



U.S. COAST GUARD INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Matter Under Investigation: Matter Under Investigation: July 12, 2021 Allision of the Liberian flag bulk carrier *Jalma Topic* with the Crescent Towing office barge fleet at mile 93.5 lower Mississippi river, (NTSB No. DCA21FM032) New Orleans, Louisiana.

Interview Of: Able-bodied Seaman, Mr. Milin Budinir, helmsman of M/V JALMA TOPIC

Date/Time: July 12, 2021@ 1100 local time

Location: In master's conference room, aboard M/V JALMA TOPIC, anchored@ MM 93.3, LMR

Interviewed By: CWO3 [REDACTED]

Others Present: Master of M/V JALMA TOPIC - Capt. Ivan Druzijanic (serving as interpreter for witness), Michael Harowski - Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker, LLP (representing Jalma Topic interests), Garreth Fernandes – New Ship Inc. (representing vessel P&I Club)

Interview Summary:

Mr. Budinir stated that he has 24 total years of maritime experience, and had worked four years for the company and was currently serving on an 8 month contract. He was standing a six hour watch from 0000-0600 at the time of the incident with his other watch being from 1200-1800. He stated that he shares the helm watch with another seaman and that the company policy restricts helmsman to 3 hours at the steering console. He had relieved the helm watch at approximately 0300 on the morning of the incident and his prior helm watch was from 1500-1800 the prior day.

Mr. Budinir stated that during his helm watch on the morning of the incident, the steering system was set to follow-up (hand steering) mode. He fully understood and complied with the pilot's rudder commands.

Mr. Budinir stated that the pilot gave him an order for "port 10", which he complied with and the rudder responded to. Then the pilot gave the order for "Midship", which he complied with but it didn't work. Then the pilot gave the order for "Hard Starboard", which he complied with but it didn't work.

Mr. Budinir stated that after the rudder failed to respond to the "Hard Starboard" command, the crew tried switching the helm steering control to non-follow-up mode, with no response. He recalled that the pilot ordered the engine to full astern propulsion, which was answered by the crew.

//s// [REDACTED], CWO3, USCG

MSSD3 [REDACTED]
Marine Casualty Investigator, USCG Sector New Orleans
July 27, 2021