

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.: DCA20FM201

* * * * *

Interview of: EDWARD ANDERSEN, Deckhand
Rebecca Mary

Thursday,
April 28, 2021

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN YOUNG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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

BRIAN MCEWING, Attorney
(On behalf of the Rebecca Mary)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Edward Andersen:	
By Mr. Young	4
By Mr. Young	21
By Mr. McEwing	39
By Mr. Young	41

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. YOUNG: Like the Coast Guard had done previously, we're
3 going to record this and we just want to make sure that you
4 acknowledge it's okay to record and we'll get a transcription
5 done so that it'll help us remember everything that you talked
6 about.

7 MR. ANDERSEN: Sure, shoot.

8 MR. YOUNG: Great, thanks.

INTERVIEW OF REBECCA MARY DECKHAND ANDERSEN

9
10 BY MR. YOUNG:

11 Q. So I only have three areas that I'd like to talk about, one
12 is about the vessel, one is about your work schedule, and one is
13 about the events that took place, and I'm not going to start from
14 scratch because I've read your transcript and the captain's and
15 Gee's and Josh's and kind of putting all the pieces of the puzzle
16 together and I'm just trying to dig a little bit to --

17 A. Okay, these are going to be questions in addition to the ones
18 that I've been asked because I may -- you know, it's been about
19 almost a year now, I'm going to do to the best of my ability what
20 I can remember --

21 Q. Absol --

22 A. -- I mean, I can remember virtually all of it, but, you
23 know, I know specific details in a general way about that one
24 particular vessel, you know, so anything that's, that pertains

1 to my schedule, whatever I can answer clearly, so let's -- we
2 can just go ahead.

3 Q. Appreciate it, and I'm sure you've been on other vessels
4 since then, so, you know, I know they all kind of blend
5 together, but just if you don't mind, do your best you can, so
6 first --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- section about the vessel itself. We do have a pretty
9 good picture of the working deck and we're just trying to
10 understand the location of the two hatches that we have been
11 talking about, one of them is the net locker hatch. Would it --

12 A. Right.

13 Q. -- be, and I have a picture of it, the flat flush hatch
14 that's right dead center that you would almost land a net on
15 inside the hog pen?

16 A. Yes, yes, sir.

17 Q. And when it was to be opened, I know, I understand there
18 was some dogs there. Was that something you would use like an
19 impact gun or wrenches or sockets to open it up or was it -- or
20 were there dogs --

21 A. We have -- we called it, it's called a key, that's the
22 only way I've ever heard it referred to, it just, it's, you
23 know, it's, it's much like the end of a ratchet or a socket on
24 top of a T-bar, which is about, it's approximately three feet
25 tall and you would just use it by hand, you know, but they, they

1 dog down pretty securely, you know, you can, you can use quite a
2 bit of force to secure them.

3 Q. Okay. All right, so you -- a T-handled kind of a wrench
4 kind of thing to --

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Understood --

7 A. Yep, like a T-handled lug wrench, yes, sir.

8 Q. Got it. And then once you were able to take all the nuts
9 or, or dogs off, could you lift that hatch by hand or would you
10 need a crane or would --

11 A. You -- no, you, you can use it -- you can lift it by hand,
12 you do it with two persons, though, and you would generally use
13 a box hook in order to do it to increase your lever -- you know,
14 your, your mechanical advantage, you pull it up just to clear
15 the gasket and you would pull it, you know, forward.

16 Q. Okay, and to kind of set it forward not too high off the
17 deck.

18 A. Yes, sir, that -- yes, sir, exactly, because they can be --
19 they can be a little unwieldy, some people do it -- you can use
20 your hand, you know what I mean, you can just bend over and do
21 it by hand, but it's, it's much more awkward that way, you just
22 use the, the box with it that way you can be clear so you can
23 pull it off in one fluid motion and pull it forward.

24 Q. Okay, that makes sense. And then I understand that the
25 gasket for that hatch cover had been replaced in that repair

1 period prior to the start of the season.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Do you re -- were you there for that at all?

4 A. Yes, sir, I was there for all, all of the, the refitting
5 of, of the vessel, yes, sir.

6 Q. Do you have any recollection if there was any sort of a
7 test with water to see if it, the new gasket leaked at all?

8 A. We -- you would get under and you'd water test it, just you
9 have somebody get inside of the net locker and you would hit it
10 with a hose.

11 Q. And do you remember if that was done after the new gasket?

12 A. I'm -- I'm sure that it, it was, but I, I didn't do it
13 personally, so I can't say for sure, but I can't imagine that we
14 didn't because that's, that's usually the standard protocol for
15 any of those hatch, you know, when we replace those gaskets.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. But I did not do it personally, so I can't say for sure.

18 Q. Okay, thank you. And do you know why the gasket had needed
19 to be replaced?

20 A. The gaskets, remember how we were just earlier we were
21 saying how when you lift that hatch and you pull it forward, if
22 you do not lift it high enough per, you know, sometimes a dog
23 will catch that gasket and pop it loose, and there was an area
24 forward in the, the perimeter forward of that net, net locker
25 that was lifted a bit and we just pulled it up, we cleaned all

1 of the adhesive out, and we replaced it because that, that area
2 is constantly getting, you know, water on it in large, large
3 amounts.

4 Q. Sure --

5 A. So there was no -- we didn't, you know what I mean, we
6 weren't going to leave it up to chance, we replaced it all.

7 Q. Okay. And, and then after changing the gasket, there were
8 two trips. Do you recall there being a lot of bilge alarms like
9 to almost not -- it may be if, if the gasket wasn't set right or
10 maybe hadn't been tested, you -- if the fish were dripping and a
11 lot of water, you would have seen an increase in -- of water --

12 A. Well, we were -- no, sir, it was, it was, as far as I could
13 tell, it was, it had improved the situation, you know, you --
14 you're going to get water in there regardless of whether or not
15 the gasket is perfect or not, there is just so much volume of
16 water, but usually the indicator, the indicator that we were
17 getting prior to the change was that if you're getting more
18 lazarette alarms than you are used to, that's usually an
19 indicator that you getting overflow from that area, and we also
20 changed nets, so you get to see the amount of water that is in
21 that net locker, we were in there quite often, especially during
22 that time period because we were cleaning everything out and
23 they had just run new electric -- you know, they -- we lifted
24 the hydraulics and we ran new electronics through there above
25 the floor, so we had -- we were in and out of that net locker

1 quite a bit and there was, there was not -- there was no water
2 in there, not any accumulation that you would be concerned with.

3 Q. Okay. Okay. Thank you. And if you can recall, inside the
4 net locker I understand there was a bilge flow and a bilge
5 suction. Can you recall if it was in the center of the net
6 locker or was it favored to either port or starboard?

7 A. Oh. Sir, I can't, I can't answer that question exactly.
8 I, I -- I can't, I can't say for sure, generally they're right
9 in the center --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- but I want to say that the one -- I, I can't say, I
12 wouldn't speculate on that, I, I can't be sure.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I want -- there's a splitter, we had -- in our particular
15 net locker I've never, I haven't been in too many other ones, we
16 had checkerboards to split the compartment in half, so I'm
17 fairly certain that it is not, was not centered. It would
18 either, it would either have to have been port or starboard.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I can't, but I can't say for sure, so I wouldn't speculate
21 on that. Everywhere else they're dead center, say the
22 lazarette, for example, it is just about dead center forward,
23 forward, you know, but not, not in the net locker.

24 Q. Okay. And one of the reasons I'm asking is because as we
25 get further just into today's discussion, I know you had a heavy

1 port list, I just wondering if, if that bilge float may have
2 been on the starboard side and may not have sounded because it
3 was, you know, out of the water, if there was any water in that
4 space, you know.

5 A. As, as I said, I, I'm, I'm not, I'm not a hundred percent
6 sure.

7 Q. Okay. And then moving further aft to asking you about the
8 lazarette, again I have this picture of the working deck, and it
9 looks like up against the back bulkhead of the bulwark is this
10 little white rectangular hatch, which --

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. And is that the way you would get into the laz?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. And once you got into that lazarette, could you go
15 underneath the stern ramp and get into the starboard side?

16 A. No. Although, yeah, yeah, yeah, you go, you go
17 underneath --

18 Q. Yep.

19 A. -- and you would go, yes, sir, you could, yep, because
20 that's where we would stow our extra dock lines and stuff like
21 that.

22 Q. So it was, would you say it was almost rectangular shape?
23 I know, I know that's an odd shape with the ramp and all, but it
24 was just you could go from side to side and then you would
25 have --

1 A. Yes, sir, you could go from side to side, the floor is
2 slanted, you know, forward --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- so that, you know, the water would collect down there
5 and that's for the, the, suction was, was dead center of that
6 floor.

7 Q. Perfect, you answered it --

8 A. Underneath, but, yes, you could walk clearly, you could,
9 you could just about stand straight up.

10 Q. Okay, great. And not only --

11 A. Well, I could, you know.

12 Q. Right. Not only was the bilge suction dead center, was
13 the -- was the bilge float for the alarm dead center?

14 A. It was port, it would be if you're standing there and
15 you're standing at, you were looking at the suction on the
16 floor, it would be just to the left, it was secured to a piece
17 of angle iron that, you know, that was float -- you know what I
18 mean, just the structural part of it where you have the float
19 secured there, just to the left of that suction.

20 Q. So very close to center then, right?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. It was just, you know, obviously it was just a little bit
24 higher, you know what I mean, so that the water would go above

1 the suction and that was where your float was, but, yes, just
2 about dead center.

3 Q. Okay, great. Moving on to the bilge sys -- bilge system,
4 it looks like from what I've seen in pictures and hearing about
5 the bilge system, that seemed like most spaces had at least one
6 bilge float and a suction, except for the fish hold, where it
7 appears to have two.

8 A. Well, yeah, you had above the floor and below the floor and
9 you had fore and aft suctions in both of those, it was, it was a
10 pretty sweet setup.

11 Q. So there were four in the fish hold?

12 A. Well, you had -- no, you had, you had the fish hold sump
13 and you had the fish hold bilge, so you had, you had the fore
14 and aft in the sump and then you had one forward on the bilge.

15 Q. And would the sump be at the base of where all the, the
16 fish are stored so that if any melting ice and everything would
17 be cont --

18 A. Yes, sir, so you were, you were always -- you know, with
19 that particular system, you were always all the time pumping out
20 so you -- everyone knew on that vessel that you were going to
21 have to pump it, especially if you have fish aboard, that amount
22 of fish, say, you know, eelettes in particular. If you were on
23 watch, you were, you were basically going to be pumping that
24 sump out twice, if you were on, say, a two-hour watch, okay, so
25 generally within the first 15, 20 minutes of your watch, the

1 beginning of your watch you were probably going to have to pump
2 it out, and then before you got the next person out, you were
3 generally going to have to pump it out.

4 Q. Because of the ice melting and the water con --

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. -- with the fish. Okay. And then --

7 A. So we, we stayed on top of that, we, we all knew that, you
8 know what I mean, that was one thing that we, we knew for
9 certain if, if there had been any indication of a problem, you
10 just would hit that alarm and you'd be, you'd be checking it
11 out, do you know what I mean?

12 Q. So you're expecting it when you have ice aboard and fish,
13 you're expecting to have to pump that --

14 A. You're expecting it, yeah, exactly, so you're never really
15 getting too comfortable because you know your ass going to have
16 to get up, pump it out, you know --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- directly --

19 Q. Yep. And then below that, the fish hold bilge, that is
20 more around the shaft alley area, would that be correct?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. And was it frequent for that alarm to go off frequently?

23 A. With the eelettes, I mean, sure, if you had a bunch of fish
24 aboard, you had to get -- you'd have to do it once a watch.

25 Q. For the shaft alley bilge?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. And why would that be?

3 A. Just, just because I honestly think that it was just how
4 low that it was set, we didn't, you know, you didn't allow for a
5 lot of water to get in there.

6 Q. So --

7 A. You know what I mean, they were set pretty low, they were
8 not high and, like I said, they were fore and aft, so you were
9 pumping that, you were hitting the fore alarm in there if you
10 were just, if you were getting a very minimal amount of water,
11 you know, just making a comparison between the boat that I'm on
12 now --

13 Q. Uh-huh.

14 A. -- you know in that boat there was just we were, you were
15 having to pump it out quite a bit, it was on the right-hand side
16 of the shaft and it was, it was set very low that float.

17 Q. Could any water from the fish hold where the fish were kept
18 drain into the fish hold bilge area?

19 A. I mean, if you were -- if that's -- you know, you -- I
20 don't think so, you had four hatch plates above the floor and
21 they were all in very good condition, and I think that that just
22 would have been your -- the amount of water that you were
23 getting in through that stuffing box, you know what I mean.

24 Q. Right, right. Okay. So --

1 A. If you were sitting low, you know, these are all -- I
2 shouldn't, I probably shouldn't be answering the questions like
3 this, I'm answering this questions in reference to any type of
4 eelettes haul, you know what I mean.

5 Q. Uh-huh.

6 A. If you're having that amount of fish aboard, that's when
7 you would be getting those alarms, alarms, you know, like if
8 you're talking, if you and I were discussing wintertime fishing,
9 you know, you know, I just want to clear this up for you, we
10 were talking, we were kind of fishing, awhile fishing, you're
11 not getting that alarm near as much. These -- all of these
12 references I'm giving you would be for eelettes fishing, the
13 fishery.

14 Q. And why wouldn't you be getting the alarms as much?

15 A. I, I just feel like it's just because you're not having,
16 you do not have that near that amount of weight aboard --

17 Q. Okay. Okay.

18 A. No, you're not getting, you're never, you're very rarely
19 getting that thump alarm if at all if you're doing it a while
20 ago because you're not getting the melt, the ice melt, do you
21 know what I mean, and at that -- at least this is my
22 interpretation, because you didn't get them as often.

23 Q. Okay. Okay.

24 A. You had a very strict schedule for those alarms what while
25 we were doing eelettes if you had a large amount of fish aboard.

1 Q. Understood. Okay, that makes sense. So just to make sure
2 I've got it right, the fish hold sump is pretty much collecting
3 the melted ice and whatever residual water from the fish,
4 whereas the --

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. -- fish hold bilge is going to be collecting any water
7 that's seeping out of the shaft seal out of the main propeller.

8 A. Yes, sir, yep, yes, sir.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. Which one that can you remember, I know there
10 were two bilge alarms on your watch that night, which of the
11 fish hold alarms sounded that towards the end of your watch, do
12 you remember was it the sump or the bilge?

13 A. It was the sumps.

14 Q. Was the sumps, so the shaft alley one.

15 A. No, no, that would be the bilge --

16 Q. Oh, okay.

17 A. -- the sump, the sump is above the floor --

18 Q. Okay, so the one -- the normally expected one because of
19 the eelettes aboard.

20 A. Yes, sir, they were -- and they were pretty much right on
21 time --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- they were -- it was, it was -- that last alarm was
24 approximately ten minutes before the end of my watch, I want to
25 say, if I'm remembering clearly, so it was nothing out of the

1 ordinary, it was just the condition of the vessel that was out
2 of the ordinary at that particular time --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- for me.

5 Q. Understood --

6 A. This is what alerted me to the, to a problem potentially.

7 Q. Understood. And on the same kind of an idea, is it pretty
8 normal to get the engine room alarm frequently or once a watch
9 or so just because of the normal operation?

10 A. Yeah, sometimes you slide on the engine room alarm, you
11 know what I mean, but it wouldn't have been out of the ordinary
12 to get one, no, sir, because as I said, the -- we had ours set
13 very low, we didn't -- there wasn't an allowance for a lot of
14 water --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- do you know what I mean, if I -- let me try to see if I
17 can give you an example here. Even the lazarette, you know, was
18 just a couple inches above the floor, do you know what I mean?

19 Q. Right.

20 A. It was, you know, I don't know, and, like I said, this is I
21 don't have much experience with those vessels, but it was if you
22 were in the area of the center of the lazarette would be pitched
23 down, you know what I mean, it's not flat --

24 Q. Right.

1 A. -- clearly, so if you were the top of that suction would
2 have been maybe four inches below the bottom of that float, so
3 if you're, if you're saying, you know, another inch-and-a-half
4 clearance, maybe five inches total, there they were all set
5 very, very low.

6 Q. Okay, so it didn't take much water to raise the float and
7 signal the arm.

8 A. Right, and it would -- anybody else just with that vessel
9 in my experience on that vessel, if you didn't get an alarm or
10 one of those, you would have immediately, you know, went and
11 checked or, you know what I mean, you would have, you're
12 constantly expecting those alarms --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- not to get one would have been unusual now, but the
15 engine room, not so much, you know, I'm sure that there was a
16 little bit of communication between the fish hold bilge and
17 that, and that engine room possibly, you know, if you're getting
18 a lot of water in that fish hold bilge --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- to communicate between the engine room compartment and
21 the fish hold compartment, but, you know, it wouldn't have been
22 out of the ordinary get one.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. I sailed for 25 years and we always had
24 engine room bilge alarms --

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. -- and the machinery leaking or, you know, condensation, so
2 it's somewhat expected, but not as much as the fish, fish hold
3 bilge like you were talking about, sump pump --

4 A. Yeah, if you were to get two in a watch, then you would be
5 concerned --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- if that, if that helps you, if that answers your
8 question any better, like if you were to get a weird lazarette
9 alarm, the lazarette is where if you were to get that very
10 often, you would know almost without a doubt that you were
11 having a lot of water inside of that net locker because there
12 was communication between those two compartments, do you know
13 what I'm saying?

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. If you were getting a high one, the engine room, if that
16 went off twice, that would have been unusual, you would, you
17 would have been wondering what the hell was, you know, what was
18 up.

19 Q. Understood. When you talk about the communication between
20 the laz and the net locker, is, is it safe to say that
21 communication would have been through wire runs or --

22 A. Yes, there was above the, if you were standing inside of
23 the net locker and you were facing aft --

24 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- on your right-hand side, which would have been, you
2 know, the port side, there was just a wire chase through there
3 and that was, you know, it never, I'm not saying that it ever
4 happened, what I'm saying is that that was, if you would have
5 been in there and let's say that there was a problem with an
6 alarm, water would be communicating through that area, then you
7 would know you had a lot of water inside of that net locker. It
8 never happened, you know, it didn't never happen, but that's
9 what I'm saying, if there wasn't a laz alarm more than once or
10 something, that would be an indicator that maybe there was
11 something wrong, the float was stuck or something over there, do
12 you know what I mean?

13 Q. Yep, and were those wire runs kind of up high, like
14 reaching up in that on your hand high above your head or was
15 kind of down low on the, on the deck line --

16 A. No, if you were standing straight up, and I'm 5'8" or what,
17 it would have been near almost center chest level, you know,
18 right, right around there, it was on that right-hand side there
19 was a chase.

20 Q. Okay. Okay.

21 MR. MCEWING: This is Brian McEwing (ph.), if I can for
22 just a moment?

23 MR. YOUNG: Sure.

24 MR. MCEWING: Mr. Andersen, my name is Brian McEwing, I'm
25 an attorney for the owners of the Rebecca Mary just so you know

1 who I am on the phone. I'm just wondering, you know, this seems
2 to be getting a bit confusing and I think it might be helpful if
3 we can get testimony of this boat, this trip, what he saw, not,
4 you know, possibilities.

5 MR. ANDERSEN: Okay.

6 MR. MCEWING: Because the record's not real clear in my
7 mind right now as to whether some of these things happened or
8 didn't happen or could have happened or, you know, observed them
9 happening.

10 MR. YOUNG: Uh-huh.

11 MR. MCEWING: I just think it would be helpful for the
12 record if, if we could be more clear.

13 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Yep, no problem. And part of this is to
14 get a general understanding of the layout of the vessel and, and
15 that was the, the kind of the intent of the first section of
16 questions is the, the layout of the vessel and the location of
17 the bilge alarms and hatches and all, so -- okay. All set with
18 that, Mr. McEwing?

19 MR. MCEWING: Yes.

20 MR. YOUNG: Okay, great.

21 BY MR. YOUNG:

22 Q. So and the last question about the vessel itself was the,
23 the alarm panel for the bilge system in the wheelhouse. Do you
24 remember if each of the bilge alarms had their own little
25 indicating light, an alarm?

- 1 A. Yes, sir. They did.
- 2 Q. And if a bilge float were to get activated, an individual
3 light would light and would there be a sound as well?
- 4 A. There would be a sound, yes, sir, a light and a sound, yes,
5 sir.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. And you, you could, if you hit it, you know, just to shut
8 it off while you were going to go down there, the light would
9 still be, you know, the light would still be going off, and then
10 after, you know, five or ten seconds, that alarm would re-sound,
11 you couldn't shut it off, you know what I mean, completely.
- 12 Q. Okay. So until the water level dropped below the, the
13 sensor, it would continue to sound.
- 14 A. Yes, sir, generally you would have to touch the retest
15 again in order to get it to turn off completely, you know what I
16 mean, like it wouldn't just once the water level went down, it
17 wouldn't go off, you would have to re-hit it, but that, you
18 know, it would stop sounding, and from my recollection that's,
19 you know, that's how it would be.
- 20 Q. Okay. And could the entire panel be shut off?
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. Oh, well, I mean, no. No, no, no. No.
- 24 Q. Okay, great.

1 A. I believe that's a 12-volt -- if, if I'm remembering
2 correctly, that's a 12-volt deal, I don't -- it couldn't be shut
3 down.

4 Q. Okay. Getting into the next second section of my
5 questioning here is the your work schedule on the Rebecca Mary
6 while you were fishing, we understood they were fishing
7 operations from sunrise to sunset. When would you be able to
8 sleep?

9 A. When would you be able to sleep?

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. All right, well, you're fishing from sunup to sundown and
12 this is just for eelettes.

13 Q. Yep.

14 A. Now, if you would get, you'd get up, you'd do a sunrise
15 sit, all the other deckhands go in there and lay down, the
16 captain is, is manning up there during fishing operations and
17 then so anytime in between a set or if you're not cooking or
18 whatever, you can sleep then. You know, and then once you lay
19 up at night, once fishing is over with, you, you rotate, you
20 have a watch rotation and the other people who are not on watch
21 can sleep.

22 Q. Okay, so at some point during the day as you're dragging,
23 you were able to get some naps?

24 A. Yes --

25 Q. Some sleep?

1 A. Yep.

2 Q. And typically were you assigned to the 02 to 0430 watch?

3 A. They -- it rotated.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So for example, if I had first watch today, you know what I
6 mean, you'd have to, you'd have the second watch or whatever the
7 next rotation, you didn't take the same, not everybody had the
8 same slot --

9 Q. Oh, okay.

10 A. You know, you'd have beginning, middle, end, and that would
11 rotate in order to keep it, keep it fair.

12 Q. Okay. And then last bit of questions here just going to be
13 about that day of the, of the incident. While you were fishing,
14 just to understand the operation on the Rebecca Mary, I
15 understand you had 11 circular flush hatches, and would that be
16 fair to say that they led directly into specific pens?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. And then in the center of the fish hold, there's a
19 rectangular hatch with a cover on it. What's the purpose of
20 that hatch?

21 A. That would be the takeout hatch.

22 Q. Oh, okay, to remove everything.

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. And at the base of that, is that what's considered a
25 slaughterhouse?

1 A. Yes, sir, that's what we call it, yes, sir.

2 Q. And what's the difference between the slaughterhouse and
3 the individual pens?

4 A. Well, you know, the slaughterhouse is, is a bigger area,
5 you know, it's going to be the alleyway there, but -- there that
6 can also be compartmentalized, just like, just like a pen could,
7 you know, so if you had -- we had 5,000-pound pens on either
8 side forward, I mean, that, that's, that's -- hm. I mean, in,
9 in, in what, in what way particularly difference, you know, if
10 you could be a little more clear on that? I'm a little
11 confused --

12 Q. Like would you use that rectangular section between the
13 pens to store additional fish?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Once you have those other pens completely filled, yes, sir,
17 you would.

18 Q. Oh, okay. Okay. And were you using it that day?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. Okay. And do you recall, and I know it is may be hard to
21 remember, but is that a bigger area than the individual pens or
22 about the same or?

23 A. Well, like, like I was saying, you, we had partitions in
24 the slaughterhouse, which would say, all right, let me, let me
25 see if I can go -- if I can break this down for you. If you

1 had -- go inside of the slaughterhouse completely forward, you
2 had two pens, one, one port, one starboard, those two pens would
3 each pen would hold about 10,000. The center of that area,
4 there was a partition to go all the way across, if you had that
5 boarded up and completely filled, that area of the
6 slaughterhouse in between those two pens, it would hold about
7 5,000.

8 Q. Okay. So you can make smaller --

9 A. So each one of those compartmentalized areas could hold
10 about five, that's how you would split it up, they -- you had to
11 put boards in between, you know, if you would generally fill aft
12 first, you know, you'd go from the rear to the front if you were
13 filling those areas in between those pens, you wouldn't use one
14 until those pens on either side of that alley were completely
15 filled.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. And then would -- then you would put more
17 boards in to segregate the center area.

18 A. Absolutely, yes --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- you'd have partition boards for each one of those areas.

21 Q. And do you recall on the night of the accident that you did
22 have additional boards put in there?

23 A. Did we have boards separating them?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Absolutely, you wouldn't have used them without them --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- it's, it's an impossibility for anybody to keep it iced,
3 you know what I mean, the, the way that you need to keep it iced
4 if you didn't have them separated.

5 Q. Okay. Great, thank you. And move on to the last section
6 and I appreciate your time, the last section is just about the
7 events that took place on the night of the sinking or the
8 morning of the sinking. If you can remember, I know once you
9 took over the watch about 2:10, that about 2:30 there was an
10 engine room bilge alarm. Can you recall if at that time there
11 was any sort of a list?

12 A. No, we were you -- not, no, no, no list --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- no, sir, we were sitting pretty low, but that was to be
15 expected, you know, you -- we, we've held -- we had about 20,000
16 more pounds of fish aboard that, that vessel at one time and
17 you're going to be sitting a little, a little low, but there
18 was, no, nothing pronounced, there was nothing out of the
19 ordinary.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. At that point.

22 Q. Okay. And then after that engine room bilge was pumped,
23 you went back to the wheelhouse and were navigating. Was the
24 vessel on autopilot?

25 A. Autopilot?

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. Yeah, I mean, autopilot, you have your way point and you
3 just have to adjust, but it was it's something that you would
4 have to be, you know, looking at the entire time, it's not
5 anything that you could just set and walk away from if you're
6 trying to stay your head, you know, keep your heading.
7 Autopilot, but, yes, it would have been on auto.

8 Q. Okay. And do you know if there was a bridge watch alarm on
9 the wheelhouse in there?

10 A. Bridge watch --

11 Q. They call it a bridge watch --

12 A. Yeah, yeah, the last, last watch or whatever? Yeah,
13 yeah --

14 Q. Yeah. Was that operational on the night of the sinking?

15 A. It was always operational as far as I'm concerned, you turn
16 it on, you got your, your -- or, yeah, I mean, it was
17 operational.

18 Q. And do you know, a lot of different manufacturers have
19 different settings, but do you know about how long it was in
20 between that the alarm would go off --

21 A. I would -- no, no, I -- no, I don't.

22 Q. Okay. And do you recall it going off at all that night?

23 A. No, sir, no, no, no.

24 Q. Okay. Can you just try to remember the events that took
25 place between the engine room alarm and the fish hold alarm when

1 you were on watch, and from what I understand, the next time
2 that the alarm went off, you got out of the chair and you kind
3 of noticed that there was a list. Can you estimate what kind of
4 a list, how many degrees you might have been leaning to port?

5 A. It was more just aft --

6 Q. So trim --

7 A. -- you know, by the stern, it wasn't a -- it wasn't a --
8 you know, it wasn't to port like that, that wasn't my -- you
9 know what I mean, that wasn't the first thing that came to mind,
10 it's just we were going to the rear --

11 Q. Oh.

12 A. -- hard --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- you know what I mean, it wasn't a port deal for me, the
15 reason -- the only thing -- I'm not sure why that would have
16 even -- I just saw water coming over the gunwale on the port
17 side and that was just, you know, but it could have been just
18 been coming either way, it wasn't, it wasn't a pronounced just
19 port list, we were going to the rear, we were going to the
20 stern --

21 Q. Okay, so --

22 A. -- hard --

23 Q. -- that makes -- that sen --

24 A. I just saw just because that was my clearest line of sight,
25 I saw water coming over that gunwale on the port side and that's

1 when I went and I alerted the captain, so that was the
2 impression that I gave, I mean, that wasn't the first thing that
3 came to my mind, do you understand what I'm saying?

4 A. Now I do --

5 Q. We were just going hard to the rear as, as it was going
6 almost how it felt to me was I got out of the chair and almost
7 went through the damn door of the wheelhouse, it was, you know,
8 straight, it felt like straight back to me --

9 Q. So the door to the wheelhouse is on the aft of bulkhead.

10 A. Say again?

11 Q. So the door you're talking about feeling like you're going
12 to go through is on the aft of bulkhead, not the port side.

13 A. I mean, it was just it's, you know, it's, it's positioned
14 more to the port side, the, the door, but it's almost directly
15 behind that chair, I got up out of the chair, turned to my left,
16 and had to hold on, you know, because I was going to go through
17 and I thought, well, that was strange, I went out onto the deck
18 and that's I saw the water coming over that portside gunwale.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. In the rear.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. That, that was the first thing that I saw.

23 Q. I'm glad we clarified that because from what I believed
24 what I had seen in the previous transcript, I believed there was

1 a big port list, but it sounds like you had a heavy trim by the
2 stern, would that be accurate --

3 A. Had there been, had there been a pronounced portside list
4 with the way that that particular vessel was, you your -- those,
5 those lists would, would have been noticeable, the fact that it
6 was just because I was sitting back in the chair is, is how I
7 feel the more that I think about it, it's why I didn't notice it
8 right away because it was just almost straight back, do you
9 understand what I'm saying?

10 Q. Now I do --

11 A. Had it been just completely port, I feel like I probably
12 would have noticed it sooner --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- you know --

15 Q. Yep. Yep. Now I understand. And do -- I have to ask
16 this, and please put up with me, but do you think there's any
17 chance you may have dozed off or fallen asleep during that --

18 A. No, sir, no, no, no, sir.

19 Q. Were you -- to try to explain, were you, did you maybe
20 leave the wheelhouse for a smoke or make any phone calls, watch
21 a movie, like is there anything you recall that you were doing
22 during that watch?

23 A. Well, here's the -- you know, without any -- yeah, I, I
24 went out and I smoked, but I went out on deck --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- and you would go out on deck, and that's what I --
2 that's why I was saying the entire time when I spoke to the
3 investigators and that's why I know, I don't know, you know what
4 I mean. Why I know what happened was it was during my watch and
5 I -- obviously I felt, you know, bad, just badly about it, but
6 I, I was out on that deck and saw nothing amiss --

7 Q. Uh-huh.

8 A. -- you know what I mean, at all until that very last that I
9 went out there, I was up, I was around, I was constantly having
10 that -- or not constantly, but I answered alarms --

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. -- but generally a lot of the time you're up in that
13 wheelhouse, but, you know, three times, say, I was out on deck,
14 the third time is when I noticed the problem, as soon as I
15 noticed it I immediately notified the captain. I'm not going to
16 speculate on, on what happened --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- but it -- you know, and that's just not to cover my own,
19 my own ass --

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. -- it happened very fast, it was very pronounced, when I
22 got when I -- that last time I got out of that chair, there was
23 a problem, and that was when I notified the captain and, you
24 know --

25 Q. Understood.

1 A. No, sir, I did not go to sleep --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- I did not let my attention wander, there was no time, at
4 no time did that happen.

5 Q. Okay, great, and thank you, I appreciate that. So --

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. The last bit of questions here is now you, after you
8 received that alarm, you quickly called the captain and it
9 sounds like there was a decision to start pumping the lazarette
10 as well as the net locker and it sounds like there was
11 definitely water coming out because either the captain or
12 yourself might have seen a discharge over the starboard side
13 from two --

14 A. I saw the, yes, sir, we all, we all did, it, it pumped, the
15 entire -- the pumps kicked on immediately and it pumped the
16 entire time, yes, sir.

17 Q. And do you remember just once seeing it or do you think it
18 pumped for a while, like how many -- did you recollect seeing it
19 for a while pumping or just briefly looking over the side once?

20 A. The time that were on deck, now, this was just in an
21 attempt obviously to keep the ship afloat and it -- you know,
22 out of -- I don't know, just, yeah, it pumped, it pumped and it
23 was going to pump, but I believe at that point the water was
24 coming on and it was just, it was trying to keep up, it just was
25 not able --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- to keep up.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. You know, nobody wanted to get off of that vessel, ever --
5 everybody loved that ves -- you know, everybody that was on that
6 boat loved that boat, you know what I mean, we were just doing
7 whatever we could to see if we could rectify the situation and
8 we were going to stay on there as, as long as we had to, but,
9 yes, sir, they were pumping --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- there was no problem with the pumps, it was not spotty,
12 it wasn't, you know, foamy or whatever, it was high velocity, it
13 was pumping, it was doing what it was supposed to do.

14 Q. Okay. Okay. And from what people remember from the
15 transcripts I read, it sounded like no one ever got any alarms
16 from the laz or the net locker, right?

17 A. No, sir, no.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Now, now, listen, well, here's what I can't say this for,
20 but, okay, now look, here's, here -- the sequence is going to go
21 like this and this is from my point of view. When I got went
22 out on deck and saw the issue, I went, I notified the captain.
23 Now, he went up in the wheelhouse, made the mayday call, I will
24 not say for sure what was happening up there, but I, I guarantee
25 if there was an alarm up there, nobody was paying it any

1 attention to it, you know, we had bigger problems at that
2 point --

3 Q. Right, right.

4 A. -- so I can't say for sure whether there was or there
5 wasn't. There had not been a problem with those alarms, so I
6 cannot see, you know what I mean, but that would just --

7 Q. Yep.

8 A. -- be speculation, I -- if they were going off, I can
9 guarantee you if there was five people in there, nobody would
10 have seen it, we had bigger issues on our mind at that point.

11 Q. Understood, I, I get it, you know, there's a lot going on
12 and if it --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. -- did go off, they may not been noticed, I get it, okay.

15 A. Exact, you know what I mean --

16 Q. Yep.

17 A. -- because he was the only person in there and he was in
18 and out --

19 Q. Yep.

20 A. -- he wasn't going to be hanging out in there, he was, he
21 made the call, was coming down, making sure everything was okay,
22 so he --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- you know, that's, that -- you know --

1 Q. And the alarms could have happened when you were not on the
2 wheelhouse, so, so it's unknown.

3 A. Absolutely.

4 Q. Okay, that, that's, that clarifies that. Three more
5 questions and then I don't have anything else.

6 A. The pumping was just in an effort to try to, to save the
7 vessel --

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. -- you know what I mean, the indication was we were just
10 trying to do whatever, whatever we could.

11 Q. Okay. Okay. I understand that part. The last part of the
12 questions is talking about the launching the, the life raft and
13 when, when the canister was thrown overboard, the sea painter
14 was tied to the rail. Do you, do you have any idea about
15 ballpark where on the rail it might have been tied off?
16 Forward, on the bow, towards the stern, towards the center of
17 the house?

18 A. I -- you know, the painter, just about dead center of that,
19 that whole, the old apparatus, it wouldn't have been, you know,
20 away from it, you know, for any, any amount, I don't really
21 know, really know what you're asking here --

22 Q. I just was trying to figure out about where the painter had
23 been secured to, to the vessel.

24 A. A bit aft of the life raft --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- I guess.

2 Q. Yep. From the, from its storage spot --

3 A. Yes, sir, yeah --

4 Q. -- up above the wheelhouse --

5 A. -- yeah, just a little bit to the -- yeah, if I'm
6 remembering correctly.

7 Q. Okay. Is that ever -- anything you ever trained on was
8 launching the life raft?

9 A. We -- you had directions on it and we were, you know, we
10 had the, the safety guys would tell us how, how to deploy them,
11 you know, so I, like I said, that was my first year as a
12 deckhand there --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- as far as I know, they, they do deployments, you know
15 what I mean, and we, we have one scheduled to do the emergent
16 suits here pretty soon, I believe, so it wasn't anything that I
17 did, you know, you had -- we were talked through it --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- wasn't anything I physically did, if that's what you're
20 asking.

21 Q. Right, right, and even when we were shipping, you'd look at
22 it and you'd talk about it, but obviously you don't launch them
23 as part of a drill.

24 A. But they do, but like as I said, they do do that, that just
25 may have been something I hadn't been on, that was my first

1 year, like I said, we've done them, they come every month and we
2 re -- they recertify or whatever and they talk us through it,
3 the life swing, the, the life preserver, the raft, the emergent
4 suits, we did -- the, oh no, we did an emergence drill, that was
5 the one that we did, so I don't know if they do them, how they
6 do them, how they schedule them, but we had done a live emergent
7 suit drill without jumping into the water, but just putting them
8 on out of, you know what I mean?

9 A. Yep, that's good, that's real good. And my last question
10 for you is if you can recall when you were up in the helicopter
11 on the way up and out, do you remember the Rebecca Mary was
12 still capsized and floating or had it completely sunk?

13 A. There was a bit of the hull sticking out, but she was going
14 down. You could see the poly balls still attached to the, you
15 know, they were floating out, but, no, she was going down.

16 Q. But it, but it was still, still visible when you, when you,
17 when the helicopter deployed --

18 A. The hull up -- yes, a bit of the hull and a bit of the
19 starboard side was, was still visible, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. Okay. Because we're just trying to see if it sank
21 immediately or if it had drifted off a bit, too, but just trying
22 to get a last few events from, from your point of view.

23 A. I looked down after we got the captain aboard and it was
24 still, it was still visible, yes, sir, the hold was and, like I
25 said, part of the starboard side.

1 Q. Okay. Okay. Well, again I really appreciate you spending
2 the time, there were a few areas that I just didn't understand
3 completely from the previous transcript and I'm, I'm glad we
4 talked about it because I, I -- definitely one of the big things
5 clarifying was the list and the trim and then that, that helps
6 me understand some of the events that took place. Do you --

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. Do you have any questions for us?

9 A. No, sir, I mean, I was just -- nope. Everything is -- no,
10 no.

11 Q. No? So --

12 A. Good to go.

13 MR. MCEWING: Brian, I have a couple questions, if I may?

14 MR. YOUNG: Of course.

15 MR. MCEWING: So this is Brian McEwing, the attorney for
16 the (indiscernible).

17 BY MR. MCEWING:

18 Q. When, when you said you saw the vessel, and maybe you saw
19 the vessel from the helo, maybe from the water, did you happen
20 to notice whether the shaft and rudder and propeller were still
21 in place?

22 A. I didn't get to see -- you know what, very briefly, okay,
23 when it, when it went down, I went by the stern and to the port
24 side and it rolled up, and I -- you got to see a portion of it
25 come up out of the water before that went back down, as far as I

1 could see, everything was still in place, but as I said, I'm not
2 an expert in these matters, but everything looked to be in
3 place.

4 Q. Okay. All right. You mentioned earlier about a
5 checkerboard in the net locker I think when we were talking
6 about the bilge suction sensor location. Is --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- framing you were talking about that runs along the
9 centerline?

10 A. You had two partitions that runs along the centerline so
11 that you can put a net on either side and it had approximately
12 five checkerboards that went down the center about probably 48,
13 48, 50 inches long and you had them stacked all the way up just
14 so that you could separate the two nets.

15 Q. Okay. All right. When you were talking about, you know,
16 potential water egress from the fish hold or through the net
17 locker or lazarette, I have some questions with respect to that.
18 Had you ever seen water go from the net locker to the lazarette?

19 A. No, no, sir. No.

20 Q. Had you ever seen water go from the fish hold to the net
21 locker?

22 A. From the fish hold to the net locker. No, sir, no, no,
23 sir.

24 Q. And how about from the fish hold to the engine room?

1 A. No, sir. Now, me, the statements that I made concerning
2 that, that was something passed from the captain to the
3 deckhands that if one was not or if there was more, a more of an
4 alarm to one area or those areas, something that you felt was
5 unusual, that could have been the cause, that was, you know what
6 I mean, that's what I was stating in regards to that, that was
7 just told passed down to me from the captain or from the other,
8 the first mate or whatever that that, if that was happening, say
9 you were getting an alarm more so in one area that you weren't
10 used to or that was unusual, that would -- could have been the
11 cause, not that I ever saw it, I, I personally didn't ever see
12 it.

13 MR. MCEWING: Okay. Thank you for clarifying that. Okay,
14 that's all I had for questions, gentlemen --

15 MR. YOUNG: This is Brian Young, and when -- and
16 Mr. McEwing just prompted one follow-up question.

17 BY MR. YOUNG:

18 Q. And that's one of the things we thought, too, is maybe the
19 propeller fell out or maybe the rudder fell off, but during the
20 transit and as you were steaming, did you ever have a loss of
21 forward speed, like during the time you were, you were steaming
22 back to New Bedford, did the speed drop off?

23 A. No, here -- and that's the other thing, the boat never
24 stopped forward, forward motion --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. It never did, because that, and that was the other thing
2 where they tell you about, you know, deploying the life raft,
3 that you need to throw, take the boat out of gear and all this
4 here shit, you know, if you would have taken that boat out of
5 gear or if that propeller had not been, at least this is just
6 what was told to me, that if it had stopped working, it would
7 have sunk a whole lot faster than it did, which was already
8 pretty damn fast, you know, so I don't -- I don't know, I'm not
9 going to speculate on what went wrong or what didn't, but we --
10 the boat was never taken out of gear.

11 Q. Okay, and that helps us narrow down to, you know, try to
12 think of these things, and what about steering, did you ever
13 notice any issues with the inability to steer, was it, was it
14 holding course proper right to the end?

15 A. Up until, I mean, it was ver -- it was very calm, you know,
16 like it is during the summertime, it was very calm, so you
17 don't, you don't have to course-correct very often, I, I
18 don't -- it didn't -- I didn't lose control, during the time on
19 my watch the vessel was not out of control, it was not acting
20 strangely, you know, like, you know, like I said, I, I know I
21 got a very general knowledge just on a specific vessel, that
22 particular vessel, nothing was out of the ordinary.

23 Q. Okay. And --

24 A. I don't -- there was no noises, there was no, you know,
25 going off to one side consistently or whatever, so as far as I

1 saw right up until the very last moment, everything was going
2 swimmingly, so I don't really know.

3 Q. Okay. Thanks, and then that just kind of helps us try to
4 understand, you know, the -- and we can't verify it because we
5 cannot see the vessel, but, you know, we would just try to rule
6 out a loss of propeller or rudder, so thank you --

7 A. So now I'm -- you asked if I had any questions, I guess my
8 only question is, is, you know, what -- this took quite a long
9 time to get to this point, is everything -- what's the ultimate
10 objective here? This is just for future safety of other, of
11 other operating, you know, vehicles or vessels that are
12 operating or what, what happens now?

13 A. Absolutely, from, from the NTSB's side, we take all these
14 facts and, and we do an analysis and we, we try to figure out
15 what would have caused the vessel to sink, and we always try to
16 put what we call a green box at the bottom of the report that,
17 that is almost a lessons-learned kind of, of a message out to
18 the industry and, and --

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. -- say, you know, quick notification to the Coast Guard,
21 testing and putting on your survival suits quickly is, is a very
22 positive thing --

23 A. Yeah, it's --

24 Q. Yeah, yeah, and, you know, and unfortunately we don't have
25 all the details as to why it sank, I mean, obviously, you know,

1 we, we are hearing that there was falling seas and, and some
2 water coming into the hog pen and maybe some water got into the
3 back end, but we will use these to, NTSB will make a report,
4 it'll go out on our website, and hopefully people in the
5 industry will read it and maybe have some lessons learned to try
6 to prevent his again. We wanted to try and get an ROV to dive
7 it so that we can try and look at the vessel, but we had some
8 survey vessels in the area and they were unable to find it in
9 the location of the sinking, and that's why I kind of asked if
10 you had seen it still on the surface, it may have drifted for a
11 while before sinking, and, you know, we, we weren't able to use
12 some of the assets in the area to actually positively identify
13 it, so at this point we're not going to be able to dive it, but
14 with some of the other jobs, the Emmy Rose, we are trying to get
15 a vehicle down there and, and unfortunately there were four
16 fatalities on that, so we're, we're trying to find that vessel
17 to determine the cause --

18 A. Recover the box? Good God.

19 Q. To determine the cause of the sinking.

20 A. Well, I mean, I, I hope that I helped, like I said, I was a
21 first-year deckhand, there's not much that I can say, you know,
22 as far as, as anything like that, I wouldn't be able to
23 speculate, I hope I helped as much as I could, but it's I'm sure
24 that it's very limited now, but --

1 Q. No, you've, you've been a huge help and you were the eyes
2 and the ears out there, we really, really appreciate you, you
3 know, remembering so much and taking the time to speak with us
4 and answer our questions.

5 A. Okay. No problem.

6 MR. YOUNG: I don't have any other questions, I'm going to
7 stop the recording, unless from the Coast Guard, Mr. [REDACTED] if
8 you have any questions?

9 MR. [REDACTED]: No, no, I'm all set, thank you, Ed, I
10 appreciate it, thanks, everyone on the call, Mr. McEwing for,
11 for your time, and --

12 MR. YOUNG: Mist --

13 MR. [REDACTED]: -- yeah --

14 MR. YOUNG: And --

15 MR. [REDACTED]: -- I have nothing further.

16 MR. YOUNG: All right, Mr. McEwing, you all set?

17 MR. MCEWING: All right, yep, thanks, Ed, I appreciate your
18 time as well and I think there'll be at least some good story to
19 tell because you guys did a lot of things right, so --

20 MR. [REDACTED]: Didn't quite hear.

21 MR. ANDERSEN: All right, well, appreciate it.

22 MR. YOUNG: I'm going to stop the re --

23 (Whereupon the interview was concluded.)

24

25

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 Edward Andersen

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA20FM021

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: April 28, 2021

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.



Steven Wright
Transcriber