- 11 Q. Okay. Did you use any other tools or just the TIG?
- 12 A. And the ball (indiscernible) they commonly use, like they put
- 13 in there to (indiscernible) so nothing will go into the vent or
- 14 anything.
- 15 Q. Okay. Describe that to me.
- 16 A. It's like you just pump it up (indiscernible).
- 17 Q. Okay. So you put something into the pipe and then you
- 18 inflated?
- 19 A. Yes. So like sparks or something can't go --
- 20 Q. Nothing can go down there. Okay. And when in the process
- 21 did you do that?
- 22 A. Like beginning of work, I like -- when I was going to re-cut
- 23 to make it (indiscernible) better. It has a small bevel on there
- 24 so it (indiscernible)
- 25 Q. Okay. So before you started?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. Okay. And how do you inflate that device?
- 3 A. It's like a (indiscernible). Just put it in there and then
4 it's hooked to a small pump and you inflate it to like 20 pounds
5 air, 30 pounds. And (indiscernible) we leave it in there.
- 6 Q. Okay. And then so you did a little cutting on the bevel and
7 then you welded a piece to it?
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. What -- does the ball stay in there that whole time? When
10 does that come out?
- 11 A. At that time the -- I was going to put it in there, but the
12 dryer was going, so I stuck around and I waited till they turned
13 it off. Then I went to my boss and I said, is it okay to -- the
14 ball (indiscernible) turn it off? He's like yeah. So I had put
15 it in and just re-cut it, and just like we cleaned it, took the
16 paint off and stuff (indiscernible).
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. Then in my mind, I just (indiscernible) that ball, just to
19 take it back out because I didn't know if they're going to use the
20 dryer or not.
- 21 Q. Okay. So they were using the dryer that morning?
- 22 A. Yeah, that morning.
- 23 Q. Okay. Do you know who was using it or what they were doing?
- 24 A. No. I don't know who was using it. So I went down below
25 just to check and see if anything came out while I was doing that.

- 1 Q. How did you know they were using the dryer?
- 2 A. Because air was blowing out of it.
- 3 Q. Okay. What time of day was that? Was that in the beginning
- 4 of the work?
- 5 A. Yeah, beginning of work.
- 6 Q. Okay. So you got there at the beginning of work at -- what
- 7 time did you start work that day?
- 8 A. Around -- it was around 7 or 8.
- 9 Q. Can you estimate what time it was when you felt the air
- 10 coming out and the dryer was being used?
- 11 A. It was around -- I think around 8, because I got done with
- 12 that other valve on this side (indiscernible).
- 13 Q. Okay. So around 8. And then you -- once the dryer's not
- 14 working any -- not blowing air anymore, you talked to your
- 15 supervisor and you said, is it okay if I work on it?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. They said --
- 18 A. Yeah, you can (indiscernible) down for maintenance.
- 19 Q. Okay. And then did you do any work before putting the ball
- 20 in or was that the first thing that you did?
- 21 A. I put the ball in first before I started any work.
- 22 Q. And then you said you cut the bevel and you welded it on, and
- 23 then after that you left the ball in or you took it out?
- 24 A. After I'm done with it and everything, I took it back out.
- 25 Q. Okay. All right. Was there -- from when you got done

1 welding to when you took the ball out, was it immediate or did you
2 wait for a while?

3 A. Wait for a while until it cools down and I took it out.

4 Q. How long do you think that was that you waited?

5 A. Probably like for an hour.

6 Q. An hour? Okay. Were there any problems when you were doing
7 this job or did it go smoothly?

8 A. It just goes smooth.

9 Q. Did anything smoke or catch fire or any issues like that?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Was there a fire watch associated with this?

12 A. Yeah, she was watching me.

13 Q. And where was she?

14 A. She was sitting on this side.

15 Q. Here?

16 A. Yeah, like standing by the -- where the --

17 Q. Out on the deck, on level 3 deck?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Was there any fire watch down on the other side of the pipe?

20 A. No. You can pretty much see everything. It's all standard
21 and safe, you can see everything.

22 Q. I understand. Was there any fire watch down inside the ship
23 for this?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Have you done jobs like this before?

- 1 A. Yeah. I do a lot of different jobs.
- 2 Q. Okay. And this one, did it go the same way those jobs
3 usually go?
- 4 A. Oh, yeah.
- 5 Q. Okay. And did you ever walk down to the other end of the
6 pipe down where the dryer is?
- 7 A. Yeah, I checked on it, then I came back up.
- 8 Q. That was before or afterwards?
- 9 A. That was after.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. That was (indiscernible).
- 12 Q. And when you said you felt air coming out and the dryer was
13 being used, did you actually walk down and see the dryer going?
- 14 A. Yeah, I saw the dryer going, so I just left it alone and then
15 just came back up and told Primo about it.
- 16 Q. Do you have any idea what was in there or who was using it?
- 17 A. Just probably clothes. I'm not really (indiscernible).
- 18 Q. Okay. You didn't talk to anybody about that?
- 19 A. Yeah.
- 20 Q. Okay. So you finished at -- you said you finished that job
21 at -- you said 2?
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. And do you know how long the fire watch stayed after that?
- 24 A. We both stayed around till like (indiscernible), like like
25 around 3, 3:30.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Because then I was starting to (indiscernible).

3 Q. Okay. And so your workday was done at 3:30 or so?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. All right. When you're on -- when people are working on this
6 vessel is there a spot where people eat lunch or hang out or have
7 snacks?

8 A. No. They told us not to eat on the boat. They told us to go
9 to the breakroom, so --

10 Q. The break room on shore?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. Okay. Did you ever go into the mess or --

13 A. No.

14 Q. And the dryer that you went down and saw running, where was
15 that dryer?

16 A. Between -- it was (indiscernible), go down and go through
17 the --

18 Q. Was it near the galley and the mess or was it somewhere else?

19 A. Right by the galley and the mess, yeah.

20 Q. And was it a big bank of a bunch of washers and dryers or
21 just a single one?

22 A. I think it was just a single one.

23 Q. Okay.

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

25 CAPT FLAHERTY: Yes.

1 BY CAPT FLAHERTY:

2 Q. After you were doing the work on the dryer vent, did you go
3 down to the dryer to check it out at all?

4 A. Yeah, just looked around it and see if anything came off of
5 it and stuff like that.

6 Q. And how did it -- and how hot did the pipe get when you were
7 welding the ball? Was it more -- if you touched it in the area
8 where you're welding, would you say you'd probably get burned?

9 A. Just a small section, probably like 1 inch. It wasn't really
10 a big weld.

11 Q. Was there a lot of slag with the welding?

12 A. Oh, no. I was using a TIG.

13 Q. I'm sorry?

14 A. TIG.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: TIG.

16 CWO [REDACTED] He was using a --

17 CAPT FLAHERTY: Oh, he said TIG. Yes.

18 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah.

19 CAPT FLAHERTY: All right. All right. I just
20 (indiscernible).

21 BY CAPT FLAHERTY:

22 Q. All right. After you were done, what did you next? What was
23 the rest of the day?

24 A. Just wait around and hang out there watching the other guys
25 how they were working and stuff.

1 Q. Okay. All right. That's all the questions I have. Thanks.

2 MR. ALTENBRUN: I want to ask a couple questions.

3 BY MR. ALTENBRUN:

4 Q. So the -- there was sort of on this -- on this dryer vent
5 there was sort of two things. You kind of cleaned it up and got
6 it prepped for welding and then you did welding, right?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And the cleanup on that, that was done in the morning and the
9 welding was done in the afternoon; is that right?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. And the welding that you did, you didn't do a full
12 weld around it, right? You were just tacking it?

13 A. Yeah, I was just putting small tacking on it.

14 Q. Right. So you were going to come back the next day or some
15 time later and do the full weld; is that correct?

16 A. No, it was just a small weld on it, not a big -- or like a 1-
17 inch tack.

18 Q. Oh, okay. So a 1-inch tack, and that was all you were going
19 to be doing?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Because it was just a dryer vent --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- and you didn't have to do more. Okay. And just so I'm
24 clear, the inflatable ball, you put that in, in the morning before
25 you started any of the cleanup work; is that right?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. And did your lead check that? Did he see it?
- 3 A. Yes. He saw it.
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. I let him know I put the ball in there and he goes over there
6 and checks it.
- 7 Q. He goes over there and checks it?
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. Okay. And then at the end of the day when all the work was
10 done, you took that ball out?
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. Okay. You're sure?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. And you indicated that you noticed that the dryer was
15 running. Are you 100 percent certain that you went down into that
16 space and actually saw the dryer turning, turning, turning?
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. You're sure that day?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Okay. And that was in the morning before you started any
21 work; is that right?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. And then did you go back down there in the afternoon after
24 you had finished up all your work?
- 25 A. Yeah, because the machine was off.

1 Q. Okay. And the machine at that point was not running; is that
2 correct?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay.

5 BY SA HELLER:

6 Q. For the cleanup work you described, what tool do you use for
7 that?

8 A. Just a regular flat -- it looks like a Tiger Claw, but it's
9 sandpaper grinding wheel.

10 Q. A grinding wheel?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Does that create sparks or --

13 A. No. It doesn't create any sparks.

14 MR. ALTENBRUN: You call it a Tiger Paw; is that right?

15 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah, a Tiger Paw.

16 MR. ALTENBRUN: And that -- you use that because it doesn't
17 create a lot of sparks, right?

18 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah. Just to take the paint off.

19 SA HELLER: So like a rotating sander?

20 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah. It goes on a grinder. Just pop it on
21 the end and --

22 BY CWO [REDACTED]

23 Q. Just so -- because there's a little confusion on that, is it
24 a flat disc?

25 A. No. It's like -- I had like a lot of sandpaper on it.

1 Q. So if I was looking at this, it's not a flat sanding disc
2 wheel, correct?

3 A. Yeah, it's a flat, sort of like flat.

4 Q. So it's flat, but does it fold over at all?

5 A. Folds over on?

6 Q. The disc itself.

7 A. No, it spins.

8 Q. Okay.

9 MR. ALTENBRUN: It's not a disc that spins in a circle,
10 right?

11 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah. It's a spinning a circle, then
12 underneath there is has like, like sandpaper or something.

13 CWO [REDACTED] Okay. All right.

14 BY CWO [REDACTED]

15 Q. I just want to ask you -- so here is Appendix A. It's a hot
16 work policy. Have you seen that document?

17 A. Yeah, like online before we came here.

18 Q. Before you --

19 A. Yeah. And Primo kind of showed me it, hot work permit.

20 Q. Okay. So you got training by Trident or just by the lead or
21 the foreman?

22 A. (Indiscernible).

23 Q. I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

24 A. The company policy? Like the (indiscernible) -- they tell us
25 like, you know, anything (indiscernible) hot work permit, how it

1 looks like and -- yeah.

2 Q. Okay. So, and then this is Appendix B, the fire watch
3 training. Have you seen that document?

4 A. I haven't seen that one.

5 Q. You haven't seen that one?

6 A. Yeah, because I think the fire watches see that one first.

7 Q. Okay. All right. And I just want to clarify, so on this
8 list that was provided to us it says that you're a temp welder.
9 So are you employed by Trident or are you employed by somebody
10 else?

11 A. By somebody else.

12 Q. Okay. Because at first you said you were employed by
13 Trident, so I just wanted to make sure.

14 A. Oh, sorry about that.

15 Q. So -- okay, so you're employed by somebody else. And what
16 company is that?

17 A. TRMG.

18 Q. TRMG?

19 A. No, SRG.

20 Q. SRD?

21 A. SRG.

22 Q. SRG. So --

23 MR. ALTENBRUN: And that stands for Sound Resource Group --

24 MR. TURQUOISE: Yes.

25 MR. ALTENBRUN: -- is that right?

1 MR. TURQUOISE: Yeah, Sound Resource.

2 BY CWO [REDACTED]

3 Q. Okay. Sound Resource Group. Okay. So they get -- do they
4 provide you any training on hot work, fire watches?

5 A. Yeah. I did, because they gave us an email just to read
6 through the paperwork and stuff.

7 Q. Okay. And then how do you document that you read it? Is
8 there something you signed or --

9 A. Just to read it and then get like a little (indiscernible).

10 Q. Okay. But there's nobody saying -- you're not saying, yep,
11 I've read that and sign something or send somebody else an email
12 saying that I've reviewed the material?

13 A. Oh, yeah, they give us the paperwork just to do that.

14 Q. Okay. And then you sign it? Is that -- I don't know. So
15 you -- that's what I'm asking. So, okay, so you sign something
16 that --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And then do they provide you a copy of Trident's policies?
19 Or when you come on, come --

20 A. Like the paperwork they give to us? Yeah, they just have
21 like pictures of it and stuff, like see how it looks like and
22 everything.

23 Q. Okay. All right.

24 CWO [REDACTED] Anybody else have any further questions?

25 CAPT FLAHERTY: I'm fine. Thank you.

1 CWO [REDACTED] Okay. All right. Well, then that will conclude
2 the interview. The time is 12:10.

3 (Whereupon, at 12:10 p.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 Sherman Turquoise

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
Tran

