

1 you ever see any weather reports provided by the charter? Like
2 the office --

3 A. Yes I have

4 Q. You have?

5 A. Yes, I have.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. They have computers in their office onboard the boat, and
8 they watch the weather just like we do.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. So you didn't see it on this particular voyage,
10 but you have seen it in the past?

11 A. That is correct.

12 Q. Okay. Okay. I see some hands up. I'm assuming it's related
13 to weather because I have some more follow-on -- other questions,
14 but if it's related to weather, let's go ahead and take those. So
15 Drew?

16 BY MR. EHLERS:

17 Q. Yeah. I'm sorry to keep hammering away at this, Captain, but
18 when you got weather from a charter, was that when you were on
19 site at a platform or at a work site or did you get weather from
20 the charter during a transit?

21 A. While we're on the job site.

22 Q. And when you're in transit, did the charter ever provide
23 weather?

24 A. The client wants to know if, you know, what's the weather
25 going to be like? Of course, you know, to get the location, can we

1 not, when can we, so, yeah, they're part of the weather.

2 MR. EHLERS: Okay. All right. Thanks, sir.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Erik? Erik Verdin?

4 BY MR. VERDIN:

5 Q. Say, Captain -- excuse me. Sorry, Captain, to -- okay. The
6 -- prior to departure, it was common or y'all do a pre-departure
7 checklist, correct?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Was that pre-departure checklist, was it on paper or
10 just computer? Just notes or how did y'all retain copies of
11 evidence of doing a pre-departure checklist?

12 A. Well, it's on the computer and a pre-arrival, pre-departure
13 is logged in the rough log, you know, that you've done that, done
14 those items before departing.

15 Q. All right. Is there a list of items or -- sorry.

16 A. No. Go ahead.

17 Q. Is there a list of items that is in the checklist that y'all
18 use as references to complete this pre-departure checklist?

19 A. Say that again? I'm sorry, sir.

20 Q. Do you have a list of items that is, you know, like a
21 reference like a checkbox, say a list of items that says okay,
22 this needs to be checked off for our pre-departure checklist? This
23 --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- needs to be checked?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yes. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Is weather -- is checking the weather part of the pre-
5 departure checklist?

6 A. I'm sure that it is, yes.

7 Q. Okay. If there are anyway, how -- I mean, we know you check
8 it through some type of internet system or something. Do y'all
9 capture or is it normal to print up or document some kind of way
10 to show evidence of how did the -- you know, did y'all check your
11 weather. Do you print up a weather report, you know, to put with
12 the pre-departure checklist, saying to, showing evidence, yes, we
13 did check the weather. Here's what the forecasts was. Here's what
14 is intended -- here's what the weather's forecasting for our
15 voyage. Do y'all normally print out any evidence of weather
16 reports?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. The one -- the one y'all used form the office or is
19 there a means that maybe one of you preferable weather reports?
20 Can you print out one of your preferable weather reports? One you
21 rely on the most? Is that printed out?

22 A. -- the most up to date and accurate forecast for the area
23 you're going to be transiting.

24 Q. Okay. And just to make sure I'm clear, so it's normally
25 printed out, the weather report's normally printed out, and

1 attached some kind of way or nearby the voyage -- the pre-
2 departure checklist or the voyage plan?

3 A. That'd be all in the same folder of, you know, for that
4 particular voyage.

5 Q. Okay. That's all I got. Thank you.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Thank you, Erik.

7 BY MR. KUCHARSKI:

8 Q. Okay. Captain, continuing along, are you familiar with the
9 Stopworth work authority at Seacor?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Did you ever have to exercise that?

12 A. I can't say I've had to do it recently but, you know, it
13 surely has been brought up, yes.

14 Q. Okay. And you say not having to do it recently. Is --
15 what's recent? Is it the last couple years, five years, what is
16 it?

17 A. I don't know how to put a time on something like that.
18 Trying to think, you know, I mean, you know -- pretty -- as things
19 go, it had been going very well you know, and it's just, I've not
20 had to -- I can't remember or recall the last time I had to say
21 you know stop work so yeah it's been a long time.

22 Q. Okay. How about -- have you been on board recently where any
23 captain has exercised stop work authority?

24 A. I can't say that I have. Not recently.

25 Q. Okay. And --

1 A. You know, we haven't been that busy in the last several
2 years, you know? We've been working but we haven't been solid
3 busy like we used to be before the oil fields started slowing
4 down, so -- but there's certainly stop work that goes on. I see
5 these write-ups that we get that, you know, these weekly safety
6 reports that we get out, you know, whether other vessels are using
7 us, so --

8 Q. Okay. Okay. So you're aware of what goes on but y'all
9 haven't been on a vessel where it went on recently. Okay. Okay.

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. Okay. And so how did you -- you've had a lot of experience
12 with different companies. How was the atmosphere, the safety
13 culture at Seacor?

14 A. The safety culture at Seacor? I thought it was very good.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And you know -- work safe you know I mean, so -- that's the
17 way to be, and that's what our company asks of us, and that's what
18 we try to do to the best of our ability.

19 Q. Okay. Okay. And last few questions. You've sailed with
20 Brian Meers (ph.) before?

21 A. I have. Brian, at one time, was my mate.

22 Q. And what's your impression of Brian?

23 A. I like Brian very much. He's very experienced. He knows how
24 to handle a boat, he should be a captain, but you know he's
25 comfortable being the mate, so he's nice to have on board. He's a

1 go-getter and very smart.

2 Q. Okay. And Chief Encalade (ph.), if I'm pronouncing it
3 correctly, did you sail with the chief?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And how --

6 A. Encalade -- yes.

7 Q. Yes. And how -- what's your impression of Chief Encalade?

8 A. I've -- you know, he's been doing this for quite a long time
9 and on lift boats and I've thought very highly of him.

10 Q. Okay. And is, you know, his performance as an engineer?

11 A, Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Okay. And last of the questions, the toughest one,
13 probably, Captain Leday, you've -- did you ever sail with Captain
14 Leday, besides this voyage?

15 A. Yes, I have. In fact, when I moved up to that size vessel,
16 David is who broke me out on that type boat, and when I stepped up
17 from a 230 class and so yes, I have sailed with David before.

18 Q. Okay. And did you sail as mate under him or did you relieve
19 him or how did that work?

20 A. No, I was going to start being his relief, and he was showing
21 me the vessel, you know? Me and the mate that was going to work
22 with me, we had -- the office put us on board with him, and we
23 traveled from Fourchon to Cameron.

24 Q. Okay. Okay. And likewise, the last of that, you felt he was
25 a competent master?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for your candor, again. Erik
3 Verdin, Coast Guard?

4 BY MR. VERDIN:

5 Q. Yeah, quick question, Captain Jim. Appreciate your time.

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. Going back to stop work authority. For example, this day,
8 the -- had Captain Dave held back because of weather, would it be
9 required or would it be normal to plead a stop work authority and
10 submit that to the officer? Was that a report or if it was just
11 something normal just waiting on weather?

12 A. Oh, that was -- you know, it usually happens something
13 normal, I mean, not a regular boat, you know? We're not out there
14 like a supply boat that can handle big seas, you know? It's
15 obvious that you can't go nowhere in a lift boat in rough weather.

16 Q. Right. So if after the boat was loaded and it was, you know,
17 after discussion of weather references and the weather and they
18 decided well, we're just going to sit here and let the weather
19 pass, they'll -- there -- would there or wouldn't there not be a
20 stop work authority form completed?

21 A. I mean, I guess you could if you wanted to. I mean,
22 generally, you know, in the past it was something I would discuss
23 with the client and the office, so -- and I don't know if it'd be
24 in that order, you know what I mean? It'd be agreed upon, you
25 know, between all of us.

1 Q. Right, right. And that's just for recordkeeping processes is
2 what I'm asking about. Yeah, that kind where on the lines of
3 where I was going.

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Thank you, Captain. Appreciate your time again.

6 A. Yep. Sure.

7 Q. And -- you know, your --

8 A. Thank you.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Once around the horn. Anyone else
10 have any questions? Captain Jim, do you have anything you'd like
11 to add? Any insight, anything you'd like to add to this
12 interview?

13 CAPT. GRACIEN: Not really, Mr. Mike. Just, you know, I mean
14 it's three weeks ago to the day that it happened, so you know, I
15 was floating around somewhere three weeks ago out there, and you
16 know it was a rough deal but, you know, it's kind of good that I
17 just recently went through water survival. That really kicked in
18 and I stayed calm and got through with it the best way I could and
19 was, if I could get out. It's unfortunate, but I just think
20 about, you know, but no I don't have any questions. I need to go
21 to the bathroom, I know that.

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Well, if there's anything you can
23 think of that maybe helpful, please don't hesitate to reach out to
24 us. We thank you for your time, tremendous interview. And if
25 there's nothing further -- Drew, do you want to have a word?

1 MR. EHLERS: I don't. I know Captain Jim wants to get going
2 so I just want to thank you on behalf of the NTSB for your time.
3 Thank you, Captain.

4 CAPT. GRACIEN: Thank you.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. The time is now 17:06 Eastern Daylight
6 Time, 16:06. The interview has ended, and thank you again.

7 Thank you, Paul, thank you for making this happen.

8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.
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CERTIFICATE

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

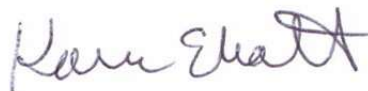
IN THE MATTER OF: CAPSIZING OF THE LIFTBOAT *SEACOR*
 POWER SOUTH OF PORT FOURCHON,
 LOUISIANA, ON APRIL 13, 2021
 Interview of Captain James Gracien

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA21MM024

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 4, 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.



Karen Ehatt
Transcriber



Office of Marine Safety
Transcript Errata

Matter: *Seacor Power*
Ref Nbr: DCA21MM024

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the transcript of interview for Mr. James Gracien taken on May 4, 2021. Kindly ask Mr. Gracien to review this transcript for accuracy and provide suggested corrections, if any, in the attached table.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

5/24/21
Date

Michael J. Kucharski
Captain Michael J. Kucharski
Senior Marine Accident Investigator

