

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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GROUNDING OF THE MOTOR VESSEL  
NENITA IN THE COLUMBIA RIVER  
NEAR SKAMOKAWA, WASHINGTON  
NOVEMBER 19, 2016

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA17FM003

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Interview of: CAPTAIN NOYA

Wednesday,  
November 20, 2016

## APPEARANCES:

BRUCE NOLEN, Lead Investigating Officer  
Marine Safety Unit  
United States Coast Guard

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## INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN NOYA

BY MR. NOLEN:

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3  
4 Q. See, I'm looking at this -- so you came off the dock and had  
5 to anchor to wait for the favorable tide to come down the river;  
6 is that right?

7 A. From the loading port?

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. Yes, sir. The ship from the berth, so I'm going just about,  
10 okay, was from the -- along the berth, just to wait there  
11 favorable tide.

12 Q. Okay. And then about how much time were you at anchor?

13 A. About (indiscernible). I drop anchor in here.

14 Q. Oh, okay.

15 A. Yeah, I drop anchor in here and then anchor is up 2300.

16 Yeah. And then --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- heading out, about.

19 Q. So then you started down river, huh? Turned the ship?

20 A. Turned that way. Turned that way. Turned the ship,  
21 maneuvered the ship, heading down.

22 Q. Did the turn go okay?

23 A. Yes. All the way was when going down.

24 Q. And then how was the trip going down river, doing well?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Yeah. How was your interaction with the pilot? Did you do a  
2 pre-transfer? I mean a master-pilot exchange?

3 A. Yes. Yes. Before -- that is mostly in the pilothouse, make  
4 a -- I gave out our pilot card and we make a pilot exchange. Just  
5 pass (indiscernible), they gave some briefings and I also give  
6 some -- they're asking about the bridge, if there are any  
7 problems. But no, at that time no problems.

8 Q. All right. When did you test gear? Before leaving the dock?

9 A. Yes. Yes.

10 Q. Did you test gear again at anchor?

11 A. The engine, you mean? No, actually the main engine, when we  
12 drop anchor, we just keep on standby because we just stay for just  
13 a few hours, and the ship is scheduled the same from the  
14 anchorage.

15 Q. Sure.

16 A. That's why we just keep the engines standby.

17 Q. Keep it on standby.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Not up.

21 Q. Right. Right. On the way down the river, how did that go?

22 A. Just going normal, sir. Going normal.

23 Q. Okay. Going normal.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Helmsman normal?

1 A. Pardon me, sir?

2 Q. Good helmsman?

3 A. Yes, sir. He's an old -- a long-time AB, sir.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. Long time with this company.

6 Q. Okay. When did you first notice that there was an engine  
7 problem?

8 A. The -- around 12:30, I guess, reading the --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. Yeah. Somewhere in between 12:29 to 12:30. And I had  
11 received a call from the engine room with problem with alarm and  
12 then -- because we noticed the rpm drops down. That's why --

13 Q. So you noticed you were losing rpm?

14 A. Yeah, (indiscernible), the pilot you mean?

15 Q. No, no. You saw that your tachometer was -- your rpm was  
16 falling and then the phone call came?

17 A. Yes, yes.

18 Q. From the engine room?

19 A. Yes. But probably when the rpm drops down, we know because  
20 we have that indicator or something.

21 Q. Right. And then the chief called you?

22 A. At the time he just asked the third he needed to call on the  
23 bridge.

24 Q. Okay. And what did -- did you take that call?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And what did the third say?

2 A. They informed that they have the problem, problem with the  
3 main engine, the jacket.

4 Q. The cooling water jacket?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. And then what happened next?

7 A. After this one, due to the rpm reduced, then the ship is  
8 approaching on the bend area like this.

9 Q. Right. So you're drawing a little chart there.

10 A. Yeah, just rough. We got this problem, drops down the rpm  
11 and we still have the speed. And then the -- due to the rpm  
12 drops, the speed reduce on the surface heading on the bend. So  
13 the pilot, of course, knows the rpm drops, speed drops, and the  
14 ship is start turning. So he give a rudder to port in order to --

15 Q. The ship was turning toward the shore?

16 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. To counter it. And then I think maybe  
17 that is not correct. Yeah, and then when the ships head in this  
18 way, there is one buoy in. So due to low propulsion, so that our  
19 steering is not affected anymore.

20 Q. Right. You're steering was --

21 A. Not affected anymore, yeah.

22 Q. Right. The propeller is too slow to keep the steering.

23 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. The rpm is very slow.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. I remember about 30, I think.

1 Q. Down to 30?

2 A. Yeah. Yeah.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You can use -- you can just -- if he  
4 doesn't want to draw on them, you can use --

5 MR. NOYA: Yes.

6 MR. NOLEN: Right.

7 MR. NOYA: Good. And then I have also --

8 BY MR. NOLEN:

9 Q. All right. Okay. So you're going to show me on the --

10 A. Back of my --

11 Q. -- DV32 printout.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So here's where he ended up grounding.

13 MR. NOLEN: Right.

14 BY MR. NOLEN:

15 Q. And here's this buoy?

16 A. Yeah, this buoy. This one. And then because the ship is  
17 heading here, so he give the rudder to port so the ship start to  
18 turning because we still have a little bit more speed. When the  
19 ship's turning, we are heading with this buoy. But he make again  
20 a counter rudder.

21 Oh, yeah. You see? Counter rudder. So --

22 Q. So now you were going here?

23 A. Yeah, where the buoy. And the ship is start to turning here.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. So when the ship is turn here, again becoming clear with the



1 buoys, so again we try to give the rudder port again, rudder to  
2 port. But just no rpm anymore, so the ship is continue to  
3 (indiscernible) here and hit the rock somewhere here.

4 Q. Now when you say no rpm, did it go to zero or did it stay  
5 about --

6 A. No, not going zero. It goes zero when -- before I put  
7 astern.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. Yeah. Yes, because I when come here and look, the rpm is  
10 just -- what? The rpm, I don't remember exactly.

11 Q. Right.

12 A. So since we give slow astern -- no, half ahead, slow ahead,  
13 half ahead, but not responding anymore, we decided to give astern.  
14 So stop the engine and put that -- we put it on, we dropped the  
15 anchor, I stopped the engine. Then slow astern and then  
16 (indiscernible) full astern. And then I still make emergency full  
17 astern, but --

18 Q. Not enough time?

19 A. No.

20 Q. You did get rpm astern?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Yeah. The engine did respond?

23 A. Yes. She respond to the order astern, yes.

24 Q. Okay. And then what happened next after you --

25 A. So after that we hit the rock, yeah, we suspect there are any

1 damage, so I --

2 Q. The anchor, when did you -- did you drop your anchors?

3 A. Both anchors, yes.

4 Q. Right. After you ordered astern -- or before, actually?

5 A. Before the astern.

6 Q. Before the astern. Okay.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. And then after, then the impact; is that right?

9 A. Yes. Yes, impact, yeah.

10 Q. Okay.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What happens on those, when they turn  
12 yellow, Travis, like on that one picture, further down in the --

13 (Crosstalk.)

14 BY MR. NOLEN:

15 Q. So what happened after the impact, I mean, what did the ship  
16 do?

17 A. Then the third (indiscernible) so we check, yeah, for the  
18 possible damage. So I send all the crew to make soundings and  
19 some others also look around the ships for any sign of collisions.  
20 But for the collisions, we don't observe any. But when they take  
21 sounding in forepeak, they found water ingress. So we continue  
22 monitoring the sounding up there in forepeak. Again, make sound  
23 again for the main ballast tanks, double (indiscernible), bilges,  
24 but they still remain empty except the forepeak.

25 Q. So --

1 A. But after the ships hit on there, even the flooding is in  
2 continuous, but we observed the ship is -- the forward part is  
3 still afloat. Just (indiscernible) already damaged here.

4 Q. The bow was moving a bit?

5 A. Yes. After it hit.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. Actually this area is (indiscernible) deck. We just don't  
8 let that stir up.

9 Q. Then did the ship -- did it just stay there or did it start  
10 to swing around?

11 A. Fortunately, the ships remain, stay almost in line with the  
12 (indiscernible) because on that time is flooding.

13 Q. Flooding.

14 A. By that time. So after that, the pilot called tugboats and  
15 trying to arrive the time before the tides change, because of  
16 course if it become ebbing, it'll change the direction and might  
17 turn the ships and block this area.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay. So the pilot called for tugs and the ship just fetched  
21 up on the anchors, huh?

22 A. Yes, yes.

23 Q. Okay. All right. So you've checked for damage. You've  
24 checked for flooding. You checked for pollution.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. The ship is in a stable position --

2 A. Is stable, yeah.

3 Q. -- against the flood tide.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And then did you proceed to -- when did you do your drug  
6 testing?

7 A. After this -- I think around 3:00. Drug testing -- oh here,  
8 yeah. The pilot, because he have like kit, there's three pieces,  
9 so he gave for me one, second officer one, and for him also one.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. So we make a drug testing and also, after is all, I sent also  
12 the second officer to take a alcohol testing with the engineers  
13 that's involved at that time.

14 Q. That's -- you did that, the alcohol testing?

15 A. Yes, we did.

16 Q. You have that equipment on board?

17 A. Yeah, yeah. We have the alcohol meter, gas separate. You  
18 blow.

19 Q. What brand is it; do you know?

20 A. I don't, I don't remember exactly.

21 Q. Oh, that's okay. You can --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, that's all right. I'll show you.

23 BY MR. NOLEN:

24 Q. Okay. Yeah, if you could show us the equipment.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Have somebody get it. Okay.

2 MR. NOYA: (Speaking in another language).

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you recording?

4 MR. NOLEN: Yes. Is that not okay?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, it's usually just, for us,  
6 everybody gets a copy.

7 MR. NOLEN: Oh, all right.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So he gets a copy, Howard gets a copy.

9 MR. NOLEN: I'll have to become acquainted with doing that.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So normally I get -- when I set the  
11 recording, if I'm going to use the recording as evidence, I have  
12 to get permission to do a recording for evidence, and then I offer  
13 everybody, you know, (indiscernible) send everybody the same copy  
14 of the evidence. A lot of times I don't use it as evidence. I  
15 just use it to spark my notes and -- but I still distribute the  
16 audio recording to everybody.

17 MR. NOLEN: All right. Right. I am only doing it as a --  
18 you know, so I don't have to write like a mad dog to do this.

19 BY MR. NOLEN:

20 Q. All right. So you got to the point where you did your -- you  
21 used the pilot's drug testing equipment and then you did your --  
22 carried out your alcohol testing.

23 A. Yeah. Yes.

24 Q. And where was the ship at that time? Was it still lined to  
25 the flood?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Oh, I see it. It took about 3½ hours for the tugs to  
3 get to you; is that correct?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. The tugs arrived on --

7 Q. Right. I see at 6:20.

8 A. First tug, yeah, at 6:20 it arrive, yes.

9 Q. Okay. We got the PT (indiscernible), so -- very good. Very  
10 good, captain. And then -- so the next thing after the alcohol  
11 testing, you just continued to monitor your position and --

12 A. Yeah, that's right.

13 Q. -- and then the relief pilot showed up; is that correct?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. All right. I think everything else is there nicely in the  
16 timeline, thank you. How did your trip go from where you were  
17 anchored up to your next anchorage point when you moved up river?

18 A. In that (indiscernible), you mean?

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. Yeah. No, we go there with the engine slow ahead plus the  
21 assistance of the tugs. And then we just kept the engine up  
22 because I had discussed with the chief engineer if we can give  
23 full, but he said for safety reason of the main engine, because he  
24 said it could been one cylinder, so just give it half ahead, the  
25 engine. And then we arrived in Port (indiscernible) and we

1 dropped anchor at that time.

2 Q. Okay. What did you decide to do about the engine for the  
3 trip up the river? Did you just isolate that? How does that  
4 work?

5 A. The --

6 Q. You isolate one cylinder and then you just use the engine as  
7 normal?

8 A. Yes. Yeah, in order to work the engines.

9 Q. Okay.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then you have the tubes, right?

11 MR. NOYA: This tube, yeah.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Do you have the box for it, and  
13 manual?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Larry took (indiscernible).

15 MR. NOLEN: AlcoScan AL7000 Breathalyzer. It's nice and  
16 small.

17 Does anyone else have a question for the captain?

18 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

19 Q. The only question I have is, were you happy with the  
20 performance of the pilot throughout this whole incident from the  
21 time that you left the anchorage till he was off? Were you happy  
22 with the pilot's performance? Was he --

23 A. Yeah. He's performing normal.

24 Q. Normal?

25 A. I didn't see --

1 Q. Professionally?

2 A. Yeah. I don't observe any unusual for him.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you, captain.

4 MR. NOLEN: I don't have any other questions. Thank you,  
5 captain.

6 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

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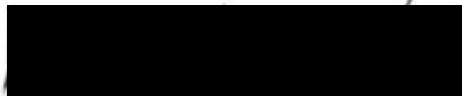
IN THE MATTER OF:                    GROUNDING OF THE MOTOR VESSEL  
    *NENITA* IN THE COLUMBIA RIVER  
    NEAR SKAMOKAWA, WASHINGTON  
    NOVEMBER 19, 2016  
    Interview of Captain Noya

ACCIDENT NO.:                        DCA17FM003

PLACE:

DATE:                                  November 20, 2016

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.

  
Michelle Hermann  
Transcriber