

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*
*

SINKING OF THE FISHING VESSEL
REBECCA MARY SOUTH OF NANTUCKET,
MASSACHUSETTS, ON JUNE 17, 2020

Accident No.: DCA20FM021

* * * * *

Interview of: JOSHUA PECK, Deckhand
Rebecca Mary

Wednesday,
June 17, 2020

APPEARANCES:

CWO [REDACTED], Investigating Officer
U.S. Coast Guard

[REDACTED], Investigating Officer
U.S. Coast Guard

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Joshua Peck:

By CWO [REDACTED]

4

I N T E R V I E W

1 MR. PECK: Joshua Peck, Deckhand, *Rebecca Mary*.

2 CWO [REDACTED]: And [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are the
3 investigators.
4

5 INTERVIEW OF JOSHUA PECK

6 BY CWO [REDACTED]

7 Q. Okay, so experience. How long have you been on the boat?

8 A. One year in May. So a little bit over a year.

9 Q. Okay. And how long have you been fishing?

10 A. Since September 2018.

11 Q. Okay. So you guys left on the 14th. Can you just kind of
12 give me a timeline of when you guys left the dock, you know, what
13 you guys did up until --

14 A. We steamed to the fishing grounds approximately 15 to 18
15 hours, around there, I think, I believe. We set in around
16 5 o'clock every morning. We do 3-hour drags; we do four or five a
17 day. And we put on, for this trip, we put -- the first day we put
18 on, like, 25 to 30. Second day, we put on around 50. And then
19 the last drag was -- we finished up around 9 o'clock, put all the
20 fish down.

21 We went inside. I took first watch. I was up there for 2½
22 hours. Well, actually, Kevin was first watch, because he didn't
23 give me the wheel till 11:00, 11:30-ish. I was up there till 2:10
24 in the morning, and then Ed took it after me. Everything was fine
25 when I went to bed. Everything was good. I went outside, I

1 pumped something, I smoked a cigarette. I gave it to Ed. Ed was
2 like, all right. He smoked a cigarette with me out there. We
3 both went inside. I grabbed a drink, went to bed. He went up in
4 the wheelhouse. I fell asleep, and the next thing I know, I woke
5 up to, we're taking on water, everyone get up, get up, get
6 outside. That's pretty much it.

7 Q. Got you. You said there was an alarm or a pump. You said
8 you hit a pump?

9 A. Yeah. It was just the engine room or something, fish hold,
10 one of the two. I can't remember which one. We usually pump them
11 every so often, couple times a day, just to make sure everything
12 is good.

13 Q. When you were on watch, did an alarm go off to make you do
14 that or --

15 A. Yeah, yeah. The engine room alarm went off.

16 Q. Engine room alarm.

17 A. I pumped it.

18 Q. You pumped it.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Did you notice an unusual amount of water in there?

21 A. No, no. It was even -- it was just barely at the level where
22 the alarm went off.

23 Q. Got you. And so you said you went to bed.

24 A. Yep.

25 Q. And captain woke you up. What did you do when you got --

1 A. I just immediately ran outside. I looked. I seen the water.
2 I went back inside, grabbed the survival suits, started bringing
3 them out on deck. Yeah, I brought them out on deck. Then I
4 brought them to the next level. Me and Ed grabbed ours, put ours
5 on. Then Kevin and Gee stayed down, and they put theirs on down
6 there. And then that's basically all.

7 Q. Did you grab the life raft?

8 A. Yeah, me and Gee grabbed the life raft. We sent -- we passed
9 it down to Kevin. He set it all up. He tied, he tied it up,
10 whatever, the line -- the painter line, whatever. He tied it up.
11 We waited until the last possible minute when it was really
12 starting to get bad. Then Kevin said, we got to go, we got to go.
13 We tried sending the raft out, and it hit the wire from the tarp
14 and the outrigger and just got caught up and popped immediately.

15 So then we just said -- Kevin just said, jump off guys, jump
16 off. Me and Ed were holding on. Ed didn't want to jump. He
17 didn't want to jump. Then finally he ended up jumping, and I
18 jumped in right after him. Kevin jumped in after me, and Gee was
19 on the other side seeing us in the water, and that's when he
20 jumped in.

21 Q. Talk to me a little bit about maintenance. Have you done
22 any -- performed any maintenance on --

23 A. Yeah. We maintained the boat very well. It's a very
24 well-maintained boat. We actually just recently put a bunch of
25 work into it. We put all new deck hatch, like, around the rings

1 for the deck plates, like the hatches. We put all new rings in.
2 Kevin is a welder, so he welded them all up. We put all new
3 stanchions for the deck for -- because illex fishing, we get
4 bigger bags than we usually get. So we expanded the fish pit, and
5 we just put -- made bigger ones, made it deeper. We --

6 Q. Talking about that, so you -- just because I don't
7 understand. So the -- in the fish holds themselves?

8 A. No, no. Not in the fish hold. In the -- where the bag comes
9 up.

10 Q. Okay. On deck?

11 A. Yeah, yeah, where you put the fish. I don't know what the
12 fuck you call it. The pit. You know what I mean?

13 Q. I think Ed call it the hog pen or --

14 A. Yeah, the hog pen. Yeah. There you go.

15 Q. All right.

16 A. We just expanded it, made it bigger so it could fit more
17 fish.

18 Q. Okay. That's above -- that's on deck?

19 A. Yeah. It's on deck, yeah.

20 Q. It's on deck.

21 A. We maintain the boat well though. We do oil changes
22 regularly. Everything's always -- we just built a new manifold
23 for the pumps, all brand new lines, everything. So the pumps just
24 got rebuilt recently.

25 Q. The manifold for the bilge pumps?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. The bilge manifolds?
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. He re-welded and --
- 5 A. It was brand new. He put a whole new one in. And the
6 maintenance guy for Tom Dodd (ph.) put it in. Kevin welded it,
7 made it, like, made it himself, and then the maintenance guy put
8 it in.
- 9 Q. Maintenance guy welded it?
- 10 A. No, no. He just put it in. It was all -- Kevin did the
11 welding on it.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. He just put it in, like, fitted it up. You know what I mean?
14 Put it --
- 15 Q. That's in the engine room though?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Talking about the stanchions.
- 18 A. Those are on deck.
- 19 Q. On deck.
- 20 A. Yep.
- 21 Q. Aft?
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. Are they on top of --
- 24 A. They start, they start in the middle, and then they go aft.
- 25 Q. And do they go over -- are there -- what I'm trying to get at

1 is, if this is boat, this is the net --

2 A. The net drum.

3 Q. No, not the net drum, but the net locker.

4 A. Net locker, yeah.

5 Q. And then the lazarette. Are these stanchions above them?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And when that welding happens, do you cut them out and then
8 re-weld new ones in onto the deck, or are they just --

9 A. Yes. We do cut them out.

10 Q. So you --

11 A. And then we put brand new ones in.

12 Q. When you cutted them -- cutted them -- when you cut them out,
13 you just boom, and then you put a new one in, then you re-weld
14 right over the top of them?

15 A. Yeah, yep.

16 Q. And you said Kevin did that?

17 A. Yes, yep.

18 Q. And how long ago was that?

19 A. Just recently, before we started, before we started this
20 illex season. So from before June 10th.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. We started this illex season on June 10th. The 2 weeks prior
23 to that, we were doing dock work. We were at home.

24 Q. Okay. And there's some above the laz and net locker.

25 A. It's not above it. It's in front of it. You know what I

- 1 mean? But it's on the same level.
- 2 Q. So if you cut one of these things off, right, to put a new
3 one on --
- 4 A. Yeah. No, no, no.
- 5 Q. -- could you ---
- 6 A. It's a fish hold. Fish hold.
- 7 Q. There on top of the fish hold?
- 8 A. Yes. Yes. That's what I meant.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. Not -- nothing goes to the lazarette or net locker.
- 11 Q. I'm not saying anything goes in, but on top of --
- 12 A. No, no, no, no.
- 13 Q. They're all on top of --
- 14 A. It's all into the fish hold, yeah.
- 15 Q. Got it. Trying to think of anything we haven't asked
16 everybody else. What do you think happened?
- 17 A. I don't know, man. It's just too much water. I mean, we
18 start -- once you get past a certain point when you start taking
19 water, there's no coming back from it. We had the pumps going
20 full throttle. They're both working fine. We were watching it
21 pump out; they just couldn't keep up.
- 22 Q. When you say too much water --
- 23 A. Just coming over --
- 24 Q. -- what does that mean?
- 25 A. Just coming over the stern. It started -- I don't know what

1 originally. When I came out, the water was already up over the
2 ramp. You know what I mean? It was already like, oh, shit, man,
3 this boat's going down. You can tell. You know what I mean?
4 Once it's over like that, it's over. I don't know what started
5 it, to be honest.

6 Q. Could water have gotten into that laz?

7 A. Maybe, but I don't know how. I don't -- we never had a
8 problem with it before. I've been on the boat a year.

9 Q. Where would it have gotten in from?

10 A. Maybe the net locker. If the net locker was full, it could
11 overflow into the lazarette because that's possible, but I don't
12 see --

13 Q. How could it have --

14 A. I think there's a hole between the two, but I'm not --

15 Q. How big is the hole?

16 A. Very, very miniscule. I think it's for a pipe or a wire or
17 something.

18 CWO [REDACTED]: Okay. Got you.

19 MR. [REDACTED]: Is there any alarm or anything in that, that
20 space?

21 MR. PECK: Yes, there is. There is an alarm in the
22 lazarette, and I believe in the net locker.

23 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

24 Q. Could water have gotten in that hatch on the laz?

25 A. On that, no. It has a cover on it at all times. I mean,

1 unless the cover came off, and that doesn't -- that wouldn't even
2 make -- how would it? You know what I mean? How would that --

3 Q. Did you see that cover on?

4 A. Yes. The cover is always on. We always make sure that cover
5 is on.

6 Q. Is there a way to lock that cover on, or does it just sit on
7 top of the hatch?

8 A. I think there's a way to lock it on. I don't usually mess
9 with it, honestly. I don't really go down there ever. I have no
10 reason to go in the lazarette usually unless if it's pumping, we
11 pump it out, and we take a quick peek down there and make sure,
12 and we just pump it out.

13 Q. When was the last time you took a peek down there?

14 A. Right before we left, I made sure it was good.

15 CWO [REDACTED]: Okay.

16 MR. [REDACTED]: You have -- when you put on your survival
17 suit, you didn't have any issues putting it on?

18 MR. PECK: No, no. It was very, it was very easy. Because
19 that one fit me perfect. Kevin had issues for his because he's a
20 little bit too big for the one he put on.

21 MR. [REDACTED]: Yeah. Okay. I'm good.

22 BY CWO [REDACTED]:

23 Q. Anything out of the ordinary about this trip? I mean, sea
24 state --

25 A. No. That's --

1 Q. -- condition of the vessel?

2 A. That's what I don't, I don't -- I'm still mind-blown as to
3 how this whole thing started. We just woke -- we -- I woke up to
4 the boat half underwater. I'm like, when I went to bed, it
5 wasn't. You know what I mean? I wouldn't go to bed with the boat
6 underwater. I didn't understand what caused it, how -- we had a
7 lot of weight on the boat, but we always have that much weight
8 when we do illex fishing.

9 We did 1.5 million pounds last summer in 2 months. You know
10 what I mean? It's not -- this isn't our first rodeo. We've been
11 doing it. We did it all last summer. We had -- one trip, we had
12 97,000 pounds. We've had a few 90,000 pound trips. So it wasn't
13 the first time this boat had weight like that.

14 Q. Yeah. And the boat was handling the same?

15 A. It was -- yeah. Everything was the same as it's always been.
16 I mean, it was squatting, but it always squats when you have
17 100,000 -- 85,000 plus 20 tons of ice. I mean, it's going to
18 squat a little bit. It's going to sit lower on the water, of
19 course.

20 Q. What's your number?

21 A. [REDACTED].

22 CWO [REDACTED]: All right. Appreciate your time.

23 MR. PECK: No problem.

24 MR. [REDACTED]: Appreciate it, man, yeah.

25 MR. PECK: Did you guys hear anything like that we should

1 have done differently for future reference or -- I think we
2 maintain our boat very well, yeah.

3 MR. [REDACTED]: The best thing you could do for yourself,
4 man, is make sure you know how to don these things.

5 MR. PECK: Yeah, yeah.

6 MR. [REDACTED]: Because, like you said, you can't always rely
7 on the life raft.

8 MR. PECK: No, of course not.

9 MR. [REDACTED]: This thing will keep you afloat.

10 MR. PECK: Yeah. And those things are a lifesaver for sure.

11 MR. [REDACTED]: Relatively warm, right?

12 MR. PECK: Yeah, yeah. That water wasn't that cool, I mean,
13 I'm sure in February or January I would have loved to have that
14 thing too.

15 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: SINKING OF THE FISHING VESSEL
 REBECCA MARY SOUTH OF NANTUCKET,
 MASSACHUSETTS, ON JUNE 17, 2020
 Interview of Joshua Peck

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA20FM021

PLACE:

DATE: June 17, 2020

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.

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the transcriber.

Transcriber