

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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:
EXPRESS SHUTTLE II :
NTSB #DCA05MM002 :
:
INTERVIEW OF :
CAPTAIN RON BAYLESS :
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An interview in the above entitled matter was
held on Friday, October 22, 2004, commencing at 9:20 a.m.,
in Tarpon Springs, Florida, before:

BOB FORD, NTSB
BRIAN CURTIS, NTSB
LT. ERIC STEIN, USGC
LT. HEATH HARTLEY, USCG
CHRIS CONNER, SUN CRUZ

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT NUMBER
IDENTIFICATION

MARKED FOR

Exhibit No. 1

6

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. CURTIS: Good morning, it's October 22, 2004.

3 It's 09:20 in the morning, and we're here to interview
4 Captain Ron Bayless, regarding the Shuttle Express II
5 accident, which occurred on October 17th, and Captain, we
6 have you here, basically, we believe you may have some
7 information that may assist us in the investigation, and
8 would like to ask you a few questions.

9 Before we start, I'd like to go around the table
10 and have each person here identify who they are, and what
11 organization they're with, and we'll get started.

12 MR. HARTLEY: I'm Lieutenant Heath Hartley, US
13 Coast Guard, Chief of Port Operations at MSO, Tampa.

14 MR. CONNER: Chris Conner, Port Captain,
15 (indiscernible) Casino.

16 MR. FORD: Bob Ford, Investigator in charge,
17 NTSB.

18 MR. STEIN: Lieutenant Eric Stein, Senior
19 Investigating Officer, Coast Guard Marine Safety Office,
20 Tampa.

21 MR. CURTIS: Captain?

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Captain Ron Bayless, Sun Cruz
23 Casino.

24 MR. CURTIS: Good morning, Captain, I'll start
25 off. Just your marine background, how you got into the

1 industry, and just go back a ways.

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I was around the commercial
3 fishing industry when I was a kid. I started captaining
4 boats when I was 16 years old. I've done that for about 22
5 years, as a captain. I went to Sea School, obtained my
6 captain's license. I've had my official Coast Guard
7 license since September of 2003. I've worked for Sun Cruz
8 for about the past year and a half.

9 MR. CURTIS: What license do you hold?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: A one hundred ton Master's
11 license.

12 MR. CURTIS: Where was the school you went to?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Sea School, St. Pete, Florida.

14 MR. CURTIS: All that time with the company,
15 you've been a captain?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, I started out as their deck
17 supervisor. I was still going to the school, and saving
18 money to pay for, you know, to get my license. So, I've
19 been a captain for them for probably, approximately, six
20 months, seven months, somewhere in there.

21 MR. CURTIS: Have you worked exclusively on this
22 Shuttle Express II, or do you work on all the vessels?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I've worked on all the vessels.

24 MR. CURTIS: What do you work for a schedule?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I mainly work the night shift.

1 A couple of days a week, I come in at 3:00 p.m., the other
2 days, 6:00 p.m. until 1:00 a.m., 1:30 a.m., and
3 (indiscernible) when we finish up at the end of the night,
4 sometimes 2:00 a.m.

5 MR. CURTIS: The accident occurred on the 17th,
6 Sunday. What shift did you work the previous day to that?

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I worked the night shift on the
8 Express II.

9 MR. CURTIS: Could you just give us a run through
10 of when you showed up for work, and that shift, the times
11 and any abnormalities?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: That morning, I did the 7:00
13 a.m. crew change, which took approximately about an hour.
14 Then, I was off work until 3:00 p.m., which I was on call
15 after that time. We did -- I did not leave the dock on
16 that vessel until 7:00 p.m. was when I actually was
17 underway on that boat. I made the 7:00 p.m. trip and the
18 11:30 p.m. trip, just those two runs.

19 MR. CURTIS: What time would you, if you left
20 here at 7:00, 11:00, the arrival times?

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Left the dock at 7:00, arrival
22 time at the ship, approximately around 8 o'clock, five
23 minutes until, left there about, probably five after 8:00
24 p.m., returned to the dock at 9:00 p.m. and then we were at
25 home at the dock and then we leave approximately 11:20 to

1 11:30 to meet the ship at midnight, and return to the dock
2 around 12:30 to 12:40, you know, given the tide and the
3 weather and everything like that. There's about a 10-
4 minute variable in there on different nights, you know.

5 MR. CURTIS: That Saturday night, did you notice
6 anything, did you have any problems, propulsion, control,
7 engine problems?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: When I arrived at the ship, to
9 maneuver up to the ship, I had a problem with the starboard
10 main engine. Just a sudden loss of power, which at that
11 time, I determined that it was probably a fuel line with
12 the experience of that boat, a fuel injector line.

13 So, I immediately killed the engine. We finished
14 getting tied up to the ship. When all the passengers got
15 off, and we pulled the hatch up, and determined that it was
16 a fuel injector line, and changed it out, cleaned up our
17 mess, cleaned the whole engine room area. The air take
18 -- air intake filters, we changed those out, started the
19 motor back up after we replaced the fuel line.

20 We had it about 2,000 rpm's, checked it to make
21 sure nothing was leaking, put the hatch back on, and
22 boarded our passengers, and went back to the dock.

23 (Exhibit No. 1 was
24 marked for identification.)

25 MR. CURTIS: I've got a photo here. We're going

1 to call it Photo 1, and Captain, if I could just have you
2 circle with a pen, on it, which fuel line, the area, or if
3 we could identify which line on it, you could go ahead and
4 circle it. Was it a high pressure line, or low pressure
5 line, coming into the engine?

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Well, I believe they're high
7 pressure because it's a line that comes out of the injector
8 pump right here --

9 MR. CURTIS: Right, correct.

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- and then circles back, and
11 fastens to the cylinder head.

12 MR. CURTIS: Was this on the inboard or the out
13 board side?

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It was on the outboard side.

15 MR. CURTIS: Outboard side?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah.

17 MR. CURTIS: Do you remember if it was the first,
18 second, third, fourth line?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Let me see if I can tell which
20 line. I know it was either the first or the second one.

21 MR. CURTIS: Okay, if you could just --

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's not a real good picture
23 here --

24 MR. CURTIS: -- put a circle around the
25 outside --

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- but if I were standing right
2 over the engine, I could tell exactly which line it was.

3 MR. CURTIS: I apologize for the picture quality.

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's all right. It's just the
5 angle that it is, you know, if I had the outboard side. I
6 would say that it would probably be the second one right
7 there.

8 MR. CURTIS: Okay, but it was definitely
9 starboard engine and in board or outboard?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Outboard side.

11 MR. CURTIS: Outboard side.

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Starboard engine, outboard
13 side.

14 MR. CONNER: Ron, can I see that photo, please?

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Sure.

16 MR. CURTIS: You mentioned previous experience
17 with the engine as if you'd had some type of problem with
18 it possibly. Was it that engine or just the engines in
19 general?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It was that particular engine.

21 MR. CURTIS: What were the problems?

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Two other times I had to change
23 the fuel injector line. It was a similar situation.

24 MR. CURTIS: In the recent past, or was it awhile
25 ago?

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's been a total of three
2 times in the last six months, probably, maybe a month ago,
3 and then probably three and a half months ago.

4 MR. CURTIS: Do you recall which ones they were?
5 Were they different lines, different size of the engine?

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: They were different sizes of
7 the engine. The first one was a -- was on the starboard
8 engine, inboard side of the engine, which was one of the
9 bottom ones. So, we had to take like two other lines off
10 to get that one on, and then put the other ones back on,
11 and then re-fasten all the little keepers, you know, that
12 hold the lines together, and the other two were real easy.
13 Just had to do the single line, didn't have to mess with
14 any of the other fuel lines to get them on. Just take the
15 keepers off, and the two nuts on each end off, and replace
16 the line.

17 MR. CURTIS: In the past, when they failed, had
18 you noticed oil building up on top of the engines where
19 they pumped oil out, or any problems with that?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Just a little bit of fuel
21 topped the engine. We'd take a diaper, one of those fuel
22 oil rags, and soak up all the -- any of the excess fuel
23 that was on top of the engine, and wipe it down, any fuel
24 that got anywhere, we always wiped it down to make sure
25 there was no fuel hanging out, because it could create

1 fumes, you know, and then the passengers would have to
2 breathe that and smell it.

3 MR. CURTIS: Was it usually the problem with the
4 starboard engine as opposed to the port?

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

6 MR. CURTIS: Did any of the other captains, have
7 you conversed with them that they had the same problems
8 with that boat, with that engine?

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

10 MR. CURTIS: Who would the other captains be?

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Captain Mario and Captain John
12 Henry, who no longer works with the company.

13 MR. CURTIS: As far as you know, had a engine
14 representative looked at it, looked into the cause of why
15 you were failing these lines?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I don't know if that was
17 particularly why he was there. The Friday before this
18 Saturday night that I changed the fuel line, the CAT
19 (indiscernible) mechanic was there running engine
20 diagnostics on the motor.

21 According to him, I didn't hear everything that
22 he said, because he was talking to the -- a couple of the
23 other maintenance guys, but I think he was going to check
24 into changing a few of the fuel injectors at a later date.

25 I was, basically, in the wheel house, you know,

1 on the Sea Trial, so I don't know all that took place
2 downstairs while they were doing the engine diagnostic
3 tests.

4 MR. CURTIS: Have you talked to anybody else
5 regarding why this engine may be failing the fuel lines,
6 other captains, or anybody else? Any other discussions you
7 recall?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, not why -- I mean I would
9 report to the port captain that you know, when that had
10 happened and we changed the fuel line.

11 MR. CURTIS: When you did have to change them,
12 were they usually just cracked, or were they actually
13 broken off?

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: All three that I have changed
15 were broken off right at the nut where it tightens down
16 onto either the cylinder head or the injector pump.

17 MR. CURTIS: So, it was broken clean?

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Broken clean.

19 MR. CURTIS: You're saying right at the nut where
20 the feral tightens onto the --

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah, just a little above it.
22 There would probably be a quarter to a half inch of the
23 fuel line actually still sticking up.

24 MR. CURTIS: So, you, yourself, have changed, in
25 the last six months, approximately three of them, is that

1 correct?

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sir, three.

3 MR. CURTIS: Have you ever brought that up to the
4 Caterpillar representative or hadn't had a chance?

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, not necessarily. Like I
6 said, most of the time, when he was on the boat doing
7 things, I was in the bridge to start the engines or shut
8 them off, or be in control of the vessel, you know.

9 MR. CURTIS: Did you ever notice that - that
10 engine seemed to have more libration (phonetic sp.) to it
11 than the other or was that (indiscernible)?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Not necessarily. Under normal
13 conditions, maybe, if we got some grass or some crab trap
14 rope, or something every now and then on there, but we
15 would immediately call the guy that dives the boat on daily
16 basis. He's always on call, you know, we could call him
17 and say, hey, we need you to come (indiscernible) the boat,
18 and he would come down and cut the rope out, or pull the
19 grass out, or whatever it might be.

20 MR. CURTIS: Had you heard that Captain John
21 Henry had changed lines himself?

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

23 MR. CURTIS: He didn't mention that to you?

24 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: (Non-verbal response.)

25 MR. CURTIS: Well, I'll go around the table and

1 give others a chance to ask some questions. Thanks, Ron.

2 MR. HARTLEY: This is Lieutenant Keith Hartley,
3 with the Coast Guard. What type of instructions or
4 procedures did you have for changing the fuel lines? Did
5 you have like Caterpillar operating instructions, or any
6 type of procedures?

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, I did not have any type of
8 Caterpillar instructions. I just go on my years of
9 experience of working on engines.

10 MR. HARTLEY: Yes.

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Caterpillars, (indiscernible)
12 Diesels, Perkins.

13 MR. HARTLEY: Right, so, you're pretty familiar
14 with the fuel lines --

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sir.

16 MR. HARTLEY: -- and feral fittings --

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sir.

18 MR. HARTLEY: -- and that type of stuff? Had you
19 recalled that Caterpillar or (indiscernible) mechanics has
20 replaced any fuel lines, recently, on the boat, within the
21 six months that you've been the captain, or seven months or
22 so?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Not that I know of.

24 MR. HARTLEY: Okay.

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I mean, they might have, but

1 not that I -- I have not personal knowledge of that.

2 MR. HARTLEY: If you were going to replace a fuel
3 line, would you just go back to the shop and grab a fuel
4 line off the parts shelf, or would you have to normally
5 order the stuff or do you have fuel lines in inventory?

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: We had fuel lines in
7 inventory --

8 MR. HARTLEY: Okay.

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- on the boat, just in case it
10 happened that you know, underway or at sea, where you could
11 change it out.

12 MR. HARTLEY: With your experience of knowing
13 fuel lines, would each fuel line have a specific part
14 number, or some of them interchangeable?

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, each fuel line --

16 MR. HARTLEY: Every one is individual?

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- has a specific part number,
18 yeah.

19 MR. HARTLEY: All right, thank you.

20 MR. STEIN: It's Lieutenant Eric Stein with the
21 Coast Guard. You were actually underway or actually out to
22 sea when you replaced the fuel line on Saturday?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

24 MR. STEIN: You were drifting I take it?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, I was tied up to the ship.

1 MR. STEIN: So, you're tied --

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I noticed the performance in
3 the engine change when I was maneuvering the vessel to tie
4 up to the Casino ship.

5 MR. STEIN: Then, typically, how do you document
6 the work that you did? How would you document that for the
7 Port Captain?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I would put it in the log, the
9 ship's log --

10 MR. STEIN: The ship's log, okay.

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- and immediately report to
12 the Port Captain --

13 MR. STEIN: Okay.

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- what I did.

15 MR. STEIN: This is a document that I have,
16 Captain. It's called the daily vessel checklist. Does
17 this look familiar to you, or did you fill this out, maybe,
18 Saturday night?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sure did.

20 MR. STEIN: So, you filled that document out --

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: That's my writing.

22 MR. STEIN: -- Saturday night?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

24 MR. STEIN: Would these be your initials at the
25 bottom, then?

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, they would.

2 MR. STEIN: What does it say on this document?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Changed fuel lines, starboard
4 side, 427671.

5 MR. STEIN: This document would be used for you
6 to document any engineering or unusual activities that took
7 place?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

9 MR. STEIN: That would be outside the ship's log,
10 maybe, but --

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

12 MR. STEIN: -- certainly documented here?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

14 MR. STEIN: Would you sign that paper for me,
15 Captain, just so I can enter it? I appreciate it. Date it
16 for me, it's the 22nd of October. Then, on this document
17 it has, basically, a part received, would this be with the
18 fuel line in your storage?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

20 MR. STEIN: Where did this receipt come from?

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It comes off of the plastic bag
22 package that the new fuel line's in.

23 MR. STEIN: So, it came right out of a plastic
24 bag?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It was a brand new fuel line

1 right off the shelf.

2 MR. STEIN: Right off the shelf?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: In it's pack, yeah.

4 MR. STEIN: So, it was in packaging?

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

6 MR. STEIN: And then you removed the packaging
7 while you were on Saturday night? You opened the package
8 and used that (indiscernible) that came out of this
9 package?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, I did.

11 MR. STEIN: How many captains are working for Sun
12 Cruz right now, with you, on the shuttles?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Three.

14 MR. STEIN: Right now?

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah.

16 MR. STEIN: All three are operating?

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: We have one fellow in training.

18 MR. STEIN: One fellow in training?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: One captain in training, yes.

20 MR. STEIN: You said Captain Henry use to work
21 for Sun Cruz, and he no longer does?

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, he does not.

23 MR. STEIN: Active captains right now, how many
24 are with Sun Cruz?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: As far as the shuttles go?

1 MR. STEIN: Right.

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Two.

3 MR. STEIN: Two?

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: And the Port Captain, Captain
5 Chris, runs the shuttles too, from time to time.

6 MR. STEIN: How long has there only been two
7 captains with Sun Cruz?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Probably three weeks, three,
9 four at the most.

10 MR. STEIN: Captain Henry decided to move on?

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

12 MR. STEIN: With two captains, what is your
13 typical weekly schedule look like as far as operating?

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I'd say that I usually work the
15 night shift. My typical schedule is 6:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.

16 MR. STEIN: That's seven days a week?

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Six.

18 MR. STEIN: Six days a week?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

20 MR. STEIN: How do you get a day off with only
21 two captains? It's a seven day operation, how does that
22 work?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: We take turns, like, a captain
24 will work most of the day, and then one of us will be on
25 standby on our day off, you know. If it -- if the other

1 captain needs us, needs the captain that's off, or needs a
2 break, or we need two boats, then they'll call us in.

3 MR. STEIN: So, you'd run, basically, the day and
4 the evening shift then, for one day a week? You'd run the
5 whole day --

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

7 MR. STEIN: -- from the first run in the morning,
8 to the last run at night?

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

10 MR. STEIN: So, that captain would handle that
11 entire day's operation?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

13 MR. STEIN: The second captain would be on call
14 if he got too tired? Is that correct?

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

16 MR. STEIN: That's all I have for right now.

17 MR. FORD: Bob Ford, NTSB. I just want to get
18 the hours straight on when the repair happened. What time
19 of night did you finish up that repair on Saturday?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Probably about 8:00, ten after
21 8:00.

22 MR. FORD: 8:00 p.m. at night's good enough.
23 Then, you made a trip back in?

24 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

25 MR. FORD: Did you have any more trips that

1 night?

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, I did.

3 MR. FORD: You had one more?

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: One more trip.

5 MR. FORD: So, you had one more full round trip,
6 and what time did that finish up?

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: About 12:45, 12:40, 12:45 a.m.

8 MR. FORD: By 1:00 a.m. in the morning. So, that
9 was it for your day then?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sir.

11 MR. FORD: You're talking about the spare parts
12 on the boat. What type of spare parts do you keep on the
13 boat? Is there a large inventory, or just basically --

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's not a large inventory, you
15 know, fuel filters, air filters, fan belts for the
16 generators, you know, fuel lines for the engines.

17 MR. FORD: Who keeps track of that inventory?

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: The senior mates of the
19 shuttles, most of them.

20 MR. FORD: This is the first time I've heard the
21 term "senior mates." Do they --

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's a deck hand that we --
23 yeah, it's one of the deck hands, but.

24 MR. FORD: Have you ever felt uncomfortable
25 enough where you would go check the inventory?

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sure.

2 MR. FORD: When you compare the boats, is there
3 one boat you would be more concerned than the other?

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: As far as inventory goes?

5 MR. FORD: Yes, based on history.

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

7 MR. FORD: No?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, not necessarily

9 MR. FORD: You discussed your deck background,
10 but obviously you're quite familiar with engines. Do you
11 have any formal training in engines, or you just learned as
12 you went?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Just over the years of being
14 around the industry, I've learned a lot. I, like, slow
15 times at fishing, I personally worked with the diesel
16 mechanic on a couple different occasions for like four
17 months at a time.

18 MR. FORD: Yes.

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Three or four different years
20 in a row.

21 MR. FORD: So, it's basically on the job training
22 is what you had?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

24 MR. FORD: Before I get into your 72-hour
25 history, do you have the repairman's name? Have you dealt

1 with pretty much the same guy from Ringpower (phonetic sp.)
2 or when they come on and do the work? Is there anyone that
3 you're familiar with in the area?

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: It's been the same mechanic
5 every time.

6 MR. FORD: Do you know his name?

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: David. I don't know his last
8 name. I think maybe it's Chong, David Chong or something
9 like that.

10 MR. FORD: David Chong, okay. Not a Dave
11 McGinnis?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: That could be his last name.

13 MR. FORD: Okay.

14 (Discussion off the record.)

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: (Indiscernible) the scheduler
16 or --

17 MR. FORD: He's not a mechanic?

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

19 MR. CONNER: I don't know what he is --

20 MR. FORD: Yes.

21 MR. CONNER: -- otherwise, but he is the man I
22 contact --

23 MR. FORD: Yes.

24 MR. CONNER: -- to have service done.

25 MR. FORD: That sounds good.

1 MR. CONNER: Service manager, maybe.

2 MR. FORD: Yes, okay. Can you tell us a little
3 bit about your employment process at the company? Some of
4 these questions may seem, why do they want to know this,
5 but we try to look at everything. I'm not sure how
6 familiar you are with the NTSB. We're not out to go after
7 licenses or anything else. We're here just to find out why
8 it happened so it doesn't happen again.

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Sure, I understand that.

10 MR. FORD: The employment process, how did you
11 come to be hired by the company? What did you have to go
12 through?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I approached the Port Captain,
14 and asked him if they needed anybody to work on the vessel.

15 MR. FORD: Yes.

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Because I wanted to, basically,
17 get my foot in the door, because I was in the process of
18 getting my captain's license.

19 MR. FORD: Yes.

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: They hired me as their deck
21 supervisor on the Casino ship, and I had to fill out an
22 application, take a drug test, and went from there.

23 MR. FORD: Did you do any check rides? Another
24 captain --

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

1 MR. FORD: -- did you have to ride with another
2 captain?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Oh, yeah, before I started --

4 MR. FORD: Yes.

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- captain, actually,
6 captaining the vessel --

7 MR. FORD: Right.

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- sure, yeah.

9 MR. FORD: How many check rides did you take? Do
10 you remember?

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Several over probably a three-
12 week period, I would say. Anytime within the three-week
13 period, I was driving the boat, there was another captain
14 on the vessel with me.

15 MR. FORD: Who gave you the blessing? Who was
16 the final one that said, you're good to go solo?

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: The Port Captain, Captain
18 Chris.

19 MR. FORD: Okay.

20 MR. CONNER: I'm Chris, sorry.

21 MR. FORD: This gets confusing for people. We're
22 going to do a 72-hour history. Saturday was the accident,
23 so we want to go back three days. We'll start,
24 Wednesday --

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Actually, Sunday was the

1 accident.

2 MR. FORD: I mean Saturday was the repair.

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Okay.

4 MR. FORD: So, we're looking at your three-day,
5 I'm sorry, you're right.

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Okay.

7 MR. FORD: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, no,
8 actually we're going to start Wednesday night, Thursday
9 night, Friday night, because then, Saturday, you were
10 working.

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Right.

12 MR. FORD: So, if you can give me a three-day
13 history, a 72-hour history of your sleep schedule starting
14 Wednesday. Your work and sleep schedule.

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Wednesday, I probably woke up
16 around noon.

17 MR. FORD: Yes.

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Obviously, got breakfast, did
19 my laundry.

20 MR. FORD: Yes.

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Went and picked up my son from
22 school.

23 MR. FORD: Yes.

24 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Spent the evening -- afternoon
25 and evening with him, went to dinner, all that good stuff.

1 MR. FORD: Yes.

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Stayed at home, watched some
3 T.V., probably went to sleep around midnight, woke up
4 around the same time on Thursday, around noon time, pretty
5 much just hung out at home, reported for work at 6:00 p.m.
6 on Thursday evening, did my two runs, the 7:00 p.m. run,
7 and the last run of the night, 11:00 p.m.

8 MR. FORD: Yes.

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Went home, went to bed,
10 probably around 2:00 a.m., probably got up around the same
11 time, somewhere between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

12 MR. FORD: Yes.

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Reported to work at 3:00 p.m.
14 on Friday afternoon. We did not need two vessels to haul
15 passengers at that time, so, I came back at 6:00 p.m.,
16 replaced the captain that was on duty for the day.

17 MR. FORD: Yes.

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Same thing, did our two runs,
19 7:00 p.m. run, and the last run of the night at 11:30 p.m.,
20 went to sleep, probably, approximately, around 2:00 a.m.,
21 got up at 6:30 p.m., got to the dock at around -- right
22 around 7:00 a.m., did the morning crew change at 7:00 a.m.,
23 left work, reported back at 3:00 p.m. in case we needed two
24 boats.

25 MR. FORD: Yes.

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: We didn't need two boats, so
2 then, six, replace the daytime captain at 6:00 p.m., and
3 then, did the 7:00 p.m. run, 8 o'clock's when we had the
4 problem with the fuel line, changed it, returned to the
5 dock, did the last run of the night at 11:30 p.m.

6 MR. FORD: Yes.

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: And approximately, went to
8 sleep, or got home, about 1:30 a.m., was in bed by 2:00
9 a.m.

10 MR. FORD: Between that 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.,
11 when you went home, did you take a nap?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Oh, yeah.

13 MR. FORD: Okay.

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I took about a three-hour nap.

15 MR. FORD: Okay.

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: A three and a half hour nap.

17 MR. FORD: You weren't involved in any heavy,
18 strenuous physical activity then or anything like that?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, just --

20 MR. FORD: Okay.

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- holding the remote.

22 MR. FORD: You felt well rested then?

23 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Oh, yes.

24 MR. FORD: Are you on any medications, things
25 like that - that would impact your --

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

2 MR. FORD: Have you been involved in any
3 casualties before, like a fire --

4 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

5 MR. FORD: -- collision --

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I never had one collision,
7 accident --

8 MR. FORD: Yes.

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- injury to any deck hands or
10 anything in the whole time I've been working on boats.

11 MR. FORD: You've never been in any formal
12 firefighting training, then, or anything like that? Crowd
13 control training, firefighting?

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: When I was a teenager, I was in
15 a volunteer fire department.

16 MR. FORD: Yes.

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I had firefighting training
18 then --

19 MR. FORD: Okay.

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- and in Sea School --

21 MR. FORD: Yes.

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: -- where you go through a
23 little bit of firefighting, stuff like that.

24 MR. FORD: How about first aid training?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Sure, Red Cross, first aid and

1 CPR.

2 MR. FORD: You keep that current, then?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

4 MR. FORD: Okay, sounds good. That's all I have,
5 thank you.

6 MR. CURTIS: Brian Curtis again. Captain, you
7 mentioned you noticed the problem with the engine because
8 of its performance. What would it do to give you reason to
9 believe you'd lost a fuel line?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: You could tell in the throttle
11 it would be real sluggish, you know, especially when you're
12 maneuvering. You wouldn't have the RPM or just the feel of
13 the boat, you know, when you put it in gear and throttle
14 up, you can feel the vessel maneuver the way it should, and
15 you could definitely tell right away that there's a
16 problem.

17 MR. CURTIS: There's more sluggish, did you ever
18 get erratic speed changes where it would speed up and slow
19 down, the speed will hunt on you?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No.

21 MR. CURTIS: The inventory on the vessel, you say
22 had fuel lines on board, did that vessel carry more fuel
23 lines because of its propensity to fail fuel lines, or all
24 of the vessels carry the same number of fuel lines, pretty
25 much?

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Well, the other vessels have
2 Detroit diesels, and they're an internal. That's a totally
3 different kind of fuel system, you know, so, the other
4 vessels didn't have extra fuel lines, probably due to the
5 fact that the type of engine that they had in them.

6 MR. CURTIS: This is the only one, the
7 Caterpillar, this is the only vessel?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: This is the only vessel with
9 Caterpillars, yes.

10 MR. CURTIS: Just for the record, your last full
11 day off was?

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Wednesday.

13 MR. CURTIS: Wednesday, okay. The new vessel,
14 it's a new captain is being trained, when is he due to come
15 on line and be a member?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Whenever the Port Captain
17 clears him to be, you know, suitable to handle the vessels
18 by himself.

19 MR. CURTIS: On board drills, take us through
20 what you do for on board drills, how frequent, and how
21 they're recorded.

22 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: We have a log that we keep that
23 records them all. I've been doing it about once a month
24 with the crew that I have on the boat. We usually with a
25 man overboard drill. Throw a life jacket in the water, you

1 know, have a man on the stern, a man on the bow, guide the
2 captain to where the life jacket would be, pull it up to
3 it, and you know, in the proper way, upwind, you know, into
4 the wind, on the port side of the boat is where the
5 boarding doors were. It would be easier to bring the
6 person aboard.

7 Then we would do a fire drill. Extend a hose out
8 all the way to the back deck, or up on the bow, have every
9 deck hand engage the fire pump. While one was working the
10 hose, I would have one engage the fire pump, and then
11 switch it around to where the other one would work the
12 hose, the other one would do the fire pump. So, they both
13 knew exactly, you know, what would take place in the event
14 we definitely needed to pull that hose out.

15 MR. CURTIS: As far as new employees, how would
16 you know that this person had - had drilling experience and
17 this person hadn't? Is there any way you could tell?

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: If you looked in the log book
19 to see, you know, previous drills, you know, whether they
20 had been through it or not. We usually would do it during
21 the daytime. On layover is when I would do most of my
22 drills, when I did work during the day, you know. Since we
23 lost the captain, I've been only doing the night cruise --
24 cruises.

25 I didn't work with a lot of the newer deck hands.

1 Maybe a couple of times during the last three or four
2 weeks, because they have the newer deck hands, you know,
3 work in the daytime. That's when they're going their
4 training process is on day shifts.

5 MR. CURTIS: If you get a new deck hand on board,
6 would that necessarily trigger you to have a drill because
7 he's new, or not necessarily?

8 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah, after he becomes
9 comfortable with the normal procedures on the vessel, you
10 know, tying up, and taking care of the customers, and
11 getting the boats clear to the ship end of the dock, then I
12 would proceed into giving them training on the man over
13 boards and fire drills, and stuff like that.

14 MR. CURTIS: On this vessel, the Shuttle Express
15 II, are you familiar with the fixed fire suppression
16 system?

17 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

18 MR. CURTIS: How do you release that system?
19 What steps need to be taken?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: There's a valve that runs off
21 the tanks that has a pin and a wire, you know, a wire with
22 a ring on the end of it. You just pull the pin and pull
23 the wire, the cable, to release the valve, you know, to
24 open the valve.

25 MR. CURTIS: Do you have to open a hatch cover to

1 do that?

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, it was located in the fuel
3 tank room, and to lift a hatch, and it was on the
4 (indiscernible) bulkhead of that particular boat in that
5 fuel room.

6 MR. CURTIS: Would the deck hand be trained in
7 releasing that or is that just the captain would be the
8 only one that would release that?

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Well, I think the deck hands
10 would be trained to release that, but if I was on the boat,
11 I would probably take care of that myself to make sure that
12 was done properly.

13 MR. CURTIS: The testing and logging of that,
14 those records are kept in the office or on board?

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: On board. Each shuttle has its
16 own on board log.

17 MR. CURTIS: Back to the records for the drills,
18 you say you kept them on the ship, were those only kept on
19 the vessel, or were they also sent to the office who
20 trained, or was that just on the vessel?

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Just on the vessel as far as I
22 know.

23 MR. CURTIS: I asked you questions, we've been
24 down on the vessel, regarding the pumps. I know it's on
25 the forward end there's a pump in each engine belt driven,

1 which of the fire, which of the (indiscernible) pumps and
2 how are they turned on?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I believe the port side, port
4 engine, the one we use for fire pump, you need to open the
5 sea cock valve and on the 12-volt panel, the stern of the
6 boat, on the starboard side, was the emergency fire pump
7 switch that actually engaged the pump.

8 MR. CURTIS: There was just the one fire pump?

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Well, there was two. I think,
10 you know, there was this (indiscernible) valve, you could
11 run either pump, you know, to -- depending on which valve
12 you opened.

13 MR. CURTIS: The fire pump was also the bilage
14 (phonetic sp.) pump.

15 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: You could use it as a bilage
16 pump, yes.

17 MR. CURTIS: Was there an independent bilage
18 pump, of those two pumps?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

20 MR. CURTIS: I'm just trying to get a sense of --

21 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: I believe the starboard side
22 would be an individual bilage pump, as far as the electric
23 emergency bilage pump goes. If you hit the emergency
24 bilage pump switch, the starboard pump would come on. If
25 you turned the fire pump switch, I believe the port pump

1 would come on.

2 MR. CURTIS: By turning the switch on, would the
3 bilage pumps -- was this a electro mechanical clutch or
4 something?

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah, electric clutch.

6 MR. CURTIS: Okay.

7 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: A 12-volt electric clutch.

8 MR. CURTIS: Where was this sea cock valve
9 located that you have to open for the fire pump?

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Near the forward bulkhead, in
11 the engine room.

12 MR. CURTIS: For the fire pump, was that always
13 left open so you wouldn't -- I mean, if you had to start
14 the fire pump, would you have to go down and open the sea
15 cock?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, I don't think so. I don't
17 believe so.

18 MR. CURTIS: That's all I have right now. I'll
19 pass the question around.

20 MR. HARTLEY: I'm Keith Hartley, with the Coast
21 Guard. Captain, you mentioned the air intakes, you cleaned
22 them out, or you changed out the filters, after you did the
23 fuel line?

24 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

25 MR. HARTLEY: Can you explain to us what you did

1 with that? Just clarify that for us?

2 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: The old filters, you know, we
3 just took off.

4 MR. HARTLEY: Yes.

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Placed them in a garbage bag,
6 got the new filter wraps, put them on the air intake, I
7 guess, I don't know what you'd call air intake brackets or
8 what have you, strapped them back around so they were
9 fastened good.

10 MR. HARTLEY: This was on the starboard engine?

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Starboard engine, yes.

12 MR. HARTLEY: Both intakes?

13 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Both intakes, yes.

14 MR. HARTLEY: Who's your deck crew with you that
15 evening?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Bruce Hester and Cory Byrd.

17 MR. HARTLEY: Did either of them participate
18 while you were changing up the fuel line and the air
19 intakes?

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Actually, the deck hands are
21 the ones that replaced the air intake filters while I was
22 doing the fuel line.

23 MR. HARTLEY: They were in the engine room with
24 you?

25 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes.

1 MR. CONNER: Chris Conner, Port Ritchie Casino.
2 They were in the engine room (indiscernible)?

3 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: (Indiscernible) the engine
4 room. We were above, on deck with the engine hatch open.
5 I mean it's easier to work on the top side of the engine.
6 It's easier to work on the top side, or around, anywhere on
7 the top side of the engine, from the deck, instead of in
8 the engine room.

9 MR. FORD: Bob Ford, NTSB. John Henry you said
10 was the captain's name that left?

11 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, sir.

12 MR. FORD: That could be either a blessing or a
13 curse depending on how you look at it when you lose a guy.
14 You either get more work or you get too much. Did you
15 know the man well?

16 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, I've known him for a long
17 time.

18 MR. FORD: Do you know why he left?

19 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: He wanted to pursue other
20 things. I mean, that's what he told me. He wanted to try
21 something different for awhile.

22 MR. FORD: Thank you.

23 MR. CONNER: May I add also that it's not
24 uncommon, over the years, for us to have only two men
25 working a week this time of year.

1 MR. FORD: Yes.

2 MR. CONNER: Because it is very slow.

3 MR. FORD: Okay.

4 MR. CONNER: One boat is primarily used except
5 for maybe the weekend pick up's night, generally speaking.

6 MR. FORD: Yes.

7 MR. CONNER: Later on, when it picks up, we'll go
8 to a four-captain staff on the shuttles.

9 MR. FORD: Okay.

10 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Could I elaborate on that?

11 MR. FORD: Sure.

12 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: This is Captain Ron Bayless.

13 On the day that just there's one captain on while the other
14 captain has the day off, you're probably only at the helm
15 of that vessel underway about eight to nine hours due to
16 the short trips that we make. We have a lot of layover
17 time. The time that we rest or take a nap or you know,
18 hang out in the waiting room and watch T.V., what have you.

19 MR. FORD: Yes.

20 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: So, it's not like we're at the
21 helm, driving that boat, all through the day and through
22 the night.

23 MR. CURTIS: On the fire detection on the Shuttle
24 Express II, what do they have for sensors and what would
25 you get for an alarm, say, if you had --

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: They had a fire alarm system, I
2 believe it was called a Fire Boy or a Fire Bouy (phonetic
3 sp.) something like that it said on the panel.

4 MR. CURTIS: That panel was located?

5 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: In the bridge, right next to
6 the bilage highwater alarm panel.

7 MR. CURTIS: Did you periodically test the fire
8 alarm that panel?

9 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yes, I always test the bilage
10 alarm and the fire alarm. All the systems were always go
11 and all the lights were always on showing that --

12 MR. CURTIS: Is there anyway to push a button and
13 sound the alarm to test the horn or anything?

14 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: Yeah, there's a test. There's
15 a test button.

16 MR. CURTIS: That had sensing heads down in the
17 engine spaces?

18 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: As far as I know. I never
19 really checked the sensors in the engine room or anywhere
20 in the bilage areas. I assumed that there was a fire panel
21 on there, there were sensors there.

22 MR. CURTIS: If the CO2 were to be released, do
23 you know if there are any trips, ventilation or engine
24 trips that would happen if the CO2 was released? Are you
25 familiar with that?

1 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: No, I'm not.

2 MR. CURTIS: I don't have any others.

3 MR. FORD: Ron, I appreciate your time today. As
4 we have no more further questions, we'll go off the record
5 now. The time is 10 o'clock, and thanks a lot Captain.

6 CAPTAIN BAYLESS: You're welcome.

7 (Whereupon, at 10:00 a.m., the interview was
8 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings of the National Transportation Safety Board Interview regarding the Express Shuttle II, NTSB #DCA05MM002.

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN RON BAYLESS

SUN CRUISE CASINOS

Eve Jemison, Transcriber

