

Crew list for Polar Prince

Arrival Departure

Name of Vessel Polar Prince	Port of Arrival/Departure	Date 2023-06-23
Nationality of Vessel Canada	Port arrived from:	
	Vessel Phone	Vessel Fax

No	Birth date	Crew Name	Rank	PASS. No / SMDB no	Exp.date	Nationality
1			Captain			Canadian
2			Chief Officer			Canadian
3			2nd Officer			Canadian
4			3rd Officer			Canadian
5			Chief Engineer			Canadian
6			2nd Engineer			Ukrainian
7			3rd Engineer			Canadian
8			3rd Engineer			Canadian
9			Motorman			Canadian
10			Able Seaman			Canadian
11			Able Seaman			Canadian
12			Able Seaman			Canadian
13			Bosun			Canadian
14			Cook			Canadian
15			Night Cook			Canadian
16			Steward			Canadian
17			Steward			Canadian
18			Client			Canadian
19			Client			British
20			Client			American
21			Client			Icelandic
22			Client			Czech
23			Client			American
24			Client			American
25			Client			American
26			Client			American
27			Client			American
28			Client			Canadian
29			Client			American
30			Client			British
31			Client			American
32			Client			American
33			Client			American
34			Client			American
35			Client			American
36			Client			Canadian
37						Canadian
Da			r.			
20						
.....						
Pol						

NAME	██████████
POSITION	MASTER
NATIONALITY	CANADIAN
YEARS AT SEA	25+

PROFILE

██████████ has over 25 years’ experience at sea, with 15+ years in a senior capacity. ██████████ has sailed around the world and spent a considerable amount of time abroad travelling to West Africa, the North Sea, Southeast Asia, Eastern Russia, the Caribbean, and most recently the North Atlantic working with various oil and gas companies. ██████████ has worked with Horizon Maritime since 2018, sailing on various vessels within the company’s fleet. ██████████ is a trusted senior officer who has proven leadership, problem solving and communication skills. He recently acquired his DP Unlimited certification, allowing him to sail as Master throughout Horizon’s fleet worldwide.

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS, KNOWLEDGE AND OTHER ATTRIBUTES

- Master Mariner Certificate of Competency
- Former Canadian Forces Member – Naval Combat Information Operator
- DP Unlimited certification

OFFSHORE WORK HISTORY

POSITION	VESSEL	TYPE	LOCATION	FROM	TO
Master	Polar Prince	Research/Ice Breaker	Canada	Apr 2023	Present
Chief/2 nd Officer	KJ Gardner	PSV	Canada/North Sea	Dec 2022	Mar 2023
Chief/2 nd Officer	Horizon Arctic	AHTS	Canada/North Sea	Jan 2022	May 2022
3 rd /2 nd Officer	Horizon Enabler	MPSV	Worldwide	Sep 2019	Dec 2022
Chief Mate	Spirit of Vancouver Island	Ferry	West Coast Canada / Poland	Nov 2018	Jan 2019
3 rd Officer	Lundstrom Tide	PSV	East Coast Canada	Sep 2018	Oct 2019
3 rd Officer	Horizon Enabler	MPSV	East Coast Canada	Jul 2018	Sep 2018
Master / Chief Officer / 2 nd Officer	Various Secunda / McDermott	Flex Lay / Rigid Lay CSV / DSV / AHTS	Worldwide	Jul 2001	Nov 2017
Naval Combat Information Officer	Canadian Forces	Various	Various	Jan 1997	Apr 2000

CERTIFICATIONS & TRAINING

Master Mariner Certificate of Competency
Marine Medical
DP Unlimited
Transportation of Dangerous Goods
Anchor Handling I
H2S Alive
Offshore Helicopter Survival with EBS
Ship Security Officer
Confined Space Entry and Rescue
Marine Basic First Aid CPR/AED C
Ship Personnel with Designated Security Duties
GMDSS – General Operators Certificate (GOC)
Bridge Resource Management Training
Passenger Safety Management
ECDIS Generic & Vessel Specific
Fall Protection
Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee
STCW – Basic Safety
STCW – Survival Craft & Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats
STCW – Advanced Fire Fighting
WHMIS 2015

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. COAST GUARD



ANSWERS OF CAPT. [REDACTED]

These are my answers to the questions posed by the U.S. Coast Guard to me in writing on 16 October 2023. The answers are provided to the best of my ability with the information available to me at this time. I reserve the right to expand or alter the answers at any time.

Further the answers are provided on the understanding that:

- (1) they are exempt in their entirety from disclosure and not segregable under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7), as records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes and disclosure of any such information could, among other things, reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings and/or cause harm or a reasonable risk of harm to me if made public;
- (2) no part of a report of a marine casualty investigation, including these my answers to the written questions of 16 October 2023, shall be admissible or subject to discovery in any civil or administrative proceeding;
- (3) that by providing these answers neither I nor the Owners/Operators of the “Polar Prince” attorn to the jurisdiction and we are not waiving any and all jurisdictional defenses and remain not subject to U.S. jurisdiction

1. Please provide us with your relevant work history.

Answer: A copy of my CV is attached as Attachment No. 1.

2. Do you hold any professional licenses or certificates?

Answer: Yes, I hold a Master Mariner Certificate

3. What are your responsibilities as a licensed Master of a vessel?

Did those responsibilities extend to the towed TITAN platform and vessel?

Answer: This question is confusing because there were several “vessels” including the Titan.

The Titan was towed on a “launch and recovery platform” or “barge” (the “**Barge**”) on which the Titan submersible was secured. There was no Launch and Recovery System on

board the Polar Prince. **All references to LARS or 'platform' in your questions are understood and deemed to refer to the Barge.**

My obligation was for the safety and security of all persons while on board the Polar Prince, the safe towage of the Barge and hotel of OceanGate personnel on board. The Polar Prince and its crew were not expected to, and did not, participate in any matter related to the Titan, the Barge (aside from towing) or OceanGate's Zodiacs (aside from deployment). The Polar Prince crew did not at any time transfer over to the Barge or Titan and did not assist or get involved in any way in the maintenance, preparation, or operation of the Barge or Titan. Polar Prince crew only assisted in the deployment of OceanGate's Zodiacs using the Polar Prince's cranes and deployment of the Polar Prince's surfer landing to assist OceanGate personnel to embark and disembark from its Zodiacs.

OceanGate was solely responsible for the maintenance, preparation, and operation of the Zodiacs, the Barge and Titan, including transferring personnel to and from the Barge, all aspects of securing and launching the Titan from the Barge, and hooking up the Barge to the towing bridle for towage.

4. Have you ever worked with OceanGate prior to the 2023 expedition?

Answer: No

5. Were you involved in the logistics and trip planning regarding the 2023 expedition?

Answer: I joined the Polar Prince at Mulgrave, NS on 13 April 2023. I was only involved in "logistics" and "trip planning" to the extent those terms refer to the preparation of the Polar Prince to host the OceanGate personnel and tow the Barge. For example: ordering fuel, ensuring sufficient provisions were on board the Polar Prince, ensuring timely departure from Mulgrave, NS so that the Polar Prince arrived at the port of delivery (St. John's, NL) on time, and preparation of a towing plan for the Barge.

6. Did you create a tow plan for the Launch and Recovery System (LARS) platform and TITAN?

Answer: I created a towing plan for the Barge. There was no separate towing plan for the Titan because, as stated above, it was only towed when it was secured on the Barge by OceanGate.

7. Who was involved in creating the plan to tow the platform and TITAN?

Answer: From the time I joined the Polar Prince I started preparing a towing plan for the Barge in contemplation of getting to/from the Titanic site safely. I would have consulted with colleagues from time to time on the scope and level of detail of the plan.

The towing plan was provided by email for comment to [REDACTED] of OceanGate before the Polar Prince left Mulgrave, NS, and a revised towing plan was provided to [REDACTED] about two weeks later. OceanGate had no comments on the towing plan or any other aspects of the towage of the Barge.

The revised Towing Plan was submitted to the Atlantic Pilotage Authority on 25 May 2023 after taking some advice from the local pilots.

8. What was your interaction with the OceanGate crew throughout the towing evolution?

Do you recall who you interacted with? If so, can you please describe what was said during these interactions?

Answer: The term “towing evolution” is not understood. Please refer to my answer to question 7 above.

9. Were the OceanGate employees and guests considered to be passengers on your vessel?

Answer: I understand that all OceanGate personnel on board, including the Mission Specialists were “non-passengers” as that term is understood by Transport Canada.

Nevertheless, the word “passenger” would have been used more colloquially in various documents and/or conversations to refer to anyone who is not the master or a member of the crew of the Polar Prince.

If so, how many passengers is the POLAR PRINCE able to carry under Canadian laws?

Answer: The Polar Prince is permitted to carry 12 passengers (as defined in the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*) unless it holds a valid Passenger Certificate.

10. Were there ever any issues with the towing of the platform and the TITAN? If, yes please explain in detail and how those issues were corrected.

Answer: As stated above, the Titan itself was never towed: Only the Barge was towed. I can recall the following “issues”:

- a) Between Missions 1 and up to Mission 3 the Barge listed to starboard after a period of 12 hours. OceanGate personnel would transfer to the Barge to address the issue via their Zodiacs. The issue was resolved by OceanGate between Missions 3 and 4.
- b) On or about 23 May 2023 (Mission 2), we were 30 miles SW of the Titanic site in deep water (over 3000m) having just turned to head to the Titanic site when the bow of the Barge sank. It was reported that it may have run into a “ghost net”. OceanGate personnel proceeded to the Barge via their Zodiacs. The swells were about 2.5 to 3 meters. We stopped for about 3 hours as OceanGate inspected the Barge and got it back into a towing aspect. OceanGate then instructed us to continue to the Titanic site.
- c) On or about 8 June 2023 the tow rope got caught in the Polar Prince’s port propeller on the way to The Gully (Sable Island). The Barge was still about 100 m. astern of the Polar Prince and was not otherwise affected by the incident. The rope was quickly disentangled.

As to how issues with the Barge or Titan were corrected: None of the Polar Prince crew, equipment or tools were transferred to the Barge or Titan, nor were they involved or assisted in its operation, maintenance or repairs, if any (except in relation to deployment of the surfer landing and launching Zodiacs as previously stated). Accordingly, I cannot say how the Barge’s or Titan’s issues, if any, were addressed.

During towage of the Barge, the Polar Prince crew regularly inspected the towing arrangement (eg for chaffing) and shortening /extending the towing arrangement.

11. When was it discovered that the forward launch and recovery system (LARS) ballast tanks had failed and there was a problem with the tow?

Answer: I cannot say whether the Barge’s forward ballast tanks “failed”. Please refer to my answer above in response to question 10.

11.1 How was the LARS repaired?

Answer: I do not have information to answer this question. Please refer to my answer above in response to question 10.

12. Did the TITAN undergo an inspection following the tow incident?

Answer: This question cannot be answered as asked. I can say we could see OceanGate inspecting and/or working on the Barge and Titan on a regular basis, both at sea and each time we returned to St. John's, NL.

12.1 Was there any damage?

Answer: I am not aware of any damage, if any. OceanGate did not provide any damage reports to me.

13. Had you had any contact with the Horizon Arctic's captain/crew regarding SOP's with respect to dealing with OceanGate from previous expeditions.

Answer: Not particularly, the Titan was launched from the stern deck of the "Horizon Arctic" which was obviously different from towing it on the Barge.

14. Had you had any contact with Transport Canada (regulators) regarding operations and providing a platform for the OceanGate expeditions?

Answer: By "platform" I understand you refer to the Barge. The Barge was "provided" by OceanGate. I am not aware, nor do I recall, any communications with Transport Canada relating to the towage of the Barge prior to 18 June 2023.

14.1 If so, what was the communications.

N/A

15. Are you required to submit a Notice of Arrival and Notice of Departure to Canadian Authorities?

Answer: Yes, to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and MCTS. CBSA notices are handled by customs agents. MCTS is advised of the Polar Prince's departure and arrival.

16. Who was the main point of contact for OceanGate throughout the expedition?

Answer: Stockton Rush (CEO), [REDACTED] (Mission Director / Sub Pilot), [REDACTED] (Mission Director) and [REDACTED] (Communications and Monitoring).

17. Were you or your crew involved in dive plans and preparations?

17.1 If yes, please explain.

17.2 If no, why not?

Answer: Polar Prince and its crew did not participate in any dive planning or preparation because that was OceanGate's sole responsibility and their specialty. The only exception would be that OceanGate had a final checklist after the Titan crew were inside and the dome was closed, in which each of OceanGate's stations were asked to confirm their status through a "go"/"no go" verbal communication, sounding similar to a procedure that would be used to launch a spacecraft. On 18 June 2023, the Polar Prince bridge was asked to confirm "go" or "no go" which meant the Polar Prince (and by extension the Barge from which Titan would launch) was in the location OceanGate requested for the starting of the dive.

18. What was your role as Master of the vessel during TITAN dive operations?

Answer: Standing by on location and regular watchkeeping.

19. What was the role of the POLAR PRINCE crew during TITAN towing and diving operations?

Answer: To reiterate, Titan was not towed and did not do any towing itself. During towage of the Barge (with Titan secured onboard the Barge), the Polar Prince crew regularly inspected the towing arrangement (eg for chaffing) and shortening/extending the towing arrangement.

During Titan diving operations, the Polar Prince stood by on location, normal ship activities and regular watchkeeping.

20. Where did the OceanGate employees have their base of operations onboard the POLAR PRINCE?

Answer: OceanGate personnel had full use of the ship's available accommodation and office space. OceanGate set up its communications and monitoring systems in the chart-room behind the wheelhouse.

21. Where was the Titan/LARS docked or berthed in St. John's?

Was there a boat lift or crane involved, how was it lifted into the water?

Answer: This question is "not applicable". The Barge and Titan had been stored at the Marine Institute's facility in Holyrood, Conception Bay, NL. The Polar Prince steamed to Long Pond where a small boat delivered the Barge (with Titan on board) to the Polar Prince. I did not see the Titan being secured onto the Barge, and to my knowledge none of the Polar Prince crew saw that process either.

Once at St. John's (between Missions), the Barge (with Titan on board) was hipped up to Polar Prince starboard side. OceanGate personnel were seen inspecting and servicing the Barge and Titan, but it was not lifted out of the water.

22. Who was responsible in determining the Go/No go decisions with respect to weather parameters and if the tow or dive operation would take place? Was input provided from you or your vessel crew ahead of each tow and dive operation?

Answer: OceanGate was responsible for determining the Go/No Go decision for Barge and Titan operations, including any dives.

That said, Weather conditions/parameters for diving with Titan were obviously different than for towing the Barge or otherwise transferring to and from the Barge. I would not have departed St. John's or remained at an offshore site if unsafe adverse weather conditions or forecasts would have endangered the tow. At the same time, I cannot recall unsafe adverse weather conditions which affected the towage of the Barge. I do recall that the weather conditions during Mission 3 were such that OceanGate did not attempt any dives.

I reviewed the weather conditions and forecasts with OceanGate regularly (at least daily if not more frequently).

23. Did you ever have to stop work or an operation during the TITAN missions due to unsafe environmental or working conditions?

23.1 Did you have any safety concerns?

23.2 If so, who did you voice these to?

Answer: See Answer to question 22 above.

24. Were you ever on the bridge during dive operations?

Answer: Yes. I was on the bridge when the Titan commenced its dive on 18 June 2023.

25. Were you on the bridge when OceanGate lost communications with TITAN during the accident voyage?

Answer: I cannot be certain as to when OceanGate lost communications with Titan. I was on the bridge when, at approximately 1115, I was advised by OceanGate personnel that as of approximately 1047 there was a loss of communication with the Titan. This was not perceived to be an emergency by OceanGate and that was communicated to me.

OceanGate advised that the protocol was: (a) to wait at least one hour of loss communication before further internal OceanGate resources were activated, and (b) the pilot of the sub is to return to the surface after one hour without communication. I was also told by OceanGate that it was an approximate three-hour ascent back to the surface.

26. Did you or your crew members hear or see anything after communications were lost with the TITAN that could have indicated that the submersible imploded?

Answer: With the benefit of hindsight, I now believe I felt the Polar Prince shudder at around the time communications were reportedly lost, but at the time we thought nothing of it...it was slight.

27. When did you make your initial distress call to the Coast Guard following loss of communications with the TITAN?

Answer: At approximately 1827 local time.

28. Did OceanGate employees determine or in any way try to persuade your actions as Master once communications were lost and at the beginning of the search phase?

Answer: No, I understood OceanGate personnel to be following their Communications and Tracking Protocol. That Protocol, which was developed by OceanGate for the Titan, stipulated that the Mission Director was responsible for tracking the Titan and communications checks every 15 minutes during dives. The Titan was to initiate the first set of communications. In the event of missed communications, the following protocol was developed by OceanGate:

- (1) 15-minute comm. Check missed (note as missed comm.)*
- (2) 30-minute comm. Check missed (note as lost comm.)*
- (3) 45-minute comm. Check missed (note as lost sub) additional 15 minutes will be given for appropriate action to be taken.*
- (4) Internal contacts and backup personnel will be called following 1 hour of no communication plus required surface time from last known or assumed bottom depth of location.*
- (5) Additional 3 hours of local surface search will be done before contacting outside emergency personnel, unless circumstances merit a shorter delay.*
- (6) A grid search pattern will be done by surface vessels as directed by MD.*

At 1520 at a meeting on the bridge I was informed by OceanGate that if the Titan is not on the surface by 1835 they would be declaring a missing sub and I was to call shoreside authorities.

At 1827 following a meeting in my cabin with amongst others OceanGate staff ([REDACTED]), I called the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Halifax by sat-phone but communications with JRCC were shortly thereafter cut-off. When I re-established communications, I was informed by JRCC that the area of the Titanic wreck is under the Search and Rescue jurisdiction of MCC Boston.

29. Did you and OceanGate have a contingency plan in place for emergency recovery of the TITAN for an incident where the submersible became entangled or was otherwise unable to surface?

Answer: Ocean Gate had a Dive Operations Manual and Project Execution Plan which included contingency plans for, amongst other things, the Titan becoming entangled or unable to surface. In the event of entanglement or if the submersible was disabled at depth, OceanGate stated that the Titan had numerous redundancy and safety systems and it had contacts with several deep ROV operators such as Oceaneering and Phoenix International that have ROV's capable of reaching 4,000m.

29.1 If so, can you provide a copy of the written plan/procedures or a summary of your verbal arrangements?

Answer: OceanGate's plans and protocols are confidential pursuant to the Charter Party agreement with OceanGate. This inquiry should be directed to OceanGate.

30. Did you have any interactions with Stockton Rush?

Answer: Yes

30.1 If so, what was your impression of his leadership?

Answer: He was a "visionary" type of leader who sought to inspire his employees and lead by example. He would not let anyone do anything he was not willing to do himself. He appeared organized and meticulous.

31. What was your impression of OceanGate's safety culture or their safety culture?

Answer: They appeared to be very professional, and safety focused. Mr Rush and his team appeared to be careful with respect to the dives and aborted several attempts due to weather or other safety criteria set by OceanGate.

31.1 Did Stockton or anyone else at OceanGate do anything that was unsafe?

Answer: This question is confusing and cannot be answered as asked: What one considers unsafe another may think it is perfectly safe...like driving a motorcycle or bungee jumping. I believed, based on what I was seeing and hearing, that OceanGate did try to take into account the inherent risks of its operations in its planning.

31.2 If so, can you describe any unsafe actions.

32. Are there any other POLAR PRINCE crewmembers that would have information for the MBI?

Answer: This question cannot be answered as asked because it is unknown what information the MBI seeks.