



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Date: 9/28/05

Place: Washington, DC

Person Interviewed: Port Capt Vince “Chris” Conner

Interview Conducted By: Robert Ford/Brian Curtis,
IIC/Engineering Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

INTRODUCTION

Port Capt. Vince “Chris” Conner was interviewed in conjunction with the Safety Board investigation into the fire on board the *Express Shuttle II* on Oct. 17, 2004 (NTSB accident # DCA05MM002). The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. The interview was conducted telephonically from NTSB HQ with Capt. Conners at his office in Port Richey, FL. It has been developed from my handwritten notes of the conversation and is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

INTERVIEW

- Capt. Conners indicated there was 1 large main hatch over each of the vessel’s 2 main engines. There was also one smaller hatch, approx. 2 feet by 2 feet located on the vessel centerline just aft of the engines, for easier access and checking of the engine spaces.
- He said he was not aware that any of the fire detection detectors below the main deck were “locally sounding.” He further stated that he believed all of the system detectors were located below the main deck level.
- He was not completely sure of the hospital that the injured deckhand was taken to, but he believed it was “North Bay”. Capt. Conners will locate the hospital report from his main office, and forward it to us.

- In the interviews conducted onscene, when “removing the end caps” is referred to, that is to say they were cleaning the engines’ heat exchanger tubes of any fouling they may have encountered by raw seawater during the vessel’s transits.
- The tables and chairs on the main were not secured to the deck or bulkheads in any manner.
- The vessel had a typical navigation package. It had GPS, radar, VHF radio, depth sounder, etc.
- Vessel was capable of up to 20 knots, but typically transited around 17 knots.
- As far as he knew, all of the fire detectors were located below the main deck, and he didn’t think the any were located in the galley area on the main deck.
- A company named Sun Coast Fire and Safety conducted the May 2004 annual CO2 inspection on the Express Shuttle II. He will forward the invoice for that work from his main office.
- Capt. Connors said he currently held a USCG 500 gross ton license.
- There were 2 fire pumps on the vessel. The one on the port engine was the main fire pump, and the ballast pump driven by the starboard main engine could have its discharge valves aligned so as to supply seawater pressure the the fire main.
- The vessel was considered a total constructive loss due to the fire, and Capt. Connors will obtain and forward the insurance company paperwork to us describing the loss.

END OF INTERVIEW

Brian Curtis