

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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BOW TRIUMPH VESSEL CRASH *

INTO WHARF BRAVO PIER NEAR *

Accident No.: DCA22FM040

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA *

ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2022 *

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Interview of: JOHN LADAO HERNANDEZ, Bosun

Bow Triumph

North Charleston, South Carolina

Thursday,

September 8, 2022

APPEARANCES:

LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Investigator
U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Charleston

BRIAN GILSON
Counsel for *Bow Triumph* owner and technical managers

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Coast Guard

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Coast Guard, Sector Charleston Investigations

MICHAEL KARR
National Transportation Safety Board

JOHN CAMERON, Counsel
Executive Director, Charleston Branch Pilots

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of John Ladao Hernandez:	
By Lt. [REDACTED]	4
By Unidentified Speaker	8
By Mr. [REDACTED]	9
By Mr. Karr	9
By Unidentified Speaker 2	11

I N T E R V I E W

(1:40 p.m.)

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2
3 LT. [REDACTED] Good morning. This is Lieutenant [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED] with Coast Guard Sector Charleston. Today is
5 September 8, 2022. The time is 1340.

6 We are here on board the *Bow Triumph* investigating the
7 collision that occurred on
8 September 5 with the Pier Bravo at joint base Charleston, and we
9 are here to interview the Bosun on board, Mr. John Hernandez.

10 At this time we'll go around and do introductions. So if you
11 could just say your name and your position.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'm Bosun on vessel *Bow Triumph*.

13 MR. GILSON: Brian Gilson, counsel for the vessel owner and
14 manager.

15 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (ph.), U.S. Coast Guard,
16 Sector Charleston.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Lieutenant Junior Grade [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (ph.),
18 U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Charleston investigation.

19 MR. CAMERON: John Cameron (ph.), Charleston pilot and also
20 representing pilot John Thomas.

21 MR. KARR: And Michael Karr with the NTSB.

22 LT. [REDACTED] Thank you. That concludes the instructions.

23 INTERVIEW OF JOHN LADAO HERNANDEZ

24 BY LT. [REDACTED]

25 Q. All right. Bosun, if you could please just talk us through

1 what happened from your perspective on September 5.

2 A. On September 5, I'm -- my position is forward with the
3 (indiscernible) forward two, and then you meet the first deck
4 (indiscernible) terminal, they call us for standby for
5 (indiscernible), so everybody is at their stations. So when
6 (indiscernible) so we just standby there for a few minutes, and
7 then the other guy, Captain told that they can take
8 (indiscernible). So me and AB stay for a while so then
9 (indiscernible). Nothing special. Then just standby and then
10 when we are (indiscernible), then captain told us standby, and
11 then we standby. Then we standby we are very close, and then
12 suddenly told drop anchor, and then we drop the anchor. After
13 dropping the anchor, we just hold the brake and nobody --
14 (Crosstalk)
15 -- no, ma'am. On the catwalk hold that because I waiting for
16 the (indiscernible) and then we just stay there, we don't lift it
17 forward because we are waiting for another captain to take action.
18 (Indiscernible). That's what I remember.

19 Q. Okay. Thank you for sharing all that. It helps us
20 understand your perspective of everything that happened. Let's
21 just go back a little bit and could you just tell us about your
22 experience as a mariner, how long you've been sailing, how long
23 you've been on the ship.

24 A. It become six months (indiscernible). I start 1994 sailing,
25 and I stay in this company 27 years. I've been Bosun as 15 years.

- 1 Q. I'm sorry, how long did you say you've been with the company?
- 2 A. Around 27 years.
- 3 Q. 27 years? And a Bosun for?
- 4 A. Around 15 years.
- 5 Q. 15. Have you ever experienced anything like this before?
- 6 A. Yeah, when we are in Korea, when also piloting, there's a
- 7 fishing boat heading kind of fast on the (indiscernible) they're
- 8 calling the fishing boat, no answer, no reply. Their speed is 30
- 9 knots.
- 10 Q. Fishing boat right at the (indiscernible)?
- 11 A. Waiting for pilot (indiscernible).
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 (Audio interference)
- 14 Q. Have you ever had an incident where you had to drop the
- 15 anchor unexpectedly like this?
- 16 A. Yeah, because of the -- when we are in the South America we
- 17 (indiscernible).
- 18 Q. Using the anchor to turn?
- 19 (Audio interference)
- 20 A. -- yes, when you hold the brake, sometimes a brake lining to
- 21 see the (indiscernible).
- 22 Q. And they don't use (indiscernible). Are their rivers like
- 23 similar to ours, like size, characteristics, or is it not
- 24 (indiscernible)?
- 25 A. Almost (indiscernible).

1 Q. The largers of the -- is that what you mean?

2 A. There's a part that's larger. They support the --
3 (Audio interference)

4 Q. Okay. If you could help us figure out exactly the timeline
5 like how things happened, that would be helpful, but it sounds
6 like you said you were told to standby, and you got the order to
7 drop the anchor. Can you specify who gave you those orders and
8 who was actually handling the brake and the anchor?

9 A. Captain asked for us to drop the anchor, me and the AB
10 because most of the time you're (indiscernible) and then said
11 brake, brake, and we brake. Even before we brake, the
12 (indiscernible). Very quick.

13 Q. Distance wise, when did that happen? Like how far were you
14 from the pier when you got the order to drop the anchor?

15 A. Yeah, (indiscernible).

16 Q. No, like how far was the ship from the pier when you started
17 to drop the anchor?

18 A. Around 15 less meters.

19 Q. 15 or less meters?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. When you started to drop the anchor.

22 A. When I drop it, very close because when you drop it, then it
23 try to lock and (indiscernible).

24 Q. How much time would you say passed while the anchor was out,
25 like while all that happened?

1 A. Maybe (indiscernible).

2 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

3 Q. What made you drop the (indiscernible)?

4 A. When we ordered to drop the anchor, so we (indiscernible).

5 Q. So you weren't directed to drop a certain anchor?

6 A. At that time we (indiscernible) drop starboard, starboard
7 anchor.

8 Q. Did you hear starboard over the radio to drop?

9 A. Something like that, drop but mostly at the time we heard
10 drop the anchor, drop the anchor, because they are
11 (indiscernible). They called the name of the -- Bogs, Bogs, drop
12 the anchor, drop the anchor.

13 Q. What -- do you have procedures for emergency anchoring?

14 A. We have (indiscernible). You just open the brake.

15 Q. Do you have a specific amount of shot that you would drop
16 based on the water depth in feet or --

17 A. No.

18 Q. You just kind of -- how do you make that judgment call?

19 A. Because (indiscernible).

20 Q. So it made you drop (indiscernible) one shot? What made you
21 -- why did you drop that just one shot, not two?

22 A. Yeah, because it's the (indiscernible).

23 BY LT. [REDACTED]

24 Q. So you're saying it got like temporarily lodged on the debris
25 or something and it loosened itself.

1 (Audio interference)

2 Q. Either before or after all that happened, you know, as the
3 ship was transiting down the channel, did you notice anything
4 unusual or strange about that day or transit itself?

5 A. After this accident, but going in (indiscernible).

6 Q. So the ship was acting normal, but after the incident
7 everyone was --

8 (Crosstalk)

9 BY MR. [REDACTED]

10 Q. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the Coast Guard. How did you feel when
11 you were standing on the bow, knew the ship was going to hit the
12 pier?

13 A. Well, we are already waiting on the deck because that is my
14 -- one thing in my mind (indiscernible).

15 Q. Aren't you scared?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Yeah. And you know by doing so, and doing what you did, you
18 likely prevented worse damage to the ship and prevented the
19 chemicals from spilling into the river, the cargo. Good job.
20 Well done.

21 LT. [REDACTED] NTSB, I'll open it up to you for questions.

22 BY MR. KARR:

23 Q. Mr. Fernandez (sic), can you describe how you and the AB
24 released the anchor?

25 A. Yeah, we just run safely to the on board. The AB opened the

1 brake and suddenly the pumper drops. That's all, and then when
2 you open the brake, it automatically drop right away.

3 Q. And when did you decide to put the brake on?

4 A. Yeah, because the captain also yelled hold the brake, hold
5 the brake.

6 Q. At the time you put the brake on, was chain coming out of the
7 locker?

8 A. Yeah, when we hold the brake, it's already one
9 (indiscernible) in the water.

10 Q. But at the time that you put the brake on, had the chain
11 stopped coming out of the chain locker?

12 A. No, no, still coming, but not so fast.

13 Q. And at that time when you applied the brake with one shot of
14 chain out, was the vessel moving forward?

15 A. Yeah, still moving forward, but not like before. It's
16 (indiscernible) is already stop the ship when we dropped the
17 anchor.

18 Q. All right. Thank you. I have no more questions.

19 A. Thank you.

20 Q. I have one more question.

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. When the captain -- what does the word standby mean to you
23 when the captain told you to stand by?

24 A. Yeah, that's when they call us standby because we are in the
25 forward, it means standby for (indiscernible).

1 Q. All right. Thank you.

2 LT. [REDACTED] Anything for (indiscernible)? Go ahead.

3 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

4 Q. You said one shot to the water or --

5 A. -- and then told us to activate (indiscernible).

6 Q. Thank you.

7 BY LT. [REDACTED]

8 Q. How do you know it's one shot? Is there like a color link?

9 A. The link is --

10 (Audio interference)

11 LT. [REDACTED] I think that's all we have. Thank you very
12 much for your time. We really appreciate it. Anything else you
13 want to add? Again, thank you.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I already said several times, this
15 crew was very professional. We appreciate that very much.

16 LT. [REDACTED] All right. That concludes the interview.

17 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

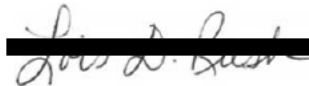
IN THE MATTER OF: *BOW TRIUMPH* VESSEL CRASH
 INTO WHARF BRAVO PIER
 NEAR CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
 ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2022
 Interview of John Ladao Hernandez

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA22FM040

PLACE: North Charleston, South Carolina

DATE: September 8, 2022

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.



Lois D. Rush
Transcriber