

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

EMPRESS OF THE NORTH  
JUNEAU, ALASKA

Docket No.: DCA-07-MM-015

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Interview of: NICO CORBIJN

Empress of the North  
Auke Bay, Alaska

Wednesday,  
May 16, 2007

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MORGAN TURRELL

## APPEARANCES:

MORGAN TURRELL, Operations Group Chairman  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, D.C.

BARRY STRAUCH, Human Factor Specialist  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, D.C.

CHRIS JULIUS  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Director, Office of Marine Safety

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1           A.    I came out of the -- I was born and raised in Holland.  
2 I'm a Dutch citizen. I'm a legal alien, not alien, legal. Green  
3 card holder. I -- so my -- most of my education was in Holland.  
4 I came out of the Maritime Academy in Holland in 1984, and joined  
5 Holland America Lines as a Fourth Mate and sailed with Holland  
6 America Lines until -- sailed for America Lines until 2002. And I  
7 left the ships as Master. I sailed as Master for about five  
8 years. I went shore side. I was the Director of Environmental  
9 Compliance for Holland America Lines, and then started working for  
10 an independent consulting company out of Washington, D.C., doing  
11 environmental consulting, ISM consulting (ph.), various consulting  
12 jobs, basic maritime consulting. I have a Masters, an Unlimited  
13 -- Masters license and I have a Masters Degree in Organizational  
14 Management.

15           Q.    Where did you get that degree?

16           A.    Phoenix, University of Phoenix.

17           Q.    And what year did you get that degree?

18           A.    Oh, '96.

19           Q.    1996?

20           A.    (No audible response.)

21           Q.    Tell us a little bit about your background as the  
22 Director of Environmental Compliance with Holland America, your  
23 job description there.

24           A.    Part of the Carnival Corporation Compliance Program  
25 basically sharing implementation and fulfillment of the

1 requirements of that program, including all the things, training,  
2 recordkeeping, and that sort of --

3 Q. And how many employees did you have working for you at  
4 that time there?

5 A. In the Compliance Program? We had Onboard Environmental  
6 Officers, and we had more staff, you know.

7 Q. So, 20 people?

8 A. Yeah, roughly.

9 Q. Could you tell us a little bit about Majestic -- tell us  
10 a brief history of it, and describe it -- and where your offices  
11 are --

12 A. Majestic America Lines started operating in January  
13 2006. They came to be from the -- two separate companies from the  
14 America West Steamboat Company and one company, Delta Queen  
15 Steamboat Company.

16 Q. American West Steamboat.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And Delta --

19 A. And Delta Queen Steamboat Company. Basically putting  
20 those two -- combining those two companies and forming one company  
21 under one brand name and one operating mechanism.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. We have offices -- our headquarters are in Seattle. We  
24 have satellite offices in Portland and St. Louis. Our Marine  
25 Operations satellite office, main office, is in Portland.

1 Q. How many total employees?

2 A. We're growing fast. I think it's 600 and something. I  
3 don't actually, can't --

4 Q. In shore side?

5 A. No, no, no, no, total.

6 Q. Total.

7 A. Shore side, I hate to guess -- 150?

8 Q. 150. And does that employment change with the seasons?

9 A. Yes, it does.

10 Q. But maximum 600?

11 A. Currently, yes, give or take.

12 Q. How many vessels --

13 A. We have seven vessels. We currently operate two vessels  
14 in the Mississippi River, and we currently operate two vessels on  
15 the Colombia River.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. We operate one vessel in Alaska. We have one vessel  
18 that is due to come on line in Alaska within the next month. And  
19 we have one vessel that is laid up in New Orleans pending further  
20 renovations.

21 Q. All right.

22 A. Sorry.

23 Q. Oh, that's all right. So, would you tell us about the  
24 -- this particular vessel -- Empress of the North? When it got  
25 started.

1 A. Well --

2 Q. To your knowledge and then take us through --

3 A. Many of the things that I tell you, I obviously have  
4 (inaudible) -- because I've only been with this company for three  
5 months.

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Just, if you can tell us the -- this  
7 -- to your knowledge.

8 MR. CORBIJN: Well, what I know of this vessel is that  
9 it came on line this year, but I was involved in it in February.  
10 This was our first ship that I was involved with coming on line.  
11 We did a major grand overhaul, putting a lot of new features  
12 onboard. Significant grand upgrade, which for us is a major deal.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: February 2007?

14 MR. CORBIJN: Yes. Now, prior --

15 MR. WILHELM: You don't have to comment --

16 BY MR. TURRELL:

17 Q. Tell us a little bit about the overhaul starting in  
18 February. What changes were made?

19 A. It was primarily cosmetic as far as guest services and  
20 related issues, you know, new beds, newer amenities, what do you  
21 call it, fluffy towels, you know, stuff like that.

22 Q. What about the itinerary? Did you overhaul the  
23 itineraries or revamp the itineraries?

24 A. No. For a cruise line you need to know that itineraries  
25 are made about a year and a half in advance in order to get your

1 brochures out. You put them out -- for the itineraries -- you  
2 know, tweaks happen somewhat, but no major overhaul.

3 Q. And take us from February, what -- going through some  
4 things have gone on on the ship since you've been here. Changes  
5 made, issues that may have come up.

6 A. Let me see. One issue that came up was the, obviously,  
7 you have it in your record is on the very first cruise after the  
8 ship came out of lay up, we were visited by the CDC. At this  
9 point we failed the CDC inspection. Consequently, two weeks  
10 later, we hired an internal auditor, no, I'm sorry, external  
11 auditor to do an audit for us regarding CDC's requirement. At  
12 this point we passed.

13 Q. Okay. That's the Center for Disease Control.

14 A. Yeah. Then we had a Norovirus incident two weeks after  
15 that which was handled, according to the Center for Disease  
16 Control, extremely well because it was eradicated from the vessel  
17 within two to three weeks.

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What's the date on the inspection or  
19 the incident that had the audit?

20 MR. CORBIJN: It was --

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: March?

22 MR. CORBIJN: It was the end -- it was the middle of  
23 March.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Middle of March.

25 (Conversations of unidentified males and inaudible.)

1           MR. CORBIJN: And another incident that we had was  
2 the gyro. There was also the -- there was a -- before that, we  
3 had a 26 -- is that right? -- about a generator failure. We have  
4 four generators on board. Only two are required to operate. I'm  
5 a driver. I'm not a machinist.

6           UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

7           MR. CORBIJN: Only two are required to operate the  
8 vessel. So, one is in standby. The fourth generator is, you  
9 know, overhauled, usually. We had one generator failure that  
10 was -- the generator was for the, parts were being, was taken off  
11 the vessel for refurbishment, put back on board later. That was  
12 handled within 10 days. That was put out a 26 92 was issued or  
13 submitted. And then they had a gyro failure as explained by the  
14 Captain.

15           BY MR. TURRELL:

16           Q. And did either of those instance jeopardize passenger  
17 safety --

18           A. No, we wouldn't have sailed it.

19           Q. In normal operational problems that were taken care of?

20           A. It's an older aged vessel. Things break down.

21           UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You guys in your meeting already?  
22 Oh, ok. As soon as you have time, can you let me know?

23           MR. TURRELL: Sure.

24           BY MR. TERRELL:

25           Q. Tell us a little bit about your competitors --

1 A. I know very little about them.

2 Q. Is there anyone operating similarly, to your knowledge?

3 A. Well, it depends on what you call competitors.

4 Obviously, we're not competing with the big ones.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So those, we don't necessarily see as our competitors.

7 Q. Sure.

8 A. It's Lynn Lines (ph.) and Cruise West that would be  
9 considered our competitors.

10 Q. Do you know roughly how much twenty vessels (inaudible)?

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We don't have twenty vessels.

12 BY MR. TURRELL:

13 Q. You mentioned yesterday that somebody was going to call  
14 someone and put in place some safety features, safety measures you  
15 had planned earlier this month. Do you want to talk a little bit  
16 about that?

17 A. Sure. We hired effective May 1st, and the reason it was  
18 May 1st, he already had an agreement that he would start to work  
19 for us --

20 Q. All right.

21 A. -- in end of March, but he wasn't available earlier. A  
22 new Director of Marine Compliance. He used to work for Cruise  
23 West. He's a Captain and has a lot of knowledge with safety  
24 management issues -- safety, I should say. And that was part of  
25 our attempt, or our desire, to make the safety management system

1 that is currently in place better.

2 Q. And what was the -- your reason to -- who had identified  
3 reasons why you wanted to make (inaudible) much better. What are  
4 the problems you identified that led you to make this hiring?

5 A. Well, it wasn't necessarily that the safety management  
6 system wasn't sufficient, but we wanted to roll it out. We will  
7 roll it out for the entire fleet. Currently this vessel is our  
8 only (inaudible) vessel. All the other vessels doesn't go forward  
9 and definitely don't have any ISM or towing requirements. And  
10 what we feel it's important that our safety management system,  
11 similar to what it is here, is rolled out for all the ships.

12 Q. Okay. And what were some of the challenges that you  
13 were facing for, or up to now, that -- estimates, can you  
14 characterize why you felt it needed to be improved? It was in  
15 place before.

16 A. Yeah. No, not specifically. I just felt it was  
17 important that we had -- that our Marine Compliance was enhanced.

18 Q. Can you describe just in brief how your system works?  
19 Your safety management system --, how -- parts --

20 MR. CORBIJN: Oh, it's pretty standard -- your main  
21 components in corporate structure or training -- there are a lot  
22 of responsibilities, basic stuff.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well the -- information, are they  
24 drafted in a -- manual?

25 MR. CORBIJN: This job, my goal is to make -- document

1 and that there will be a manual, or a values manual, a values,  
2 corporate values.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, -- paraphrase the company's  
4 safety environmental --

5 MR. CORBIJN: No, I cannot.

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you -- who's the external  
8 auditing agency?

9 MR. CORBIJN: That would be ADS (ph.).

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And do you know what's the name of  
11 the Master?

12 MR. CORBIJN: It was Danny Burns (ph.) and it will be  
13 Chris Zolkle.

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How do you spell that?

15 MR. CORBIJN: Z-o-l-k-l-e.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you describe your relationship  
17 with Captain Orgain (ph.), since you've been here. Any issues or  
18 problems that you experienced with Captain Orgains --

19 MR. CORBIJN: No. Captain Orgains is the Captain that  
20 we use frequently to help us plan future itineraries. He helped  
21 us plan the 2008 itinerary, in Alaska, as well as in the Colombian  
22 Snake River. That's as far as I know. He was instrumental in  
23 bringing this ship to operational status.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Up to this point, was there any  
25 future plans for Captain Orgains, as far as what his -- going to

1 be -- what's the goal right now before the accident -- his goal --

2 MR. CORBIJN: Captain --

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is there a relief captain assigned  
4 to the Senior Captain?

5 MR. CORBIJN: I, you know, they share Captain -- who is  
6 senior between them, Rob, and I think Dale is a Senior --, but Rob  
7 is just as qualified as Dale is.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Tell me a little bit about your  
9 human resources and your hiring of Deck Officers. What procedures  
10 are in place for personnel to handle the hiring of particularly  
11 Deck Officers -- you know, things like staff that's hire --

12 MR. CORBIJN: Right. We have one Director of HR in our  
13 Seattle Office. And then we have individual recruiters on the --  
14 in the satellite offices who go out to the fairs and try to  
15 attract people, deck engine and the hotel, to work for us.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How many recruiters are there?

17 MR. CORBIJN: I think it's four, although, don't hold me  
18 to that.

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And there's one human resource  
20 person who goes recruiting --

21 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah, I mean there's, well, there's a  
22 structure there between the recruiters and the HR person.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And these recruiters are familiar  
24 with the -- requirements of what the Deck Officer's requirements  
25 are?

1 MR. CORBIJN: I would assume so. I wouldn't know that,  
2 but --

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Typically, what would you expect  
4 someone to look for in a new Deck Officer as far as --  
5 qualifications?

6 MR. CORBIJN: Well, I guess -- We have various vessels  
7 that require various -- of licenses -- license -- or the Delta  
8 Queen, or the Queen of the West, which are smaller boats are  
9 different than the license for this vessel -- you see a -- on the  
10 Delta Queen which is a steamboat requires an engineer with a steam  
11 license. So --

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And who evaluates the resumes and --  
13 before just ask that person to --

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Again, I --

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: No, no, no -- in particular.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is that out of Seattle or is that  
17 out of the satellite offices?

18 MR. CORBIJN: Satellite offices. But then again, when  
19 you get to the higher ups, you hire a -- Engineer or hire a new --

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Senior Officer are reviewed by  
21 Senior staff.

22 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you have a -- of -- how does your  
24 operational staff -- Port Captain, Port Engineer --

25 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah. We are currently in the process of

1 restructuring the Marine Operations Department. Again, as I said,  
2 I've only been three for three months. So, now it becomes time to  
3 redefine the roles and responsibilities a little bit -- the Vice  
4 President of Marine Operations. He will become the Vice President  
5 of Technical Operations. We have a person -- who will become the  
6 Director of Nautical Operations and Foreign Operations. And we  
7 have a person in Portland who is the Director of Nautical and  
8 Foreign -- We have a technical superintendent in Portland. We  
9 have a Technical Superintendent, or will have, a Technical  
10 Superintendent in St. Louis. We have, let's see, a Director of  
11 Marine Compliance in Seattle. And there will be more to come.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. And do all these folks have  
13 the authority to make decisions regarding the vessels? Are they  
14 given the authority to make on the spot decision regarding safety?

15 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah. Absolutely. We have -- the  
16 company's corporate culture is safety first at any time. And this  
17 is a message that we brought to the vessels, each of the vessels  
18 before they came into service. This year, senior management,  
19 meaning the company's president, went onboard to present a video  
20 which explained safety as being our core value, which explained --  
21 and then we explained by means of a discussion, again, the desire  
22 to operate -- And any memo that was sent out regarding this,  
23 again, safety has been our first and foremost --

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You meant the memo -- from  
25 corporate -- communicated to the crews, the Deck Officers,

1 particularly.

2 MR. CORBIJN: By and large, we are communicating either  
3 directly to the Captains via email or by telephone, or we are  
4 communicating to the satellite offices for distribution. And  
5 that's -- are you asking where in our safety management system we  
6 needed -- I felt the need, or a need to make it better. That was  
7 the only reason, to define and -- or distribution of information.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: If a crew member or employee has a  
9 problem or safety issue, who do they bring that issue to? Let's  
10 say onboard the ship first and then the shore second.

11 MR. CORBIJN: Well, the -- would be the person.  
12 However, that's only for the --

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Would they bring it up to the  
14 Captain or would they go directly to you?

15 MR. CORBIJN: -- person -- Captain first.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How are those issues and complaints  
17 processed and sent on to senior management? How are those issues  
18 communicated?

19 MR. CORBIJN: --

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you recall the last audit,  
21 internal audit --

22 MR. CORBIJN: I don't know.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you know when the next one is  
24 scheduled?

25 MR. CORBIJN: --

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, the ABS is scheduled to do those  
2 audits?

3 MR. CORBIJN: Yes.

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And they do, like annual they come  
5 out --

6 MR. CORBIJN: ABS is the regular -- audit.

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Have you at any time sat down with  
8 ABS --

9 MR. CORBIJN: No, I don't.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you know of any non-conformity in  
11 the company -- and anywhere on board this vessel?

12 MR. CORBIJN: No, I do not.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How is non-conformity kept track of?

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- ABS --

16 MR. CORBIJN: Correct.

17 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. We want to talk a little bit  
18 about the -- we talked a little bit this morning with the -- Mate  
19 about the prior events.

20 MR. CORBIJN: Um-hum.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I'd like to just talk about the  
22 prior incidents involving this vessel.

23 MR. CORBIJN: Surely. Do you want me to talk about --

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah.

25 MR. CORBIJN: Okay. As far as I made aware of, there

1 were five previous incidents. The first incident was when the  
2 vessel was launched by the shipyard and consequently ran aground  
3 after the launch. This was under the -- again, the ship wasn't  
4 part of Majestic America.

5 The second incident was when the vessel was transiting  
6 some of the locks in the Snake River and was given the go ahead to  
7 depart from the lock and consequently struck an under water lock  
8 door which has -- which -- up. It's the Army Corps of Engineers  
9 responsibility for the incident and to pay all the damages.

10 The third incident was the ship went, made a hard turn,  
11 a hard left turn and then aground. I am not sure, again, this  
12 wasn't -- I don't know what happened. I haven't read a report  
13 about it. So, I won't speculate on the reason why, what happened.

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Where?

15 MR. CORBIJN: I have no idea because I -- Colombia --

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

17 MR. CORBIJN: The fourth incident happened last year and  
18 this was when the vessel was in the Majestic America Lines  
19 operation.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And you're telling us now was the  
21 first incident of the Majestic --

22 MR. CORBIJN: Correct. And this time the vessel took  
23 avoidance action and strayed out of the channel because of a barge  
24 and -- that had lost control of the barge. In order to avoid a  
25 worse situation, they went outside of the buoy markers and struck

1 ground.

2 We have a civil action, civil lawsuit against the barge  
3 for repair and financial repayment.

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And this -- still under  
5 investigation by the Coast Guard?

6 MR. CORBIJN: The Coast Guard and -- has reported this  
7 investigation not yet closed. They also have told us that they're  
8 three years behind. So --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Are there any other incidents  
10 involving Majestic vessels other than Empress of the North?

11 MR. CORBIJN: Not since I've been here.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you know of any before you came  
13 here? If you don't know, don't --

14 (Pause.)

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Tell us a little bit about how you  
16 learned about the accident and tell us your role and how you were  
17 notified --

18 MR. CORBIJN: I was in Orlando, Disney World, on  
19 vacation and I got a phone call at 6:00 in the morning, 6:15, and  
20 that's Eastern time. I got on the plane at 8:30, and I was in  
21 Seattle at noon. And I was in the Seattle Command Center. Sorry,  
22 after I got the call at 6:15 I notified David -- our company  
23 president. And I contacted our independent consultant to provide  
24 support in the Control Center in Seattle. And then I hopped on the  
25 plane.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

2 MR. CORBIJN: I arrived in Seattle and went straight in  
3 to the Control Center in Seattle until -- and then got on a  
4 plane --

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- any questions?

6 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: -- What was the --

7 MR. CORBIJN: You can find that in the CDC website.  
8 It's public information.

9 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: And how -- is the Deck Officer  
10 --lot of -- for Deck Officers once people --

11 MR. CORBIJN: It's a little better now at the Academy.  
12 They're starting to send out their new cadets -- so, for, it's  
13 a tight job market.

14 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: And about how many applicants  
15 have you had for --

16 MR. CORBIJN: I don't have the --

17 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Okay. Thank you.

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- tight job market means there  
20 aren't as many people available to --

21 MR. CORBIJN: No. There are -- we don't have an  
22 abundance and a backlog of people that we can pick from. We can  
23 fill the spots, but it's not like we have, we can pick and choose,  
24 or we have a, like a roster or, you know, -- of the people that we  
25 can pull out for, you know, for spots to fill.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And how has this affected the  
2 standards, backgrounds of the people that you're hiring in the job  
3 market --

4 MR. CORBIJN: It has not

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- job market?

6 MR. CORBIJN: It has not. You hire people who  
7 are licensed.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. How many Deck Officers have  
9 you hired since you took over --

10 MR. CORBIJN: I don't know.

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Are you involved in the hiring of  
12 Deck Officers?

13 MR. CORBIJN: No.

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you walk me through the process  
15 of when a Deck Officer hired -- local recruiter and satellite  
16 office hires them --

17 MR. CORBIJN: If you want the specific details, you need  
18 to talk to our HR Department.

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. Is there anybody in your  
20 department involved in the selection at all --

21 MR. CORBIJN: Again, Randy Burns would be the person who  
22 probably knows more about the actual review and/or looking at, you  
23 know, applicants.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Randy Burns is your subordinate?

25 MR. CORBIJN: He is.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And where is his office?

2 MR. CORBIJN: It's in Portland.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And your office is in?

4 MR. CORBIJN: Seattle.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And how does that work?

6 MR. CORBIJN: How does it work? The ships all -- out of  
7 Portland and it, of course, it makes no sense to have a satellite  
8 office in Portland as long as we do have a satellite office in St.  
9 Louis, so we can better support the ships.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How often do you talk to him?

11 MR. CORBIJN: Daily. More than daily.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Who's involved in the, who's  
13 responsible for updating the training program for new hires such  
14 as Deck Officers?

15 MR. CORBIJN: Let me see. There is the -- Program that  
16 currently is done by the Masters or by the ship staff. We have  
17 identified the need to redefine this program and we put out a memo  
18 about three weeks ago that announced to the entire company that a  
19 training program was going to be released, an all encompassing  
20 training program was going to be released this month.

21 So, again, when you ask me whether we felt that the --  
22 manual further upgrades, training, as far as standardizing,  
23 formalizing, that was one of the issues, too.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And -- already asked you what about  
25 the upgrades.

1           MR. CORBIJN: And as we are talking about this, those  
2 are the things that I'm bringing up.

3           UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And this is one of the issues --  
4 areas --

5           MR. CORBIJN: Right. Just formalize it and standardize  
6 it, not necessarily compare, I mean, -- formalize it and --

7           UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, when the new upgraded SMS  
8 program takes effect, describe how a brand new Deck Officer right  
9 out of the, right out one of the academies will be trained --

10          MR. CORBIJN: Well, for starters, one thing that we will  
11 implement fairly soon is a matrix that defines the amount of  
12 overlap a person needs before he actually can stand a solo watch.  
13 Such a matrix would include, you know, new vessels, new positions,  
14 and it would include, also, the position of the person. So, for  
15 instance, if you have a Third Mate -- vessel maybe two weeks out  
16 of, you know, this is something we need to define, but to give you  
17 an idea, maybe two weeks of overlap.

18           If you have a Third Mate who is not new to the company,  
19 maybe a week of overlap. And these are just examples. So, don't  
20 hold me to those. It might be four weeks. We have yet to further  
21 define that depending on the current operating procedures that are  
22 in place, although they -- formalize --

23          UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, under the new system, would it  
24 be possible for a brand new Third Officer to take a watch the  
25 first time in 28 hours --

1 MR. CORBIJN: No.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- vessel --

3 MR. CORBIJN: --

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What would be the minimum amount of  
5 time for overlap say that would take place before he could take a  
6 watch unsupervised?

7 MR. CORBIJN: As I told you, I will have -- we will go  
8 back to -- and ask them what their current operating procedures  
9 are with that, and then we could formalize that. We could see if  
10 those are sufficient for our -- we feel that they are sufficient  
11 or not and we can then have a -- so, it's dependence on what the  
12 current operating procedures are --

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There was some discussion yesterday  
14 of the differences between the Alaska and -- What do you see as  
15 the challenges operating in Alaska's waterways that someone  
16 joining the company should be aware of -- Alaska?

17 MR. CORBIJN: You know, I never sailed on the river. I  
18 always sailed on deep water ships. And Alaska, deep water ships,  
19 it's a big deal, you know. But then again, this ship is 900 feet.  
20 So, it's a little bit bigger than -- about three times the width  
21 of the -- So, since I never sailed on the river, I really don't  
22 know how to compare the two. I can wholly understand from their  
23 perspective that Alaska must seem like this wide open body of  
24 water compared to -- only -- sailing on the river.

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You operated -- Holland America for

1 years in the Alaskan waterways.

2 MR. CORBIJN: Yes, I did.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, if you had to take somebody  
4 brand new to the vessel and they were to ask you, you know,  
5 somebody -- Alaskan waterways, what do I need to know? What would  
6 you tell them?

7 MR. CORBIJN: If I would talk to a green kid out of  
8 college never been sailed to Alaska? I would -- I find that a  
9 difficult question because, you know, I never operated on a vessel  
10 like this. The only time I operated in Alaska was in the -- So,  
11 you know -- would you tell him anything different in Alaska than  
12 in the river? No --, because the only thing you would tell them  
13 is, whatever you do operate the vessel in a safe and -- on the  
14 river, no --

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Now, the other thing we look at in  
16 the investigation is when you have two people working together and  
17 one is senior to another, but the junior person has far more  
18 experience than the person who is -- superior, that may create  
19 difficulties and -- So, when you have a situation like that,  
20 where you have a brand new, you know, Third Mate working with an  
21 experienced -- you know, capable of --, how would you see that, or  
22 how would you see them working together -- accident -- the  
23 experience -- authority --

24 MR. CORBIJN: Well, I've been in this situation. I can  
25 only talk out of experience, if I may. I've been in a situation

1 like that where I was a Captain of a vessel and I was -- I had  
2 sailed with a -- Captain who at one point was my mentor. So, he  
3 now was reporting to me. From my experience, you grab the bull by  
4 the horn and say, listen, I know this is awkward both for you and  
5 for me, but we need to make the best of it and -- you know, -- job  
6 together. So, that would be my approach. Now, how somebody else  
7 would do it, I can't speak for anybody else.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- of -- who -- interviews the  
9 whole -- was on the bridge at the time of the accident.

10 MR. CORBIJN: The Officer of the Watch ultimately would  
11 be responsible for the watch. That's why he's the Officer of the  
12 Watch.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And the Helmsman.

14 MR. CORBIJN: Well, the Helmsman has no  
15 responsibilities. He's -- navigational watch as far as --

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What kind of guidance -- you give --

17 MR. CORBIJN: What kind of guidance?

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.

19 MR. CORBIJN: Well, the Helmsman is part of the  
20 navigational watch -- in charge of it. So, -- management is that  
21 he shares what he knows about the vessel with the Officer of the  
22 Watch.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: All right.

24 MR. CORBIJN: And advises where necessary because he has  
25 the operational experience.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, one thing that was kind of  
2 interesting that we heard yesterday, the Helmsman -- that he  
3 steers vessel according to your -- But what would you discuss,  
4 particularly an experienced Helmsman who takes the vessel. Let's  
5 say he hasn't heard any order yet -- evacuation order.

6 MR. CORBIJN: I think that's the ten million dollar  
7 question, isn't it. Yeah, I mean, no matter how you ask that  
8 question, you know, always going to be a lose/lose situation no  
9 matter how you answer that question.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you answer it for me?

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What's the question again now?

12 MR. CORBIJN: Should the Helmsman override the Officer  
13 of the Watch? Is that what you're asking me?

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- the vessel -- orders from the  
15 Third Mate.

16 MR. CORBIJN: I know what my answer would be, but I  
17 don't know if that's -- bears on any relevancy. It's just my  
18 personal opinion.

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- operating at that time --

20 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah -- I think the opinion before  
21 actions are taken is the thing that needs to be dialogued as far  
22 as addressing it if things are going wrong, I think we should do  
23 something. Maybe we should do something. How about doing this?  
24 And I would hope that the Officer of the Watch not making a  
25 decision is also a decision. Right? So then, if he can explain

1 the reasons why he didn't want to change course, fine -- good one.  
2 If the guy on the Titanic would not have changed course and hadn't  
3 hit an iceberg straight on, there would have been no loss of life.  
4 He could -- the only thing that would have been crumpled would  
5 have been the forward bulkhead, and the -- Maybe the Officer of  
6 the Watch feels that the best thing to do, and he knows there's no  
7 way you can avoid any -- or an object, -- hitting it head on is  
8 just the best thing to do. So, again, it's -- all questions. If  
9 you have a person who is not -- doesn't have the theoretical  
10 background, do you allow him to make a decision and override the  
11 Officer of the Watch who may --

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- bridge -- where do you see the  
13 Captain --? Where do you see the Captain in that bridge team?

14 MR. CORBIJN: Well, the Captain, when he's on the  
15 bridge, he's part of the bridge team -- but not always. When the  
16 Captain announces that he's on the bridge and wants to be part of  
17 the bridge team, he's part of the bridge team. Just the fact that  
18 he walks on the bridge doesn't make him part of the bridge team.  
19 Does that answer your question?

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes. Yes.

21 MR. CORBIJN: It's not a black and white answer. It is  
22 an answer that has -- of many, many what ifs and buts and this and  
23 that. The safety of the vessel should be prime at all times.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: But the reality of it is, -- vessel  
25 on the -- and -- As a result of this accident that resulted --

1 yesterday and -- of your own --, what changes will you make in the  
2 way -- operating --

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

4 MR. CORBIJN: Well, -- the investigation is still  
5 pending. Obviously, we don't have all the facts yet. We still  
6 have to listen to the EDR. So, I'm going not comment until I  
7 listen to the EDR and have more facts available to me. It's very  
8 early on within this investigation --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- I explained -- asked the Captain  
11 what he sees, what do you see as the Captain's role onboard the  
12 ship -- navigational division.

13 MR. CORBIJN: One of the things that I did starting with  
14 this company is visit all the vessels and visit with first with  
15 the Captain. One of the things that I did with them, talk to them  
16 about is empower them into telling them you are in charge. This  
17 is your vessel. You are the company representative aboard ship.  
18 You will make the decisions. Sailing the vessel safely.  
19 Obviously, cost effectively, and, you know, the -- Those are our  
20 three main, you know, main issues, safety, obviously,  
21 environmentally in compliance, compliant with all the rules and  
22 regulations, but also in a cost effective manner because we like  
23 to make -- and we have our own responsibilities toward the  
24 stockholders or shareholders. But, also, part of being a Captain  
25 means that you are part of a management team. So, you have people

1 that work for you and you can make a decision together with them.  
2 However, it's not a democracy. You can ask people what they  
3 think, but ultimately, you're the person who is in charge of the  
4 decision-making process.

5 As far as the navigational watch, the Master -- I highly  
6 value the Chief Mate as a person who is responsible for the Deck  
7 Officers and has a large responsibility in making sure that the  
8 navigational watches -- the way it's supposed to be -- I see the  
9 Master above that. The Master is not necessarily any  
10 different --, but as you look in a hierarchy, the -- of hierarchy,  
11 the Chief -- Mate is definitely there.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you -- is there any pressure put  
13 on the Captain for itinerary arrivals and departures. Is there  
14 any pressure, in your opinion, put on the Captain to make certain  
15 arrival times or departure times? -- consideration --

16 MR. CORBIJN: We are -- the itineraries with the help of  
17 a Captain. The Captains inform us whether or not to make an  
18 itinerary. And they, I know they can keep a significant amount of  
19 -- spare just to make sure that they can operate the vessel within  
20 those parameters.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you know what kind of typical  
22 duties the Captain aboard this vessel, to your knowledge, what,  
23 some of what -- he has to deal with?

24 MR. CORBIJN: Well, you have your Master in charge of  
25 the vessel -- not only navigation but also engineering, and also

1 hotel. And since he is a supervisor, I expect him to make routine  
2 daily rounds, walk around the vessel, observe. Report to the  
3 various department heads thing that are not -- they're out of  
4 whack and tell them to fix it, or repair it, you know. Vacuum  
5 this lounge more often or wipe off some of the oil that's on deck  
6 or something -- You know, I'm just giving random examples. But  
7 also I expect him to walk on the bridge with -- and observe how  
8 his Officer of the Watch are standing there watch.

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- point. In your experience as a  
10 Captain of Holland America, can you tell us a little bit about  
11 when a new Third Officer comes onboard. I realize it's a much  
12 different operation, different ship, but tell us Holland America  
13 deals with brand new Third Mates that -- into the ship.

14 MR. CORBIJN: Well, for starters, in Holland America,  
15 you have three Second Mates. You've got three Third Mates. You  
16 got two -- So, if you hire a green guy just out of school, he's a  
17 Fourth Mate, and he will be as an assistant Watch Officer for a  
18 significant chunk of time, probably three, four, five years.  
19 That's because of the complement of the vessel. So, if you hire,  
20 let's say, compare, if you hiring a guy who's going to stand the  
21 navigation watch, Second Mate, if I'm not mistaken, they'll -- for  
22 two weeks, two weeks time table, new with the company, new aboard.  
23 I think it's two weeks handover period.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And what type of training would that  
25 person receive in addition to the -- and -- is there some

1 training?

2 MR. CORBIJN: Again, this is what Holland America has.  
3 They have a personal -- system which is something that you ask me  
4 what are the things that needed to be in the training manual.  
5 That's one of the things that will be in the training manner.

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And that was --

7 MR. CORBIJN: And that was one of the things that was  
8 going to be implemented as part of the new training program that  
9 we were going to announce this month.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

11 MR. CORBIJN: --

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Questions?

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah, I just want to clarify --  
14 handled -- vessel for all the Deck Officers --

15 MR. CORBIJN: No, it depends on the grade.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

17 MR. CORBIJN: If you are a Master, for instance, you're  
18 a brand new Master, brand new to the company, I think it's a  
19 month.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

21 MR. CORBIJN: One month.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh. If you are -- Engineer, for  
23 instance, and you're brand new to the company, you're brand new to  
24 the vessel, obviously, it's a month. It depends on your rank and  
25 whether you're new to the company or just new to the ship. So, we

1 will put in place a similar type of matrix, not necessarily using  
2 those timeframes, but something that looks like that.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The two companies have merged, do  
4 you know how long each have been in business?

5 MR. CORBIJN: No, I think -- I don't know --

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And how long has been -- in place  
7 when -- came onboard?

8 MR. CORBIJN: Not, too -- Majestic America Lines started  
9 operating in America -- company in January of 2006. At that time  
10 Delaware North was operating Delta Queen. Delta Queen Steamboat  
11 Company was in foreclosure. It was taken over by Delaware North.  
12 And I think -- also had something to do with that, but, you know,  
13 you need to talk to our legal people because they have exact, you  
14 know, legal complications, who goes where and what, who has  
15 liabilities. But we purchased from Delaware North the Delta Queen  
16 Steamboat Company for some money and a whole bunch of debt. So,  
17 we didn't operate Delta Queen last year under Majestic. We had  
18 Delaware North operate the vessels for us. So, we were the owner,  
19 not the operator of Delta Queen Steamboat Company last year.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, when did you become the owner  
21 and operator?

22 MR. CORBIJN: This year.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So right now there's how many  
24 operational -- the owner -- separate management structure  
25 operating the West Coast and one in the --

1 MR. CORBIJN: --

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

3 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah. Majestic America Lines operates  
4 both vessels in the East and the West Coast.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Under a single name --  
6 single --

7 MR. CORBIJN: The vessels in the -- there's only one  
8 vessel that is required --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. So, right now there are  
10 managers from Delta Queen and -- companies --

11 MR. CORBIJN: As part of the inheritance of both  
12 American West and Delta Queen, we also inherited some of the  
13 corporate culture and some of the corporate personnel.

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- company?

15 MR. CORBIJN: Yes.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

17 MR. CORBIJN: But we put in place -- we are putting in  
18 place new management, a --

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Now, -- mergers -- companies  
20 where ---cultural differences between the two companies. So, --  
21 and -- right now.

22 MR. CORBIJN: --

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. That's very --, but what  
24 problems have you seen in terms of the merger of two cultures  
25 in --

1           MR. CORBIJN: Well, you are operating two vessels under  
2 completely different operational modes. I mean, for example, on  
3 the Mississippi River, we have River Pilots onboard at all times.  
4 These are licensed River Pilots. They're onboard all the time.  
5 Now, it's just a totally different operational mode. On the  
6 Colombia, we don't require that River Pilots --

7           UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, what personnel can move from say  
8 the Midwest to the West --

9           MR. CORBIJN: --

10          UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. So, right now, if you're  
11 licensed to operate a vessel --

12          MR. CORBIJN: I -- no, because this vessel requires a  
13 seagoing license.

14          UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

15          MR. CORBIJN: And the Mississippi is --

16          UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay --

17          MR. CORBIJN: They can. The only restriction is that  
18 Engineering -- engine type and steam --

19          UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. At some point, what is the --  
20 moving from one to the other or across --

21          MR. CORBIJN: We have one Captain that has dealt mostly  
22 on the Colombia that has been on the Mississippi and now switches  
23 back and forth. We recently brought one Captain that is only --  
24 Mississippi and put him on a familiarization trip on the Colombia  
25 just to see how the ships in the West operate, just to get cross

1 culture. And so we are encouraging it.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Have you had personal -- know  
3 of any merger related --

4 MR. CORBIJN: Yes. As a matter of fact, well, not  
5 necessarily merger, but I joined the company February 19th, this  
6 month, this year, and three days later was -- out at the --  
7 Windstar Cruises.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

9 MR. CORBIJN: Right. So, I'm also Senior Vice President  
10 of Marine Operations for Windstar Cruises. So, his last three  
11 months he's been in the process of handing over Windstar Cruises  
12 to our operating entity which is -- ships out of --

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, how is your time been spent  
14 overseeing the integration of Windstar?

15 MR. CORBIJN: Oh, it's 50/50.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Fifty percent watching -- on the  
17 Delta Queen.

18 MR. CORBIJN: 50/50 Majestic America and Windstar  
19 Cruises. So, 50 percent Majestic American and 50 percent  
20 Windstar.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Are there separate -- one overseeing  
22 on the Delta Queen, one overseeing --

23 MR. CORBIJN: No. But you'll find mostly that the  
24 employees are currently operating on the -- were Delta Queen. And  
25 you'll see operational personnel from the -- but for instance, our

1 new Director of Marine Compliance, has nothing to do with either  
2 one of them -- America West and Delta Queen --

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

4 MR. CORBIJN: And we are going to eradicate the name  
5 America West -- as far as we can --

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: One last item on this -- . There  
7 was some question yesterday about -- heading the -- island --

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Right. What is your view of that  
10 five degree heading versus going -- of the island? What safety  
11 issues do you see --

12 MR. CORBIJN: Well, from my operational experience  
13 sailing in Alaska, I can honestly say that I've never been north  
14 of Rocky Island, but then again, the vessel I sailed was about --

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah.

16 MR. CORBIJN: -- ten times the size of this one. So, --  
17 the normal passage plan takes -- between those -- between the  
18 mainland and Rocky Point and they've done this on numerous  
19 occasions in previous years, you know. This is not the first time  
20 that they've been in between -- from a -- and Captain's  
21 perspective sailing on a large vessel, I wouldn't even attempt to  
22 go -- although I've sailed on areas where I was in water that was  
23 as narrow as a half mile.

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You have any other questions,  
25 Ms. Brierley?

1           LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: I do. You said something about  
2 an oversight report -- or it's not complete at this time?

3           MR. CORBIJN: Captain. We asked the Captain -- sail the  
4 ship -- in a --

5           LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Now, this is for -- how does  
6 the company deal with sailing short? Do you have any -- or --

7           MR. CORBIJN: We have to comply with our COIs. And if  
8 we can't comply with our COI, if we're missing a Mate, we ask for  
9 an exemption -- But we won't sail short. Obviously, I mean,  
10 it's up to the Coast Guard if they'll allow us to sail, you know,  
11 short, then -- maintain the safety onboard -- we can sail short --  
12 show that we can still operate the vessel safely until the next  
13 port when the new guy comes aboard.

14          LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: In this instance, if the  
15 Captain had said, I've got a new guy on board and I'm --

16          MR. CORBIJN: He would have called me. I would have  
17 called a Pilot, an Alaska State Pilot.

18          LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Is there anything --

19          MR. CORBIJN: There will be. Yeah, absolutely. Because  
20 I -- standardized or formalized -- Obviously, I think your  
21 question, you know, is not that -- relevant because I don't  
22 believe the Captain said that. The other guy there and he wasn't  
23 that sure.

24          LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Okay.

25          MR. CORBIJN: So, if you would --

1                   LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  And it's not -- by the Coast  
2  Guard --

3                   MR. CORBIJN:  Yeah.

4                   LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  -- company --

5                   MR. CORBIJN:  Well, he wasn't -- again, he wasn't  
6  sailing short.  So, if there would be a license missing, then the  
7  Captain would have called me and said I have a license missing.  
8  I'd just like to clarify that, I have a license missing and now I  
9  can't sail.  I would have a call into the Alaska State Pilots.

10                  LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  What about in a -- in place  
11  where you had to make -- pilots --

12                  MR. CORBIJN:  The new familiarization, what I envision  
13  is -- to take alternate measures out of those -- or for the  
14  Captain to stand watch.

15                  LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  Okay.  So, he would -- tested -  
16  -

17                  MR. CORBIJN:  Yeah.  That's why we put in a major  
18  complaint.

19                  LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  Please tell me a little bit  
20  about the -- that -- started --

21                  MR. CORBIJN:  I can't, and obviously, well, I can't say.  
22  The reason that we would like to -- is, you know, I started here  
23  three months ago and I -- my goals to operate -- and bringing --  
24  Majestic America --

25                  LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER:  So, the decision to revamp

1 the --

2 MR. CORBIJN: Yes. And to expand it, possibly.

3 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Have you solicited input from  
4 Captains on revamping?

5 MR. CORBIJN: My goal was to take the higher guy in the  
6 office who would be dealing directly with Marine Compliance --  
7 and stuff like this. And the safety management system is  
8 something that goes -- to use the lay up period this fall and  
9 winter -- Captains and Mates and get their input as to how to  
10 rewrite. What is it that you're doing that should be in there  
11 that's not in there? What is it that is in there that you're not  
12 doing because it doesn't make sense? -- Living document.

13 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: And you're saying that would be  
14 done -- formal or informal --

15 MR. CORBIJN: I didn't get that far yet.

16 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: --

17 MR. CORBIJN: No, I didn't get that far to put it out  
18 there yet.

19 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: I mean, on the current system.  
20 Have you, even informally --

21 MR. CORBIJN: I spoke to Dale about it and he had told  
22 me that it needed upgraded, the current system needed upgraded.

23 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Was he specific about what he -  
24 -

25 MR. CORBIJN: No. He just said that there's some

1 requirements in there that require some review and revisions to  
2 make them more --, and --

3 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: Currently is there any sort of  
4 orientation or training for new hires when they hired and when  
5 they arrive on the vessel?

6 MR. CORBIJN: Not that I'm aware of. They go -- from  
7 what I heard yesterday, they go to the Portland office to start  
8 the paperwork.

9 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: -- orientation period, what do  
10 you see that accomplishing above and beyond the --

11 MR. CORBIJN: The point of it, obviously, is that a  
12 person that is new to a vessel and/or new to the company will be  
13 required to familiarize him or herself with the equipment that he  
14 or she is working with. And whether that's supervised  
15 familiarization or whether that's just take a manual and read how  
16 the equipment works. Because not everything needs to be, you  
17 know, you're an adult. If you buy a new computer, you read the  
18 manual, or if you buy a Blackberry, you read the manual. If you  
19 get on a ship that's using GPS, you get the manual and see how it  
20 works.

21 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: And can you tell us a little  
22 bit more about the other side of that? There's training, but then  
23 there's also evaluation of --

24 MR. CORBIJN: Yes. What I envision is that the Master  
25 and the Chief Mate sign off on a PQX saying that they witnessed or

1 have witnessed that the person who will be standing the watch is  
2 sufficiently familiar -- whether that's an Engineer, or whether  
3 that's a Deck Officer.

4 LT. BRIERLEY OSTRANDER: That's all I have. Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Windstar has --

6 MR. CORBIJN: Correct. Again, Windstar, I think, is now  
7 under new management.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Old, the old operation that  
9 was formerly known as Windstar.

10 MR. CORBIJN: No, the name isn't changed.

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay.

12 MR. CORBIJN: But we are changing operators. We  
13 recently implemented a new safety management system which is  
14 currently under -- period. It's a management system that is  
15 replaced by -- operating --

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And if you compared the current --  
17 Majestic versus the current -- with the previous Windstar version,  
18 was Windstar more mature in their --

19 MR. CORBIJN: Well, Windstar operated their own Windstar  
20 safety management system, in effect, the old -- America safety  
21 management system, which to me is not very effective. There's  
22 very, how do you say, very wordy.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Wordy.

24 MR. CORBIJN: Very wordy. Very discombobulated. Very -  
25 - explanations, and it's -- you need to have to --

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

2 MR. CORBIJN: The new system in place is more a --  
3 management system, focus on safety. So, it's more focused on  
4 that.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Does Windstar have a --

6 MR. CORBIJN: The old system that I'm more familiar  
7 with?

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.

9 MR. CORBIJN: Has, yes. The new system, I am not as  
10 familiar with it because it was just installed in the -- So, I  
11 haven't -- So, I don't know.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Just briefly describe Windstar's  
13 type of operation compared with --

14 MR. CORBIJN: Not necessarily. It's -- we like to call  
15 these -- ships. They're, you know, they're -- this is not your --  
16 product. This one -- sail. One differs significantly in -- age  
17 group where the Windstar caters more to the between 40 and 60  
18 affluent type of passenger, Majestic caters to the 60-up, affluent  
19 passenger. The standard of service on Windstar is for sure five  
20 star, and Majestic America has the intent to raise the level of  
21 this product to the level of Windstar.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- fall or winter or the off season  
23 you have planned meetings for the Deck Officers or --

24 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah. These vessels do go in for lay up  
25 periods for a number -- because -- okay --

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (inaudible)

2 MR. CORBIJN: -- Colombia River --

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Right.

4 MR. CORBIJN: -- for that matter. These vessels are  
5 laid up, and during that time it was my intent to get, for  
6 starters, to have a senior manager's conference where we, as the  
7 senior management team could meet and talk with the Engineers, the  
8 Senior Engineers, the Captain or the Chief Mate, and the Hotel  
9 Manager, about operational issues, safety issues, -- with the  
10 company -- the way the vessel has been performed in the past year  
11 and how we can --

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Like a review.

13 MR. CORBIJN: Just a review and the charting -- and part  
14 of that would be also then to discuss --

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: How much are the age of the  
16 passengers, in your opinion, -- change in the safety posture, and  
17 specifically, Windstar --, how much does age play a difference in  
18 the way the -- manage the -- compared to other --

19 MR. CORBIJN: Oh, I think, I, you know, if you go on a -  
20 - Carnival Cruise Ship, the way they operate a lifeboat drill is  
21 the same as they do on a American Lines.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- hotel staff --

23 MR. CORBIJN: No. I think by and large -- gathering the  
24 -- or, you know, --

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Finally, one more question to ask.

1 Did you -- Third Mate who ran his -- what would your expectations  
2 be and how did you communicate those expectations to a new person  
3 who is now standing the first watch -- How would you handle that?

4 MR. CORBIJN: I would make sure that he was familiar  
5 with the route that he was going to stand the watch on. I would  
6 make sure that he had familiarized himself as is part of normal  
7 navigational duties. When you come on watch, you familiarize  
8 yourself with -- that you're going to be -- That's what they  
9 teach you in school. That's why it's -- Before you get on the  
10 watch, you make sure you understand where you're going and what  
11 you will be -- prepare yourself for your watch. Where do I go and  
12 what the circumstances, whether it be night or day. Whether it  
13 dusk or dawn, whether it be --, or it would be what will I see on  
14 the way. So, I would make sure that this person would have done  
15 that, and I would ask him. And then I would tell him that he was  
16 the Officer of the Watch in charge of the navigational watch, and  
17 that at any point in time he should feel free to operate the  
18 vessel the way he sees fit -- safety, but never feel shy to call  
19 me for any issues, you know, that come up -- that were kind of  
20 strange for him, anything unusual.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And when a person presents himself  
22 onboard with a valid Coast Guard license, either as a company  
23 official or as -- what is your -- expectations that person --  
24 Coast Guard Deck Officer --

25 MR. CORBIJN: Well, that means that he's completed the

1 theoretical part of his education.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- the person who graduates the  
3 theoretical part of his education, would you consider that  
4 person -- license, qualified to operate the vessel --

5 MR. CORBIJN: No, if he's -- if he has -- if he's got a  
6 Coast Guard license, that means that he has completed at some  
7 point in time the theoretical part of his education. He went to  
8 school and he got a license.

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Is he ready for the manned  
10 watch on -- vessel?

11 MR. CORBIJN: When you got your driver's license, do you  
12 feel you're a better driver now than you were when you were 16?

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Or after my first -- One of the  
14 things that came up yesterday -- how often management can actually  
15 get -- and how do you see you and your subordinates in terms of  
16 learning how well the Captain --

17 MR. CORBIJN: I think the responsibility is on the  
18 management and the -- to assess how the other Deck Officers are  
19 standing their navigational watch -- responsibility I feel I need  
20 to taken; however, having said that, there is senior management --  
21 responsibility. And so, visiting a vessel and going onboard and  
22 -- with the vessel is something that -- frequently. Perhaps more  
23 so then -- and you will find that our senior management has been  
24 onboard the Delta Queen and the American Queen extensively over  
25 the last couple of months. Not so much -- and -- That -- You

1 can only be in one place at the same time.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. So, what will happen then in  
3 terms of -- management.

4 MR. CORBIJN: We do --, I mean, I, again, I've scheduled  
5 -- June an organization trip for myself on the American Queen and  
6 Delta Queen, staying two weeks -- two days on one and two days on  
7 another. Part of that will be going up at all hours and sitting  
8 maybe on the bridge, -- engine room and see what those guys are  
9 doing -- night or in the morning. The same thing goes for  
10 Windstar Cruises. In August I'm flying to the Greek Isles to spend  
11 three days on each of the vessels just to do a quality review,  
12 which not only focuses on the bridge, but it also focuses on the  
13 hotel -- and cleanliness of the vessel, and the food is up to our  
14 standards. So, it's an all encompassing review.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- where you have subordinates  
16 acting on your behalf also visiting the vessels?

17 MR. CORBIJN: I know that Randy as a VP, and also the  
18 Superintendent, the vessel Superintendent, they are boarding the  
19 vessel in the Colombia -- I would say once or twice a week.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well -- program, scheduled visits,  
21 and formal oversight of the -- verbal or written -- on what --

22 MR. CORBIJN: You mean the report from the Captain on  
23 how the voyage went?

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The report to the senior management,  
25 or reported to you directly.

1 MR. CORBIJN: Uh-huh.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Reporting on how -- you're doing  
3 and -- how well the vessels were being operated the way you  
4 expected them to be operated?

5 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah, that will be part of -- one would be  
6 part of your internal safety -- it's one of the things that --  
7 vessel, and I expect that my senior management -- anytime not  
8 necessarily, you know, waiting for their turn onboard the vessel  
9 to do it, and, you know, but -- if they see something that is --  
10 that requires my attention. And also, I expect the Masters be --  
11 recently a week or so ago, started a program by which I will be  
12 contacting the Masters each -- for each of the vessels, either  
13 weekly or, yeah, on a weekly basis to talk --

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- Masters.

15 MR. CORBIJN: Yeah.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- time.

17 MR. CORBIJN: That's the intent. I don't know if I can  
18 do that with having 13 ships. So, it might be every other week,  
19 but definitely be in routine communication.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- anyone else in the office --  
21 phone calls.

22 MR. CORBIJN: I like to have an open dialogue -- and  
23 that's what I told them, you know, I'm approachable. You can  
24 contact me anytime if something has happened that you feel  
25 requires my attention.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- Masters report to you directly?

2 MR. CORBIJN: We have five vessels operational. So, we  
3 have on each of the vessels we have two Masters. And then we have  
4 Windstar cruises which have three vessels and they have --

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

6 MR. CORBIJN: Three. And they have, I think --

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And the Masters report to you or --

8 MR. CORBIJN: No, they report to --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

10 MR. CORBIJN: -- Master --

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And you report to who?

12 MR. CORBIJN: To Dave -- President.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: --

14 MR. CORBIJN: Yes, he is.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- Do you have any comments or  
16 suggestions -- like to pass on to us --

17 MR. CORBIJN: No. One more thing -- show you that, you  
18 know, safety -- you know, top priorities, we had scheduled an  
19 independent consultant to board the Empress next week to do an  
20 independent environmental audit of shipboard operations pertaining  
21 to waste management and waste handling. And the same person will  
22 also go to the American Queen to do a similar audit there. Again,  
23 these are two separate audits that are not dictated by anybody,  
24 but that we feel as a company are necessary and in order to have,  
25 we'll show that we take this very seriously. But again, it looks

1 kind of --

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay -- recorded.

3 MR. CORBIJN: Yes, it was all recorded.

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you.

5 (Whereupon, the interview in the above-entitled matter  
6 was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           The Investigation of  
                                  Empress of the North  
                                  Juneau, Alaska  
                                  Marine Accident  
                                  Interview of Nico Corbijn

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-07-MM-015

PLACE:                     Auke Bay, Alaska

DATE:                      May 16, 2007

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to  
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

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Mary Anne Jones  
Transcriber