



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Interview Summary – DCA21FM026

Interview with: Coner Golden

Date: May 01, 2021

Location: *President Eisenhower* conference room – upper deck

Interviewed by: LCDR [REDACTED], Lt. [REDACTED] - USCG, Bart Barnum - NTSB

In attendance: Joe Walsh – attorney representing vessel owner, Antoine Letournel – APL

Case: *President Eisenhower* – DCA21FM026

Mr. Golden was interviewed in conjunction with the investigation into the fire on the *President Eisenhower*, off the coast of Santa Barbara, CA, on April 28th, 2021. The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. It has been developed from notes taken during the interview of Mr. Golden. Mr. Golden was cooperative during the investigation and agreed to be interviewed but requested that the interview not be recorded.

- Mr. Golden is a 2009 graduate of California Maritime Academy.
- Completed four tours aboard the *President Eisenhower* prior to the fire (tour being about 84 days).
- He had joined the vessel on 4/24/21 in Los Angeles.
- The evening of the accident once the engine was set at 80 revolutions per minute he and the 1 A/E completed a round of the engine room. Mr. Golden indicated that he did not notice anything out of the ordinary.
- Himself and 1 A/E were the last to leave the engine room prior to the fire, at about 0030.
- About 0030 Mr. Golden indicated that he called the bridge to inform the mate on watch that he was departing the space and going “unmanned.”
- About 0150 on 4/28/21 he was socializing with 1 A/E outside on his stateroom deck when the fire alarm activated.
- He and 1 A/E went down to U-Deck and looked into the engine room from the accommodation entrance on the upper deck. He observed that there was smoke and fire a deck below near the boiler. He exited the space, shut door, returned to safety storeroom, and dressed out in turnout gear.
- He was assigned to the STDB side safety storeroom (Squad 1).
- Made entry again through same door. Attempted to deploy ABC portable extinguisher but it was a “dud” and did not function.
- Retreated once again out the door. Other crew had arrived and began donning turnout gear.
- Prior to making another entry, Mr. Golden indicated that the water mist system above the main engine was automatically activated. He said this was due to multiple fire sensors in the area going into alarm.
- Also prior to making another entry Mr. Golden said that while in the fire control room, with the C/E and 1 A/E, he observed the remote operation of the engine room fuel oil quick closing

valves and remote closure of the engine room fire dampers. He was not sure whether the C/E or the 1 A/E had operated the shutdowns.

- Mr. Golden also assisted the hose team that made entry into the engine room through the aft U-deck exterior entrance.

The remainder of the interview concentrated on the forward injector fuel oil return line on the main engine's, no. 5 cylinder.

- Mr. Golden was tasked by the 1 A/E to remove the old fuel oil return line on either 4/25 or 4/26.
- The return line had formed a small "pin hole" leak during a Pacific Ocean crossing in January/February 2021. At that time the main engine was secured, and the onboard engineers removed and welded a patch over the leak.
- Mr. Golden said similar return lines on the main engine had also failed on other cylinders in the past.
- Once the fuel oil return line was removed, Mr. Golden said the line was given to Dockside Machine and Ship Repair to be used as a template when fabricating new line.
- When the new line was delivered to the vessel, Mr. Golden was tasked by the 1 A/E to install the new line on the engine. He completed the job alone on 4/27/21.
- The new steel tubing return line did not come with compression fittings. Vessel spare tubing fittings were used by Mr. Golden to complete the installation.
- Mr. Golden indicated that he had replaced similar tubing lines before but had never installed one when new compression fitting had to be fitted.
- Mr. Golden indicated that the new return line didn't line up easily with the existing brackets. He used new shims to assist in securing the pipe.
- Mr. Golden did not use a torque wrench to tighten the tubing compression fittings nor did anyone else from the crew put a wrench on the fittings. He did not loosen the compression fitting nut after tightening to check if the ferrule had secured to the tubing.
- After the installation he operated the main engine fuel oil pump to leak test the new installation. He said that the fuel oil pressure in the return line was about 8 bar and remained relatively constant during the testing. He indicated that there is some pulsing and vibration while the engine is online.
- He and the 1 A/E inspected for leaks while the return line was pressurized. No leaks were observed.
- He acknowledged that several of the similar fuel fitting on the engine had anti-spray tape on them. He knew that the vessel had some anti-spray tape onboard but did not apply any to the newly installed compression fittings.