



## National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594  
Office of Marine Safety

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**Date:** 07/06/06 and 8/10/2006

**Place:** Washington, D.C. (phone)

**Person Interviewed:** District Fire Chief John Evans

**Interview Conducted By:** Liam LaRue,  
Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

### INTRODUCTION

District Fire Chief John Evans was interviewed in conjunction with the Marine Board of Investigation concerning the *Massachusetts*. The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. It has been developed from my handwritten notes of the conversation and is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

### INTERVIEW

John Evans is the Fire Chief for District 6. He has held that position since 1991 (15 years). He has been working for the Boston Fire Department for 32 years. He is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Chief Evans stated that he received the report of a fire from Fire Alarm at around 1700 and was dispatched to Connolly Terminal to meet the marine unit. The marine unit *Firefighter* departed from its dock at Burroughs Wharf in the North End of Boston. Chief Evans estimated that it is a 15-20 minute trip from Burroughs Wharf to Connolly Terminal and that the terminal is on the way out to where the fire was. Chief Evans arrived at Connolly Terminal and Engine Company 2 and Ladder Company 19 were there and boarding the Marine Unit. There were no problems boarding – it is an old pier and they had to climb down into the boat so it took 5+ minutes to load up. It took 25+ minutes to get to the fire from Connolly Terminal. Chief Evans described the *Firefighter's* speed as slow.

There was no one on board the *Massachusetts* when they arrived on scene. There were several response assets there including a state police boat, Boston Police boat, Environmental Police boat, and several Coast Guard boats. A Massport fireboat (from Logan International Airport) also arrived on scene. They approached on the *Massachusetts*' port side where there was heavy black smoke coming out of the vents as well as both doors on the stern. The Fire brigade from Long Island was on scene and observing from the Long Island Bridge.

Five fire fighters initially boarded the *Massachusetts* from the marine unit to fight the fire. They used a 2 ½" hose down each engine access aft, with two men on each line. The fifth man was one of the crew from Firefighter who came on board because of his knowledge of boats. They also discharged two 5-gallons bucket of foam down the port engine room access with little effect. The hose on the starboard engine access had a Brezlen nozzle which spreads out the spray. The engine room was filled with water so that it reached about 5 or 6 rungs high on the ladders in the ER accesses (approximately 7-8 feet). The main deck was cherry red and steam was coming out of the carpet. They were unable to put the fire completely out by fighting it through the access ladders.

After about an hour and a half they picked up the Captain of the *Massachusetts* from a police boat so that he could show them a different/better way to access the engine compartment. He indicated there was an access hatch over the engines in the main deck. They removed carpet on the main deck and opened the center hatch. After putting more water down from above they were finally able to extinguish the fire. Worried about stability of the boat with so much water in the engine compartment, they started pumping out using 2 pumps brought by the Coast Guard. They pumped out about 5-6 feet of water. Water was used to cool down hot spots in the engine room and they did not use any CO2 on the turbos. They did not fill the fuel tanks with water. Firefighting took around 4 hours total including re-flash watch.

Chief Evans' office is located at 272 D St. The responding Engine/Ladder Companies (2 & 19) are located at 700 E. 4<sup>th</sup> street. The distance between the two is 10-12 city blocks. It takes 3-4 minutes to get to Connolly Terminal from the District 6 firehouse.

There were 16 people on board *Firefighter* initially. State police brought out 1 additional company. Massport boat brought out 1 additional company. These companies were: Engine 9 and Ladder 21 – not sure which boat brought out which company

They go out on cruise ships each spring to familiarize with boats but no other specific training. Marine unit 1 (Firefighter) and Marine unit 2 (St. Florian) are both kept at Burroughs Wharf. Chief Evans stands a 24-hour watch twice per week.

Chief Evans has not responded to a vessel fire before but has responded on the marine unit for various other emergencies such as fires on outer islands, and rescue operations for people in the water.

There are no written lessons learned that he is aware of as a result of this fire.

**END OF INTERVIEW**

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Liam LaRue