

CONVERSATION RECORD		Time: 1100	Date: 20 Sep 05
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visit <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Incoming <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing		Location of visit/conference: U.S. Coast Guard Station Umpqua River	
Name & title of person(s) contacted Richard Oba, Master of UPV SYDNEY MAE II	Organization (office, dept, etc) Pacific Pioneer Charters, LLC PO Box 1266 Winchester Bay, OR 97467-0813	Telephone #: [REDACTED]	
Subject: UPV SYDNEY MAE II (O.N. 647664) - MARINE CASUALTY ACTIVITY# 2498020 - CAPSIZING WITH LOSS OF LIFE			

Summary:

On September 20, 2005 at 1100, Master of Uninspected passenger Vessel SYDNEY MAE II, Mr. Richard Oba was interviewed at U.S. Coast Guard Station Umpqua River, Winchester Bay by Marine Investigators, LT Eric Allen, LTJG Adam Birst and PS1 Kenneth Reis. Mr. Richard Oba declined to be recorded, but was willing to be interviewed.

Narrative:

1. Departed with passengers, originally for Rock Fish/Salmon, but changed to Tuna.
2. Usually has deck hand.
3. Crossed bar @ 0830 hours (clear) heading on course 290.
4. Arrived fish grounds @ 1200 hours, approx 50 miles out.
5. At 1330-1400 hours, swell began picking-up.
6. 1600 hours heard VHF broadcast that Depoe Bay bar closed.
7. Cell phone call to Station Umpqua River, Umpqua River bar also closed, discussed possibility of bar escorts.
8. Mr. Oba spoke with Jim Shrack (Fish-on Charters) on cell phone between the hours of 1600-1800 regarding bar conditions.
9. Continued communications w/ Sta Umpqua River, and friends.
10. Made continued course corrections based on decision.
11. 2000 hours, arrived at "U" buoy (1.5 miles out) Whistle buoy, seas calm.
12. Small wind ripple. Visibility dark, but clear.
13. Could see range lights, #2 lights and city lights.
14. Mr. Oba spoke with Sully and he advised do not cross.
15. Called Station for permission (ease up on restrictions) COMCEN: No
16. Phone call secured and wave hit.
17. Position was at about the #2 can. North of the South Jetty, stern to seas. Approximately 1/4 mile off South Jetty.
18. Prior to wave hitting, Mr. Oba decided to proceed to Coos Bay. Station Umpqua River notified (watch stander).
19. Wave was estimated 8-12 feet. Swamped cockpit and knocked fly bridge around. Vessel veered South.
20. PAX: 3 on bridge (OBA, PARKER and HARRIS)
21. PAX: 2 In house (STRELOW and TAYLOR).
22. Vessel lay on port side and began to sink rapidly. Fly bridge and bow exposed.
23. Female out of cabin and on the bridge.
24. Mr. Harris and Mr. Parker on bridge.
25. Mr. Oba was wearing inflatable PFD which did not inflate.
26. Mr. Oba lost touch with other PAX as he drifted away from the boat.
27. He pulled line on life raft, but could not make it operate.
28. Boat overturned at 2030 hours.
29. Explosion sound was likely life raft deploying.
30. Mr. Oba states he believes it sets off a flare as he thinks he remembers seeing one.
31. Then he saw blinking light.
32. He then called out and heard voice (PARKER). "Dog paddled" to Mr. Parker to buddy-up. Only Mr. Parker visible, no other passengers.
33. Mr. Oba and Mr. Parker had drifted South of the South Jetty.
34. CG 47 ft. MLB spotted. Pulled Mr. Oba and Mr. Parker from water. Mr. Oba in the water for 30 minutes. Regular clothes and PFD. Water temp estimated to be 53 degrees.
35. Injuries: Back and hip (contusions and bruises).
36. Passenger Virginia Strelow was a comp, took payment from remainder of passengers.
37. When asked if he gave any kind of orientation, Mr. Oba stated with uncertainty that he believes he did. When asked if he gave a safety orientation, again, he showed signs of uncertainty and responded with the same answer.

- 38. Mr. Oba uses NOAA web for current weather conditions. Good conditions going out.
- 39. When asked about vsl conditions, Mr. Oba said vessel was in good condition, new engines. Performs 60-100 charters a year. Conducts maintenance in winter time.
- 40. Mr. Oba is 54 years old and has no health conditions. Wears glasses all his life with a 20-400 un-corrected vision.
- 41. When questioned about life saving equipment, he stated that he had at least 7 approved PFD's with lights located in bench seats. He was wearing a type V, entire trip.
- 42. After hearing that Depoe Bay Bar was closed at approx 1600 he contacted Station Umpqua River on cell phone to get bar report. CG said they may escort in. Go to Coos Bay. After hearing that it was closed he decided to pack gear and head back to port. Throughout the course of the trip he had the auto pilot set and made numerous course corrections.
- 43. Mr. Oba came back hopeful the bar would be open. His intention was to just check the status of the bar. When asked how Coos Bay Bar was to transit, he stated that it was easier to cross, much wider.
- 44. No passengers complained that trip was cut short.
- 45. The master of the UPV FISH ON CHARTERS, Mr. Jim Shrack was in communications with Mr. Oba giving updated bar condition reports. Jim Shrack was gauging bar, told him it was laying down, less than CG reported. Jim Shrack went into station to discuss w/ CG to cancel bar restriction and let the SYDNEY MAE in.
- 46. Mr. Oba's wife was making provisions for passenger transportation from Coos Bay back to Winchester Bay.
- 47. At 30 miles out seas were 3ft. At 20 miles out, calm. Making approx 20 knots. 5 knots at U buoy.
- 48. Radar was used and set at 1/4 range to check waves. Good visibility, no problems.
- 49. Approx 50 yards NW of #2 Buoy, does not believe to be in COLREGS zone/in channel when wave hit vessel.
- 50. Four years experience as licensed Master. Grew up in San Francisco Bay and has life experience fishing.
- 51. Will not go out again.
- 52. Typically obeys stations bar closures.
- 53. When asked how he felt about the bar restrictions he stated, "They always pull this snunt to close! He was very irritated.

Mr. Oba showed signs of fatigue and disorientation. We had him contact wife to pick up.

END OF INTERVIEW

Name of interviewer: LTJG Adam Birst	Signature: 	Date: 27 Sep 05
Name of interviewer: LT Eric Allen	Signature: 	Date: 27 SEPO5
Name of interviewer: PS1 Kenneth Reis	Signature: 	Date: 27 SEPO5