

1 I was getting information coming from members coming down, from
2 members that were there. I was getting equipment. They were
3 calling for more equipment. I don't remember the conversation
4 verbatim but I do know they were there. I do know that they
5 advised me that they were ready and could be deployed if needed,
6 and that we were going to eventually use them, yes.

7 Q. Okay. I know you mentioned at the beginning when we were
8 talking about equipment that was available for that day, that the
9 cascade truck was not functioning. Did a cascade truck or bottle
10 refilling function ever come on scene?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Or were you completely relying upon extra spare bottles that
13 units had?

14 A. In the beginning, I was using -- utilizing all the bottles.
15 Each truck carries about 10 extra bottles. So we had all the
16 bottles emptied from the trucks brought over to the command post,
17 and then as bottles were needed, I believe Elizabeth showed up
18 with their cascade truck and they handled that, the bottles,
19 whatever refills we needed.

20 Q. Okay. And then once, once both missing Firefighters Acabou
21 and Brooks were recovered and off the ship, when and how was the
22 decision made to evacuate the ship, essentially stand down from
23 the firefight on board the ship?

24 A. Okay. After Firefighter Brooks was brought down, at that
25 point I was -- things had started to -- the overwhelming portion

1 of this -- of the incident kind of flooded me a little. So when I
2 looked at the boat, I said, listen, we're not putting anybody else
3 in this boat. I'm not losing anybody else today, and it was no
4 more operations on this boat. So everybody came down. We had to
5 figure out -- now at that point, I realized I had heavy fire on
6 the 11th deck. The fire was out but conditions were much worse on
7 the 10th deck. And the 12th deck, my understanding was it was too
8 hot for the guys stand up there, but the fire was out.

9 So, we wound up sending units systematically up to recover.
10 There was a lot of equipment up there. Empty bottles, oxygen
11 tanks, hooks. There were saws. Whatever was up there. So I had
12 to empty the boat of all the equipment. So systematically we
13 brought up units. I said take everything that's yours, bring it
14 down, and whatever else you can carry, we're going to put in a
15 pile, and we did that at the base of the boat on the ramp. And
16 then the next units that went up, I said look in the pile, take
17 what's yours, go up and get it and bring it down and that's how I
18 emptied the boat. That took about 45 minutes to an hour to do
19 that, to gather it. Then I had to get accountability of all the
20 people, make sure everybody had their people, and we moved
21 forward.

22 Q. Okay. And when you say moved forward, what happened at that
23 point then?

24 A. Well, at that point, New York, New York had arrived with
25 their boat. I had no communications directly with their boat.

1 Their boat is a massive boat with the capabilities of doing
2 whatever functions that need to be handled. But I had no direct
3 link with them. A member from their marine division came over to
4 me. He was there with a scribe, the Italian chief, a captain and
5 a couple firemen, and he was pretty much just educating me because
6 I really had no knowledge of how to do that stuff with this boat.

7 At that point, I realized that the biggest problem we had was
8 that door on deck 12, and I wanted to redeploy the CO system now
9 that everybody was off the boat, but the door could never close.
10 We -- I sent up, I sent up two ladder companies, Battalion 4 and
11 Battalion 1 to try to figure out a way to close that door. They
12 brought up air. They were going to try to go in there with a tank
13 on but at that point now, the 11th deck was hot, heavy smoke was
14 coming out, the door was unable to be closed. We came back down.

15 The gentleman from New York went up, and he had more
16 knowledge of the boat. I used him. He was very familiar with it.
17 He said I'm going to see if I can do something with -- please -- I
18 don't recall verbatim. He was going to try to do something with
19 either the pistons or find another way to deactivate that system
20 so they can close the door. That didn't work. He had direct
21 communication with the captain. I did not. He did. I guess it
22 could not be closed from the bridge. And then we came back
23 downstairs, and we came with -- found a tarp. We tried to cover
24 the hole with a tarp. That was unsuccessful. We tried plastic,
25 unsuccessful. The hole was just too big. It was just way too big

1 for us to try to cover.

2 So -- and then at that point, I brought everybody back down
3 and we were towards the end of the operation. New York began --
4 I've learned a few terms now, which I did not know. They began
5 surface cooling the side of the boat and their boat had the
6 capability of shooting up over the deck and the whole object of
7 this thing was to flood that deck, hopefully it goes down inside
8 that doorway and does some effect on the 11th deck. That was the
9 game plan.

10 Q. And prior to the Newark Fire Department representative going
11 up and talking to the captain, did you ever -- were you -- prior
12 to that, were you aware that that door on deck 12 was an issue?

13 A. I was. I was made aware of it as the operation was
14 continuing. They said that they couldn't but I think you said a
15 Newark member went and talked to the captain. It was not a Newark
16 member. He was from New York.

17 Q. New York, yes.

18 A. Yes, yes, he was from New York. He spoke to the captain in
19 an attempt to get it. He was very familiar, very knowledgeable of
20 what was going on. He taught me quite a bit in an hour of
21 terminology outside that I was unfamiliar with, and that was about
22 6 o'clock in the morning at this point. So, they went up and he
23 spoke to the captain. And we tried our best to close that door.
24 We could not close it through the whole operation. I was told it
25 was open. They were unable to close it, and we were unable to do

1 anything with that.

2 Q. Okay. And, prior to that point, had you ever had any
3 conversation about the potential to release more CO2 into the
4 space?

5 A. Yes. After -- well, we could not do that while we were still
6 searching for our members. So that was -- that point never --

7 Q. I'm sorry, Chief. You are frozen on my end.

8 A. -- see if we could drop --

9 MR. LIPSHUTZ: We lost you for a second. So I don't know
10 what you heard.

11 BY CDR BARGER:

12 Q. Yeah, I can hear you but you're both frozen on my side. Are
13 you able to hear me?

14 A. I can hear you, yes.

15 MR. LIPSHUTZ: We can hear you. Maybe it's a good time for a
16 break.

17 CDR BARGER: Yeah, we can do that, and try to reestablish our
18 connection. So, we will go back to that question about the CO2
19 system. We will take -- let's take a 10 minute recess and try to
20 reestablish the connection. The time is now 10:23 a.m., and we
21 will reconvene at 10:33 a.m.

22 (Off the record at 10:23 a.m.)

23 (On the record at 10:33 a.m.)

24 CDR BARGER: Okay. The time is now 10:33. Chief Carlucci,
25 do I have you back on?

1 THE WITNESS: Yes, you do. I'm here.

2 CDR BARGER: Okay. Very good. We'll go ahead and restart
3 the record then. The time is now 10:33 a.m., and the hearing is
4 now reconvened and back on the record regarding the fire on board
5 *Grande Costa D'Avorio*. This is a continuation of Deputy Chief
6 Carlucci's testimony. Chief Carlucci, as a reminder, you are
7 still under oath.

8 THE WITNESS: I understand.

9 BY CDR BARGER:

10 Q. Before we took our recess, we were experiencing a little bit
11 of technical difficulties with the virtual line here. So if we
12 could go back to reanswering the question with regards to the
13 ship's CO2 system. Prior to New York Fire Department being on
14 scene and having that discussion with the captain, was there ever
15 the conversation about possibly redeploying the CO2 system had
16 earlier in the response?

17 A. Yes. There was but again, two variables at the time. We
18 were missing a couple firemen. So we could not deploy the system
19 at that time. I was notified about the problem with deck 12. I
20 was really unfamiliar about how much CO needs to be dropped to
21 contain something like that. So I didn't even know if the ship
22 had the capability of doing that, but it was discussed.

23 Q. Okay. And who was that discussion with?

24 A. I believe we did it at the command post. It was myself. The
25 battalion chiefs were there. Chief Jackson at the time was there

1 I believe. I think he was already there. So we talked about, but
2 we couldn't do it because we could not close 12, the door on 12.

3 Q. Okay. Was that discussion ever had with any members of the
4 ship's crew?

5 A. I don't recall. I believe so. I believe that we did get
6 someone to see if it could be done, but again, because that door
7 wouldn't close, it would have been null and void to use.

8 Q. Okay. And then during your time in command, there at the
9 incident command post, was a member -- were there any outside
10 entities present in the command post to provide any kind of agency
11 liaison or guidance, Coast Guard, Port Authority or any other
12 group like that?

13 A. Yes, they reported to me. They notified me that they were on
14 the scene. To be quite frank, I wasn't sure what their
15 capabilities were. The Port Authority was there. Coast Guard
16 came, told me he was there. You know, I don't know if he had to
17 shut the waterway down. I'm not sure what his function was.

18 Q. Okay. And at what point would you say those individuals came
19 and introduce themselves to you?

20 A. I don't really recall, but it was pretty deep into the
21 incident. I don't really recall though.

22 Q. Okay. And you mentioned when New York Fire Department Marine
23 Battalion arrived on scene, that they gave you a lot of education
24 on the ship and what to do. Had there been any discussions of
25 requesting New York Fire Department respond earlier than that in

1 the incident?

2 A. I don't recall that at all, no. I don't recall.

3 Q. Okay. Were you aware previously of the resources or
4 knowledge that the New York Fire Department Marine Battalion had
5 and could have provided?

6 A. No, I did not. There was a -- there was -- New York did
7 arrive with their rescue crew and they had a chief with them or I
8 believe he was a battalion chief and I'm not sure if he called for
9 the boat or not. I don't know.

10 Q. Okay. Does or have you ever been involved in any training or
11 fields or exercises with regards to marine firefighting or working
12 with New York Fire Department in the Port there?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. And, Chief, my last question for you before we go into
15 follow-up questions, what limiting factors do you think challenged
16 your response in this incident?

17 A. I would think, I would think the knowledge of the boat and
18 the -- what we were kind of getting involved in and putting
19 ourselves into, definitely radio communications, language barrier
20 I had with the crew, the amount of people that we had responding
21 and I had to contain it. I had -- the accountability of the
22 members was a key thing for me. I was afraid to lose anybody
23 else. It was just a very -- it became a very emotional,
24 physically draining incident.

25 Q. Okay. And I forgot to ask earlier. With regards to the

1 language barrier, was there -- I know you said you and your driver
2 tried to communicate in Spanish. Did -- was there ever
3 consideration to finding an Italian speaker within the fire
4 department or a translator elsewhere to help assist?

5 A. No, sir. I don't recall asking. I mean I don't know if we
6 have any Italian speaking people in the fire department. I know a
7 little bit. I know enough to get me through a few small things
8 but, no, I don't recall asking for anybody.

9 Q. Okay. And then have you participated in or are you even
10 aware if one has occurred, a post-incident lessons learned? We
11 would call it a hot wash on the Coast Guard side, to discuss how
12 the incident went and what can be learned from it at the fire
13 department?

14 A. We call it a critique. And, yes, we do have that. After
15 that situation, a lot of members were, including myself, were out
16 for about 2 months. The department gave us that time off and then
17 when I did come back to duty, a lot of the members still were not
18 there. So I only spoke really to the battalion chiefs about it,
19 regard it, and I did visit each firehouse where we lost members
20 and spoke to those members.

21 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you, Chief. That's all the
22 questions I have for you.

23 CDR BARGER: We'll now go around to investigation team for
24 any additional questions, and we will start with Lieutenant Reed.

25 LT REED: I have no follow-up questions. Thank you, Chief.

1 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

2 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. Lieutenant Commander Ward.

3 LCDR WARD: Can you hear me?

4 CDR BARGER: Yes.

5 THE WITNESS: Yes, we hear you.

6 LCDR WARD: Okay. Thank you for your time. I don't have any
7 follow-up questions as well.

8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

9 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. And over to NTSB, Mr. Barnum.

10 BY MR. BARNUM:

11 Q. Hey, Chief Carlucci. Bart Barnum, NTSB. You were discussing
12 earlier with Commander Barger about some of the out-of-service
13 equipment that your department had. I think the fireboat, the
14 cascade apparatus, maybe a couple of engines. That level of out-
15 of-service equipment, what was your reaction to that? Was that
16 normal or how did that -- yeah. Was that normal?

17 A. At that time, it was a little normal. We had a few, we had a
18 few pieces of equipment out on a regular basis. We had
19 contingency plans to cover that, and that day those units were all
20 used as manpower.

21 Q. So you weren't concerned with the number of pieces of
22 apparatus being out of service?

23 A. To be quite frank, those apparatus that were there, their
24 functions and aerials would not have helped, and I did have
25 working aerials at the scene in the event we needed them, and all

1 those members were utilized that, you know, during the operation.

2 Q. Okay. All right. So, let's say that, you know, this is a
3 normal day prior to July 5th or prior to the fire. Is there a
4 level at -- an out-of-service level for apparatus that, you know,
5 gets brought to your attention or does raise alarm?

6 A. Any piece of equipment that's out of service is usually
7 brought to my attention on a regular basis. I mean there may be
8 times when something, you know, slips through but we try to keep
9 track of what equipment we have and what's operational.

10 Q. Right. Understood. But, is there a certain number of
11 criteria that you have so many engines being out of service, so
12 many, you know, ladder trucks being out of service. Is there a
13 certain number that really, you know, begins to become an issue
14 for you?

15 A. No. No, there's no individual number.

16 Q. Okay. You were also talking a little bit about Chief
17 Maresca, your interaction with him on scene and his kind of
18 deployment onto the vessel. Can you talk a little bit more about
19 that? It was more of -- was he requested to go onto the vessel or
20 was it he was more curious? It kind of sounded like he was kind
21 of curious.

22 A. No, I did not request him to go up, but he requested to go
23 up. And, you know, due to the unfamiliarity of the ship, I had no
24 problem with him ascending the boat.

25 Q. Did he tell you why he wanted to go on board?

1 A. Yeah, he wanted to see what they had. He wanted to see what
2 it looked like.

3 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Not what the boat looked like. The fire.

4 THE WITNESS: Yeah, he wanted to see -- I'm sorry. What they
5 had and what the fire, you know, what they had up there.

6 BY MR. BARNUM:

7 Q. Okay. And do you recall what level of PPE he had on when he
8 went on board?

9 A. I do not recall that, no.

10 Q. And would you have -- would you expect anybody that went on
11 board to be fully dressed out in full PPE?

12 A. That's our standard operating procedure, yes. You know, full
13 PPE at a full assignment.

14 Q. Okay. So if he wasn't in full PPE, would you say something?

15 A. If I noticed it, yes, I would but I didn't notice it.

16 Q. And then we were talking earlier about the CO2 system on
17 board the vessel. What is your experience with CO2 systems,
18 compression systems?

19 A. It's limited, but I understand the process, and most of mine
20 have been in smaller structures, computer rooms and so and so
21 forth. I really didn't know how the CO2 system worked on a ship
22 of that side and/or its capabilities.

23 Q. All right. And so you are familiar, you know, small scale.
24 Could you kind of explain what's the principle on how a CO2
25 suppression will function in extinguishing the fire?

1 A. It's released into the, into the room. It smothers the fire.
2 It puts the fire out. You wait a few minutes, and then we would
3 open the door and mop it up because the amount of CO2 that goes
4 into a smaller computer room, it's not that, it's not that much.
5 We can get in there and put it out. The best thing to do in a
6 situation like that is just to de-energize the room and the fire
7 goes out.

8 Q. On the night on July 5th, did you have any concerns about
9 sending your firefighters into a space where CO2 had been
10 released?

11 A. No, because I didn't know what floor it was released on. I
12 didn't know how much was released. I left that up to the
13 battalion chiefs when they were up there. I had no visibility of
14 the boat at all from my standing.

15 Q. What kind of PPE would you expect a firefighter to wear while
16 going into a space where CO2 had been deployed?

17 A. Full PPE is definitely something they should have on going
18 into that space.

19 Q. Okay. All right. That's all the question I have for you,
20 Chief Carlucci. Thank you.

21 A. You're welcome.

22 CDR BARGER: All right. And, Chief, before we go over to the
23 parties, I have just two follow-up questions for you.

24 BY CDR BARGER:

25 Q. Earlier you mentioned when we were discussing Chief Jackson

1 and yours and his interaction and him arriving on scene, that his
2 not taking over command of the scene was contrary to -- I believe
3 you said contrary to your standard operating procedure. Could you
4 tell us what that SOP says in a case like that?

5 A. Well, any -- at any incident, the highest ranking officer is
6 to assume command. He came really as support for me that day.

7 Q. Okay. And is that a written SOP that specifies that?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. All right. And then I think that is all the -- oh,
10 I'm sorry. My last question, as the incident commander for the
11 incident, what was your command objectives or command priorities
12 for the incident?

13 A. In the beginning stage, it was just a simple fire, that I set
14 up the command structure outside. I was in charge of the
15 incident. I placed my battalion chiefs in the proper position to
16 do the job that was needed, and I gave them the resources that
17 were needed, whatever else they had, and I set up the
18 accountability. And then my major one was life priority, like
19 it's incident stabilization, proper conservation, and life safety.
20 So I couldn't flood the boat with people. So I was sending them
21 up as needed.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Does that answer your question? I'm sorry. I'm not sure if
24 I answered it.

25 Q. It does. Yes, sir.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. Thank you.

3 CDR BARGER: We will now go to questions from the parties in
4 interest. As we have done with previous witnesses, in order to
5 ensure equitable time and opportunity for each party in interest
6 to ask questions, each party will have approximately 10 minutes
7 for cross-examination within the scope of the direct examination
8 questions asked by the investigation team and relevant to
9 informing the purposes of our investigation. And we will start
10 with the City of Newark.

11 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Commander, may I request that we go last
12 kindly please?

13 CDR BARGER: That is fine. Yes, sir.

14 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Thank you.

15 CDR BARGER: We will go then to Grimaldi Deep Sea.

16 MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Commander.

17 CROSS-EXAMINATION

18 BY MR. O'CONNOR:

19 Q. Good morning, Chief Carlucci. Can you hear me clearly?

20 A. Yes, I can. Good morning to you also.

21 Q. I apologize that I'm not on video, and thank you for working
22 with me here. Earlier I believe you said that you did not
23 personally have any marine firefighting training. Is that right?

24 A. That is correct.

25 Q. And that you initially turned away mutual aid from North

1 Hudson who was a member of the Regional Fireboat Taskforce because
2 at that time you thought that the fire had been knocked down. Do
3 I have that right as well?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you know what, if any, marine firefighting training North
6 Hudson had --

7 LCDR WARD: I think we're having a little bit of technical
8 difficulties.

9 MR. O'CONNOR: Lieutenant Commander Ward, can you hear me
10 correctly because I was, I was having a little trouble hearing the
11 witness as well?

12 LCDR WARD: Yeah, I can hear you fine. I think his video --
13 Deputy Chief, can you hear us?

14 MR. LIPSHUTZ: I can hear you fine.

15 LCDR WARD: Mr. Lipshutz --

16 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Should we --

17 LCDR WARD: Yeah --

18 MR. LIPSHUTZ: -- and try and fix this on their end?

19 LCDR WARD: Yeah, I think, Mr. Lipshutz, can you -- do you
20 see that he's having issues? I guess you can't see either.

21 CDR BARGER: Okay. Yeah, let's take a quick 5 minute recess.
22 The time is now 10:52 a.m. We'll reconvene at 10:56 -- 10:57 a.m.
23 in order to resolve the technology issue.

24 (Off the record at 10:52 a.m.)

25 (On the record at 10:58 a.m.)

1 CDR BARGER: So the time is now 10:58 a.m. and the hearing is
2 now reconvened and back on the record regarding the fire on board
3 the *Grande Costa D'Avorio*. This is a continuation of Chief
4 Calucci's testimony. And again, Chief Carlucci, as a reminder,
5 you're still under oath.

6 THE WITNESS: I understand.

7 CDR BARGER: Prior to the recess, Mr. O'Connor, on behalf of
8 Grimaldi, was in the middle of asking questions. So,
9 Mr. O'Connor, I'll turn it back over to you.

10 MR. O'CONNOR: Yes. Thank you, Commander Barger.

11 BY MR. O'CONNOR:

12 Q. Chief, we had just talked a little bit about the fact that
13 you did not have any prior marine firefighting training. And then
14 we were starting to talk about mutual aid. I believe you had said
15 that you had initially turned away mutual aid from North Hudson
16 who was a member of the Regional Fireboat Taskforce because at
17 that time you thought that the fire had been knocked down. Do I
18 have that right?

19 A. That's correct. All indications from my command staff that
20 were in the boat told me the fires were knocked down.

21 Q. Do you know what, if any, marine firefighting training that
22 North Hudson had?

23 A. I do not.

24 Q. Was Newark also a part of that Regional Fireboat Taskforce?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I believe you said that when the FDNY came to the incident,
2 they were much more knowledgeable and that they taught you a lot
3 in a short period of time. Do you think that marine firefighting
4 training and general awareness of the cargo ship environment
5 before the incident occurred would have helped you and the Newark
6 Fire Division better respond to the incident?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I believe you said that Battalion Chief Kupko had gone up to
9 the top deck around the time that you arrived, and talked to the
10 ship's captain, and that he had radioed back down to you and
11 reported that the fire started on deck 10, the states (ph.) were
12 sealed and CO2 had been released. How did that information affect
13 your strategy for responding to this incident?

14 A. We were already on the scene at that point. So the strategy
15 then changed in my response there. He was in charge of that deck,
16 and he was just relaying me the information. I didn't put anybody
17 into that boat until they were requested.

18 Q. I'm sorry. Did you say until they were requested?

19 A. Yeah, when they asked for additional resources up there, I
20 sent them up. They had people up there that were --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- that the fire was out on the 12th deck. That's all we
23 knew about was those cars that were on fire on the 12th deck and
24 they were out.

25 Q. So to be clear, that request came from other firefighters?

1 A. I'm not understanding that question. What request?

2 Q. The person who requested more resources from you up on the
3 top deck, was that Battalion Chief Kupko?

4 A. Well, yes, he had people operating up there, and once they
5 went to go check the 10th deck, and they found fire, then you have
6 to deploy the rest of the people. So I deployed them at that
7 point but if they needed fresh people, they would call and ask for
8 more resources and I gave it to them. I'm not sure if that
9 answers your question.

10 Q. Yes. I believe you also said that you had limited experience
11 with some knowledge about CO2 systems. And I think you had
12 referenced maybe CO2 being deployed into a small computer room.
13 Is that correct?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you said -- I believe you said that when CO2 is deployed
16 into small computer room, you'd wait a couple minutes and then go
17 into mop it all up. Do I have that right?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Do you know how long it would take CO2 to suppress the fire
20 on a large cargo ship?

21 A. No idea, no. I was sure if it was compartmentalized either.
22 No, I didn't.

23 Q. All right. I believe you said that as the operations were
24 progressing, at some point in time, you learned that the door on
25 deck 12 was open. Do you know why that door was open?

1 A. I found out later.

2 Q. What did you find out later?

3 A. That the --

4 LCDR WARD: Sorry. Just to clarify. Are you -- I'm sorry.
5 This is Lieutenant Commander Ward. As to finding out later, are
6 you referencing after the incident or during the incident?

7 MR. O'CONNOR: I'm referencing -- well, I'm not sure.

8 BY MR. O'CONNOR:

9 Q. What -- when -- Chief Kupko, when you say you found out
10 later, was that during the incident or after the incident?

11 A. I found out both times that they were unable to close the
12 12th deck because I was trying to figure out where the smoke had
13 started to come from. After the smoke began to turn brown, we
14 were trying to get the smoke out of the structure.

15 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Well, was the question why was the door open?
16 Is that what the question was?

17 LCDR WARD: Yeah, and I just also want to caution any
18 questions directed towards information that the Deputy Chief might
19 have learned after the fact, like after the incident occurred
20 through media or anything in that kind of vein. Does that make
21 sense?

22 MR. O'CONNOR: Yeah, I'll rephrase the question.

23 LCDR WARD: Thank you.

24 BY MR. O'CONNOR:

25 Q. Chief Kupko, I believe that you found out that the door was

1 open both during and after the incident. When you found out that
2 the door was open during the incident, did you know why it was
3 open?

4 A. No, I did not.

5 Q. And I believe you said that firefighters tried to close, and
6 they could not. Why couldn't they close the door?

7 A. I guess it was a mechanical issue. I don't know exactly, but
8 I do know that we sent people up to try to close it, to try to
9 cover it, but it was, you know, we couldn't do it. I didn't see
10 the --

11 Q. Do you know whether that was --

12 A. Hum?

13 Q. Understood. You were on the stern ramp the entire time
14 during the incident. Is that correct?

15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. Do you know whether that was the first effort to close the
17 door? In other words, do you know if the ship's crew had
18 previously tried to close the door?

19 A. I do not know that, no.

20 Q. I believe you said that despite language barriers, the ship's
21 crew were able to provide you and the firefighters with escorts to
22 guide you all around the vessel as well as the fire plan. Did the
23 ship's crew also provide hoses to push into deck 10?

24 A. That's what I was informed of, yes.

25 Q. And did they also help the Fire Division use the crane to

1 lower those downed firefighters?

2 A. I'm not sure who operated that crane. I know that we had
3 just attempted to find someone who could operate the crane, and
4 that was handled up there on the 12th deck.

5 Q. Do you believe that the ship's crew were helping the Fire
6 Division to the best of their ability?

7 A. I don't know to the best of their ability because I don't
8 know what their abilities are, but they were helpful with what was
9 asked of them.

10 Q. So they were helpful, right?

11 A. I believe so.

12 Q. When you evacuated the ship, which I believe you said was
13 after Firefighter Brooks was round, what happened to the ship's
14 crew? Did they also evacuate?

15 A. I'm unsure of that, but I did speak to the battalion chief.
16 We verified that they had the crew intact, and I'm not sure if
17 they evacuated the boat or not.

18 Q. Did anybody order the ship's crew to evacuate?

19 A. I did not.

20 Q. Okay. Just one moment when I scan back through my notes.

21 A. I never had contact with the captain of that ship myself
22 personally.

23 Q. Did you ever ask for the captain to be brought down to the
24 stern ramp to meet with you?

25 A. I don't recall asking for the captain. I just kept asking

1 for someone who spoke English.

2 Q. And you were effectively communicating with the captain
3 through Battalion Chief Kupko. Is that right?

4 A. I never had any contact with the captain. Chief Kupko I
5 believe spoke to the captain in the initial portion of the fire.
6 I don't know what other contact was made with the captain.

7 Q. Okay. Thank you, Chief Kupko. I have -- Chief Carlucci. I
8 have no further questions at this time.

9 A. Thank you.

10 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. Ports America.

11 BY MR. ZONGHETTI:

12 Q. Good morning, Chief. My name is Gino Zonghetti. I have a
13 few questions. If for some reason I speak too quickly, just
14 please let me know. We tend to do that on this proceeding with
15 the time limitations. When you arrived at the scene, your
16 understanding was that the fire had been knocked down, correct?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you observed white smoke. Do you know where you saw that
19 smoke come from or can you explain?

20 A. Just as I was arriving and pulling towards the boat, and when
21 I had a chance to look up, I was able to see just a few wisps of
22 white smoke. I guess it depends on the wind direction. I don't
23 know but that's all I saw.

24 Q. Okay. And your understanding I believe if I'm understanding
25 what you said, is that that would be an indication of some level

1 of control or the fire being in its last stages?

2 A. That's correct. Once you put water on the fire, it begins to
3 change color and then goes to a steamy white.

4 Q. Right. That's because the fire is essentially heating up the
5 water, causing that white sort of steam?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Were you ever trained or educated in your years as a fireman
8 and then a leader, in a leadership role, that other things aside
9 from the super heating of water by a fire could cause smoke to be
10 white?

11 A. Yeah, I guess a gas release would be white, but I didn't take
12 notice of that.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And I was concerned that they were telling me that they had
15 the fire out.

16 Q. In terms of the Fireboat Taskforce, I understand your
17 testimony about why it was called off at the time. Do you -- you
18 were in a training role with the Newark Fire Department at some
19 point if I understood your testimony earlier?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did you ever receive from the Fireboat Taskforce or do you
22 ever remember receiving the manual for marine firefighting of the
23 FDNY?

24 A. No, I don't remember ever.

25 Q. And you had no training in marine firefighting. I assume to

1 your knowledge, there was never a course or a manual provided to
2 your firefighters with respect to marine firefighting?

3 A. That's unknown to me. I'm sorry. I don't know.

4 Q. Do you know -- were you aware that the members or some
5 members of the New Jersey Fireboat Taskforce did, in fact, have
6 training with respect to marine firefighting?

7 A. That's unknown to me also.

8 Q. Is it fair to say that when you arrived at the scene of this
9 fire, that the situation that was unfolding that you and your
10 firefighters were to deal with was a unique situation, meaning you
11 had not dealt with a ship fire of this magnitude and you had no
12 training with respect to it?

13 A. It was a unique situation, but the fire was on the top deck,
14 and the water was on the fire and the fire was out. So -- other
15 than the size and the structure of the boat, that was the most
16 unique thing at the time.

17 Q. One question I have that's been a little bit vexing
18 throughout is what is your understanding as to why the
19 firefighters were actually sent into this deck 10 at the time they
20 were sent in? And I believe that was by Chief Maresca.

21 A. Well, again, you have a life priority there. We don't know
22 if there's someone in there or not, and as firemen, our job is to
23 go and make the situation better. You have to -- we have to
24 search regardless and we have to make sure that -- if 4 days after
25 this incident someone was found in there, there'd be different

1 questions to answer.

2 Q. But your understanding at the time was that the CO2 system
3 had already been deployed. Is that correct?

4 A. It was announced.

5 Q. Okay. And what you obtained from your chiefs up on deck 12
6 was that the captain had indicated or someone on the vessel had
7 indicated that all the crew was accounted for. Is that also
8 correct?

9 A. That is correct, but in my 27 years of experience, that's not
10 a valid statement. We still need to make sure that life safety is
11 our priority.

12 Q. I understand that. I understand. You have your training and
13 you've been to many, many fires where people have given you
14 misinformation and what you're doing is trying to save lives.

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. But this is a different situation, and I guess what I'm
17 driving at here is did you ever have any training or were you ever
18 given any protocols whereby when you got the scene of a marine
19 fire, you needed to interact with the captain in order to
20 determine, number 1, what had been done and also whose authority
21 there was to enter a space on a vessel, whether -- was it yours or
22 the captain's?

23 A. No, I did not.

24 Q. So when you have -- and I believe earlier you testified one
25 of the reasons that you did not push to reactivate the CO2 system

1 on the vessel after it had already been deployed once -- there was
2 two reasons. One was you were searching for the two firemen, and
3 you couldn't send your crew in if the CO2 was deployed. The other
4 reason was that there was this open door on deck 12, right?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. But if you couldn't send your guys in with CO2 being
7 deployed, wouldn't that be the same for the situation earlier on
8 when the CO2 had been deployed sending the men in?

9 A. No, that was a different situation. And we didn't know the
10 capabilities of the CO2 system that was deployed. I didn't know
11 if it was compartmentalized, and that was a call made up on the
12 10th deck. I didn't make that call.

13 Q. So one of the things that clearly was going on here was a
14 lack of knowledge about the compartments on the vessel, how the
15 system worked and things of that nature. Is that fair to say?

16 A. That's unknown really. I'm not sure if -- what their actions
17 were on the 10th deck and why they did what they did. They were
18 in there to make the situation better.

19 Q. Sure. Do you know whether there was ever a briefing, like a
20 formal briefing or whatever you want to call it, where the captain
21 came forward to one of the chiefs on deck 10 and said this is what
22 we've done. We don't think anyone should go in there. We need to
23 let the CO2 work. It can work up to 24 to 48 hours on a ship. Do
24 you know whether that ever took place?

25 A. No, that's unknown to me also. I have no knowledge of that.

1 Q. When the FDNY arrived, the marine unit, you indicated that
2 they -- the gentleman in charge, the firefighter in charge, had
3 superior knowledge. I assume that's because of his training and
4 experience. Did you ever learn from him that the ship actually
5 had an emergency plan that they could activate whereby they would
6 get professional salvors firefighters aboard that vessel?

7 A. No, I did not. It's unknown to me. Also I learned about the
8 salvage company at the end of the operation. I had no knowledge
9 of it.

10 Q. Did you learn at any point in time while you were on scene
11 that the protocol for fighting a fire aboard a vessel such as the
12 Grimaldi vessel was to deploy the CO2 and literally let it do its
13 work for up to 48 hours?

14 A. No. I don't think it would have been effective anyway in the
15 long term because the door would never close. And to have an
16 effective CO2 system, everything needs to be sealed.

17 Q. And in addition to that, would it be the case that opening up
18 doors on the decks in order to check the status of the fire or
19 enter while the CO2 was being deployed would undermine the
20 effectiveness of the CO2 system?

21 A. That's -- I'm not clear on that. I'm not sure, but the -- I
22 know the doors, to get into the decks, I was told were only, I
23 don't know, 3 feet by 6 feet, and up on deck 12, you had 24 by 18
24 foot opening. So I mean I don't see -- I really don't -- I don't
25 really know to answer your question.

1 Q. Okay. Fair enough. Just one more. So if I'm understanding
2 correctly to the best of your recollection and reasoning, the
3 reason that the firefighters were sent in to deck 10 was to see if
4 there were any people who were trapped in there or caught in
5 there?

6 A. I don't know what his reasoning was but he did have fire and
7 he went in to put the fire out to make the situation better, and
8 while doing so, you search for people. That's standards.

9 Q. That's all I have. Thank you.

10 A. You're welcome.

11 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. American Maritime Services.

12 BY MR. PALLAY:

13 Q. All right. Good morning, Chief Carlucci. Thank you for your
14 service and testifying today. My name is Matt Pallay from
15 Freehill Hogan and Mahar. I represent AMS in this case. I have a
16 few questions for you today.

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. What is the purpose of the safety officer or safety chief who
19 is on the scene of a fire?

20 A. He's there to -- at a regular house fire, he would go around
21 the back, tell me what the situation is. He makes sure that the
22 aerial is placed correctly, that water service is -- we have
23 enough water. He checks to make sure no aerials are close to
24 wires. And then at that point, he would then -- someone would
25 deploy a few extra ladders for a second means of egress and then I

1 use him on the interior.

2 Q. Okay. So is it fair to say a safety officer's there to
3 ensure I guess logistics of fighting the fire is safe, you know,
4 ladders in the right spot. You're not, like you said, not hitting
5 wires and things like that.

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. Is a safety officer supposed to be actively investigating the
8 location of the fires and fighting fires or is that for other --

9 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Matt, can you repeat your question? We froze.
10 Can you repeat the question? We froze up a little bit. I'm
11 sorry.

12 MR. PALLAY: Okay.

13 BY MR. PALLAY:

14 Q. Is the safety officer supposed to be actively investigating
15 and fighting the fire as opposed to say other teams who will be
16 doing that?

17 A. I'm trying to see if I can understand your says. If he's
18 actively -- can you just repeat it? I'm sorry. One more time.

19 Q. Sure. Is a safety officer, is he supposed to be actively
20 investigating, you know, where a fire is or is he more -- whereas
21 other teams would do that or is he just more or less just supposed
22 to be making sure the logistics of those fighting the fire is that
23 they're safe?

24 A. No, I would use him that way also on the interior of a
25 building. After he did the opening components of his job, I'd

1 send him in and see if he had fire spreading somewhere or someone
2 needs help inside. Then he would become safety officer for the
3 members inside also.

4 Q. Okay. And then how about, you know, would the safety officer
5 also fight fires?

6 A. Not normally, no. I mean he conducts it though. He
7 definitely commands people, puts people in the right position. He
8 doesn't take the hose line himself, no.

9 Q. Okay. You know, the safety on this vessel was Chief Maresca?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. And whereas, you know, him going up and he wanted to explore
12 and investigate on the vessel. Was that beyond that the duties of
13 a safety officer?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. As deputy chief the last 7 years, are you in charge of
16 coordinating and selecting, you know, trainings to be done, you
17 know, for the fire department?

18 A. I am not.

19 Q. And who would that be?

20 A. That comes from headquarters, from the chief of the
21 department.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. The chief of operation.

24 Q. Okay. Were you ever made aware that the ventilation system
25 was turned on, on the vessel, at any time?

1 MR. LIPSHUTZ: You know, Commander and -- this was not really
2 discussed on direct. I suppose -- so I'm going to object. It was
3 not really discussed on direct at all. I'll just leave it at
4 that.

5 LCDR WARD: Yeah. Mr. Lipshutz, thank you. That's correct
6 and you're objection is timely because we just talking about
7 asking that ourselves. So please proceed.

8 MR. PALLAY: Yeah, I was just say my response would be like I
9 don't know if it was forgotten but I would think that that would
10 be something you'd want to ask. So okay. But I'll repeat the
11 question.

12 LCDR WARD: Thank you.

13 BY MR. PALLAY:

14 Q. Chief Carlucci, were you ever made aware that the ventilation
15 system on the vessel being turned on at any time during your
16 operations?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. In your 27 years as a firefighter, would a good
19 firefighting practice introduce a large amount of oxygen into
20 areas where there's active fire but no firefighting activities?

21 A. Yes. And you want me to explain. You vent for two reasons.
22 You vent to find fire and you vent for life safety, and at that
23 point, we had a life safety issue. We were going to do whatever
24 we could to get to these people as quickly as possible.

25 Q. Okay. You'll agree with me that previously you testified

1 that the open door on deck 12, that undermined the CO2 system
2 because air was getting in and CO2 was getting out, correct?

3 A. That's what I was -- that's the way I see it, yes.

4 Q. Okay. So then would you agree with me that introducing a
5 large amount oxygen via the ventilation system would further
6 undermine that CO2 system?

7 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Again, this was just asked, and he answered
8 it, but you can answer it again I suppose. Go ahead.

9 THE WITNESS: We had to -- our main objective here was now to
10 find our members.

11 BY MR. PALLAY:

12 Q. And are you aware --

13 A. And to eliminate the smoke was the best option to try to find
14 them.

15 Q. And did -- turning on the ventilation system, it would
16 eliminate the smoke and make it easier to find your members or did
17 it make the smoke worse?

18 A. My understanding was it began to make conditions a little bit
19 worse. So we had it shut down immediately.

20 Q. Okay. And so -- and to your recollection, how long was the
21 ventilation system turned on for?

22 A. I can't answer that. I don't know that timeframe.

23 Q. A few minutes, a few hours, you know.

24 A. Oh, no, a few minutes. A few minutes.

25 Q. So maybe, you know, more or less than 10 minutes?

1 A. Again, I don't know. I would be guessing.

2 Q. Okay. And were you part of any of the chain of command to
3 make that decision to turn on the ventilation system or was that
4 done by someone else?

5 A. It was brought to my attention. We tried to figure out the
6 best way, and I believe Chief Maresca called to have that -- to
7 have the ventilation system done.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Try to vent the boat, but it was discussed.

10 Q. Okay. You testified earlier about, you know, on a typical
11 day you would go around to check different firehouses and
12 different departments, checking on their equipment.

13 A. That's negative. I don't check their equipment. I just go
14 in, talk to the members. I see if there's any conditions or any
15 problems. I can't make it to every firehouse. We have a lot of
16 firehouses in the City. So I pick a section and I go to that
17 section. That day, I didn't do that because we had inspections.

18 Q. Okay. And as part of that inspection, you were checking
19 equipment?

20 A. I am not checking the equipment. I'm checking the members.
21 We have another service, special services that comes and then they
22 go through the rig along with Chief Jackson. They go through the
23 equipment.

24 Q. Okay. And when I say you, I mean I guess, you know, who
25 you're with, not necessarily you personally. Is that a better

1 characterization?

2 A. Yes. I'm present if that's your question -- if that's the
3 answer you're looking for. I'm present but I'm not physically
4 checking every piece of equipment.

5 Q. And then that equipment is checked by I guess your team, I'll
6 just, for lack of a better term, are they checking SCBAs?

7 A. No, that's done in the morning, when the firefighters arrive.
8 They check their own SCBAs. If it's broken, they take it out of
9 service, and it's immediately replaced with a spare. They check
10 their air bottles. They're in charge of checking their own
11 equipment.

12 Q. Okay. And the SCBAs, do they have I guess like digital
13 receivers or transmitters that transmit their information on those
14 SCBAs?

15 MR. LIPSHUTZ: I mean I don't recall this being part of any
16 prior questions by the investigative team. So respectfully I will
17 object to this topic.

18 LCDR WARD: Mr. Pallay, do you have anything?

19 MR. PALLAY: I was just trying to get into, you know, what
20 his knowledge of certain equipment that was used or not used that
21 day. I was trying to build my way to that.

22 LCDR WARD: Certain equipment being specifically SCBAs?

23 MR. PALLAY: And I guess the pack tracking technology on
24 them, if they existed and whether or not that was used on the day
25 of the fire.

1 LCDR WARD: I think if the question is limited to are you
2 aware of their use in this incident, that's acceptable.

3 MR. PALLAY: Okay.

4 BY MR. PALLAY:

5 Q. All right. So, Chief Carlucci, are you aware of pack
6 trackers being used on the day of the fire to locate Captain
7 Brooks and Captain Acabou?

8 A. No.

9 Q. And did Newark Fire Department have capability of pack
10 trackers?

11 MR. LIPSHUTZ: Again, this is now -- you give an inch and it
12 goes a mile.

13 LCDR WARD: Is the question do you have them?

14 MR. PALLAY: Yes.

15 LCDR WARD: Okay. That's acceptable.

16 THE WITNESS: Yes.

17 BY MR. PALLAY:

18 Q. Okay. And the purpose of -- and just for -- because I'm not
19 a firefighter, what is the purpose of the pack tracker?

20 MR. LIPSHUTZ: The questions are being allowed. So go ahead.

21 LCDR WARD: To your knowledge. To your knowledge.

22 THE WITNESS: Okay. It's utilized to find a pass alarm that
23 is going off or an actual signal that comes from the harness of
24 the SCBA.

25 BY MR. PALLAY:

1 Q. And so would you agree with me that that's -- we were
2 searching for firefighters and a pack tracker could have been used
3 to help search for them?

4 MR. LIPSHUTZ: You know. Again, you want -- I keep objecting
5 but it seems like --

6 LCDR WARD: I would say that the limit of this being relevant
7 to the investigation is that they weren't present that day.
8 Newark possesses them. So please move on.

9 MR. PALLAY: Okay. All right.

10 BY MR. PALLAY:

11 Q. Deputy Carlucci, when you were first advised I believe -- it
12 was Coast Guard Exhibit 17, we can pull it up if you'd like, if
13 not I'm not going to quiz you on the exact wording of things.
14 Would you agree with me that dispatch had advised that North
15 Hudson was available, correct?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And then why would dispatch offer North Hudson to you?

18 A. They may have called our dispatch center. I don't know why
19 they would do that, and at that point, the fires were out.

20 Q. Okay. And then at that point, you told them you didn't need
21 North Hudson, correct?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. How soon after you told them that you didn't need North
24 Hudson had fires increased or there had been more confirmed fires?

25 A. I don't recall.

1 Q. Okay. And after that canceling of North Hudson, what was the
2 next -- was there ever another call or the idea revisited to have
3 them respond?

4 A. No, I don't recall that either.

5 Q. Okay. Just one more question here. You mentioned earlier
6 that tag system to keep track of firefighters going into spaces.
7 Was the tag system set up and implemented before Chief Maresca
8 went into the decks of the cargo vessel or after?

9 A. No, I just had them on a pad because it was only a few
10 members in there.

11 Q. But the tag system itself was not being utilized when Newark
12 Fire Department was entering the space?

13 A. Not the initial stage, no. It was just a few members, a
14 couple companies. So it was easy to keep track of people at that
15 point, and the fires were out on the 12th deck, and we thought it
16 was done. We thought the situation was over.

17 Q. And my last question.

18 A. We were never informed of fires anywhere else on the boat.

19 Q. Okay. To your recollection, was the fire -- at the time you
20 had arrived on the vessel compared to the time you left, was the
21 fire better or worse?

22 A. That was a 12 hour incident. It was definitely worse when we
23 left.

24 Q. All right. Nothing further. Thank you, Chief.

25 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. Port Authority of New York -

1 New Jersey.

2 MR. KIM: We have no questions at this time. Thank you,
3 Deputy Chief.

4 THE WITNESS: You're welcome. Thank you.

5 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you. And the City of Newark.

6 MR. LIPSHUTZ: I appreciate in letting us go last, and I
7 think we don't have anything else to ask at this point. Thank
8 you.

9 CDR BARGER: Okay. Thank you.

10 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

11 BY CDR BARGER:

12 Q. Chief Carlucci, I have just a couple of follow-up questions.
13 Going back to the decision to utilize the ventilation, was that --
14 you mentioned you knew or you were a part of that conversation.
15 Was that your decision to turn it on or was that somebody else's?

16 A. I guess ultimately it would be my decision because I'm in
17 command, but we spoke about it. We were trying to make conditions
18 better. We had already located a fireman. We were still looking
19 for another one. We were just trying to get some of the smoke out
20 to make the rescues quicker and more effective.

21 Q. Okay. Did you ever have any conversation about the use of
22 that ventilation system with the ship's crew?

23 A. I don't recall. I'm not sure who had contact directly with
24 the crew, whether it was Chief Maresca. There was a member
25 standing by me. I mentioned we were going to try to do the

1 ventilation because we have people missing. At that point, they
2 didn't even know we had people missing inside the boat.

3 Q. Okay. Were you ever made aware of any objections from the
4 ship's crew or more appropriately the ship's captain about turning
5 on the ventilation?

6 A. It's unknown. I'm not sure. I don't recall that incident,
7 you know, that situation coming up, you know, whether it was going
8 to be helpful or non-helpful.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Again our priority was to get our men out of there.

11 Q. Okay. And were you aware if at all, was the ventilation
12 system turned on and off more than once?

13 A. I don't recall, but I do know that it was turned on. I was
14 told conditions were not good when -- it was bringing more smoke
15 on them and we shut it off. I don't know. I don't remember if I
16 called to have it shut off or I called up to somebody up there to
17 have it shut off or Maresca, but it was shut off. It was very
18 quickly.

19 Q. Okay. And when you say it was making conditions worse on
20 them, was that for the rescue teams on deck 10? Was that for the
21 teams on deck 12? What does that relate to?

22 A. I believe there was a radio transmission from someone who
23 said that the smoke was getting worse, and then I had someone who
24 came down from the vessel. I had a lot of eye-to-eye contact with
25 people that were working coming down to get new bottles or

1 rehabbing, and saying. So that's when we realized that we had to
2 shut it down. It wasn't helping.

3 Q. Okay. And then with regards to the life safety aspect, you
4 know, you mentioned part of the reason going to deck 10 was to
5 verify if there was anybody still left in the space for life
6 safety. Did any members of the fire department or did you direct
7 doing the same for the other decks of the ship?

8 A. Yes. When members began missing, I would send crews up and
9 have them check each deck. We did that more than one time. I
10 checked the stairwells as we were still looking for Firefighter
11 Brooks in case he was able to evacuate himself. I had them
12 checking the stairwells, checking the decks as they went up.
13 Everything I was getting was that all searches for him were
14 negative.

15 Q. Okay. And that was after the mayday was called, correct?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. What about prior to the mayday being called, when you first
18 started exploring deck 10, were there other firefighters or any
19 objective to exploring let's say decks 6, 7, 8, 9?

20 A. Yes, they did. They told me there was no fire, no conditions
21 on any of those decks.

22 Q. And then my last lines of questions and follow up here. In
23 your previous experience with structure fires, have you worked
24 with UASI in previous responses?

25 A. I have not personally, no.

1 Q. Okay. So you've never been in charge of an incident where
2 UASI has responded.

3 A. Well, Newark's UASI team, yes. Just before, you know, we had
4 a building collapse, like -- and we called our Rescue II company
5 and they came and they did the shoring and cribbing. So not with
6 outside agencies, no, I've never had a job with the outside
7 agencies.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I wouldn't go to those jobs as outside agencies. That is the
10 function of the battalion chief that runs the section of the City.

11 Q. Okay. When the UASI teams did arrive at the incident on July
12 5th, 2023, was your interaction with them as you would expect?

13 A. Yes. They identified themselves. They came to the command
14 post, told me the amount of people they had, and they went over to
15 their section where they were setting up their command structure.
16 I asked them to take -- to keep accountability of their own
17 people, and they did, and that was my most interaction I had until
18 we wound up deploying those units. Then they would come over. We
19 would set up what we were going to do, and we deployed those
20 units.

21 Q. Okay. When those units did deploy -- start deploying onto
22 the ship, would you say that then became a UASI command of the
23 incident or did you feel that you retained command of the
24 incident?

25 A. I remained in command but we worked together.

1 Q. All right. I have no additional questions.

2 CDR BARGER: Do any other members of the investigation team
3 have any last follow-up questions?

4 LT REED: Yes, Commander. I have a couple of follow-up
5 questions.

6 CDR BARGER: Lieutenant Reed.

7 BY LT REED:

8 Q. Okay. Chief, earlier you mentioned that Newark only has four
9 battalion chiefs for any given tour, but they previously had six.

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Were there any specialty divisions shut down to reduce that
12 number to four?

13 A. I don't understand the question. I'm sorry.

14 Q. What -- so they used to have six. Now, they have four. So
15 what positions were merged or gotten rid of to reduce the
16 battalion chief number to four?

17 A. Well, there was -- they would break the City up between --
18 well, they were called Battalion 2 and Battalion 6, and we would
19 split the City in half. So Battalion 2 would take one and
20 Battalion 6 would take the other. He would become the designated
21 safety officer at every fire, and through attrition and through,
22 you know, people just coming and going, being promoted, those
23 spots were never filled.

24 Q. Okay. And, about how long has the City been operating with
25 four chiefs instead of the previous six?

1 A. A long time.

2 Q. A long time.

3 A. Over 5 years I would say.

4 Q. Okay. That's all the questions I have. Thank you, Chief.

5 A. You're welcome.

6 CDR BARGER: Okay. Any other questions from the
7 investigation team?

8 LCDR MOORE: Nothing from me. Thank you.

9 CDR BARGER: Okay. Hearing none other, Chief Carlucci, I
10 want to thank you for your time and your testimony today. You are
11 subject to recall and my sequestration order will remain in place
12 until you're notified by Lieutenant Reed that you're released from
13 these proceedings. The time is now 11:37 a.m. The hearing remain
14 in recess pending scheduling of any additional virtual testimony.

15 Thank you, Chief Carlucci.

16 CHIEF CARLUCCI: Thank you very much, everyone.

17 (Whereupon, at 11:37 a.m., the hearing in the above entitled
18 matter was recessed pending scheduling of additional virtual
19 testimony.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

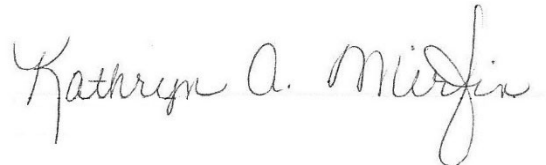
IN THE MATTER OF: FIRE ABOARD *GRANDE COSTA D'AVORIO*
AT BERTH 16 IN THE PORT OF NEWARK
IN NEWARK, NEW JERSEY ON JULY 5, 2023
Interview of Alfonse Carlucci

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA23FM039

PLACE: via Microsoft Teams

DATE: March 13, 2024

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.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber