



## 8<sup>TH</sup> COAST GUARD DISTRICT FORMAL HEARING

### **Explosion and fire aboard Bouchard No. 255 Tank Barge resulting in loss of 2 lives and oil spill Oct. 20, 2017, in Gulf of Mexico near Port Aransas, Texas**

#### **United States – Flagged Tank Barge BOUCHARD Barge No. 255 Fact Sheet**

On October 20, 2017, the articulated tug and barge (ATB) BUSTER BOUCHARD (O.N. #605691) and Bouchard tank barge B. NO. 255 (O.N. #603622) was anchored in the Aransas Anchorage Area located in the Gulf of Mexico. The barge was loaded with an estimated 140,000 barrels of crude oil. At approximately 0430, as the anchor on the B. No. 255 was being raised in preparations for getting underway, an explosion occurred. The explosion ejected both deckhands from the vessel and a fire ensued.

#### **B. No. 255 Casualty Facts**

448-foot permissively manned oceangoing tank barge, U.S. Flagged, U.S. Built in 1979  
02 Persons onboard tank barge (both designated as Tankermen), both U.S. citizens  
02 persons onboard tank barge found deceased in water  
Coupled to Articulated Tug BUSTER BOUCHARD at time of explosion  
06 persons onboard Tug BUSTER BOUCHARD  
Barge No. 255 loaded with estimated 140,000 barrels of crude oil  
B. No. 255 authorized to be permissively manned as per Certificate of Inspection issued 19 FEB 2015.  
Explosion occurred roughly 03 miles offshore in Aransas Anchorage, Sector Corpus Christi.

#### **B. No. 255 Details**

1979 Keel Laid - U.S. Built, U.S. Flagged Steel Tank Barge – Inspected under 46 CFR, Subchapter 'D'  
Owner – B NO 255 CORPORATION / Operator – BOUCHARD TRANSPORTATION CO INC.  
Capacity – 188,400 barrels, Grade A and lower, 16 total Tanks (8 Port/8 Starboard)

#### **Recent Inspection History**

Most Recent COI issued 19 FEB 2015 by Sector New York  
Most recent inspection performed (annual) 09 May 2017, Sector New York – 00 Deficiencies Issued  
Last Dry-dock Date: 19 February 2015 - Next Dry-dock Date: 29 February 2020  
Last Internal Structural Exam: 05 February 2015 – Next Internal Structural Exam: 31 January 2018  
Last Cargo Tank Internal: 09 February 2015 Tank Id 1 thru 8 P/S – Next Cargo Tank Internal: 29 February 2020

#### **Lifesaving Equipment**

1 – Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)  
3 – Immersion Suits & Lifejackets  
2 – Ring Buoys  
1 – 6-man Inflatable Life-raft