

ENS [REDACTED]

Below is a summary of interview of ENS [REDACTED] USCG, conducted by the AIM informal board on August 21, 2006 concerning the diving incident which resulted in two deaths on 17 August 2006. AIM board members present at the interview were Captain [REDACTED] LCDR [REDACTED] and LCDR [REDACTED]. This summary is in addition to ENS [REDACTED] statement dated 18 August 2006. This summary is true and accurate.

ENS [REDACTED] reported aboard HEALY [REDACTED]. She attended the five week Navy Dive Scuba School (dive school) and graduated in [REDACTED] during her first class cadet summer. Since graduating from dive school she has participated in one day of Coast Guard diving consisting of four dives. These dives were conducted when an MSST dive team came to the United States Coast Guard Academy in October of [REDACTED]. The number and dates of the dives are in ENS [REDACTED] dive log. Prior to the mishap, ENS [REDACTED] had not conducted or received dive training aboard HEALY, participated in any previous dives with HEALY's dive team, nor had she received a letter from the command as a qualified diver.

Since reporting in HEALY she had only been in the dive locker one time prior to the day of the mishap. That was approximately two weeks prior to the mishap. On that occasion she went to the dive locker with LT Jessica Hill to prepare for a potential dive operation. ENS [REDACTED] was surprised at how the dive locker was being maintained – it was not as organized as she would have expected it to be. While in the dive locker she tested some dive equipment with LT Hill. Much of the equipment they tested was not functioning properly – there were a lot of leaky depth gauges and they had a hard time finding properly functioning gauges. When ENS [REDACTED] and LT Hill discarded this dive equipment and conducted preventative maintenance (PMS) on other equipment, they did not record what they did. LT Hill and ENS [REDACTED] also did not use a PMS checklist. It was ENS [REDACTED] impression that the dive team had not been following the PMS procedures she had learned at the Navy Dive School or that she had previously observed with the MSST dive team.

ENS [REDACTED] did not attend and was unaware of any dive training since she reported in HEALY on the 18th of July 2006. LT Hill did have a meeting for all interested divers and talked about the dive program in general, the physical fitness

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standards to go to dive school, and what is expected at dive school. However, no formal dive training was conducted at that meeting.

ENS [REDACTED] was told there was a dive plan routed up the chain of command before the 17 August 2006 dive, but never saw it. Prior to the dive brief on the ice, she did not attend nor was she aware of a pre-dive brief, dive meeting, or an Operational Risk Management (ORM) discussion/brief.

The dive team did discuss the dive equipment they were gathering in the dive locker before they went to the ice for the dive. During this informal discussion ENS [REDACTED] remembers LT Hill asking some of the standard dive questions she learned at dive school, but she did not use a pre-dive checklist to ask these questions. One of the questions LT Hill asked was whether any of the divers were taking medication. BM2 Duque mentioned that he was taking some sort of sports vitamin to help with his physical fitness workout program. ENS [REDACTED] does not recall the name of the vitamin.

On the ice, just prior to the dive, the dive team had a modified dive brief. In attendance at that modified brief were: the divers - LT Jessica Hill, ENS [REDACTED] and BM2 Steve Duque; and the dive tenders - LTJG [REDACTED], ENS [REDACTED], DC3 [REDACTED] and MK1 [REDACTED]. ENS [REDACTED] does not recall anyone else being present at this brief. During this modified brief LT Hill covered the dive plan ENS [REDACTED] mentioned in her previous statement dated 18 August 2006. LT Hill did not use a check off sheet, did not conduct an ORM, nor did she cover an emergency action plan at this brief.

The hyperlite decompression chamber was not on the ice nor did the personnel at the brief discuss its location or use prior to the dive. ENS [REDACTED] does not believe a spare oxygen container was on the ice and she did not see and was not aware if a first aid kit was on the ice. The hydrophone was not used or on site and the dive party did not have a radio to communicate with the bridge.

ENS [REDACTED] is aware that the standard CG dive side for two person scuba requires two qualified divers, two qualified tenders, a qualified dive supervisor, and a qualified standby diver. To qualify as a dive tender you must be a qualified diver or complete the requisite PQS. The dive tenders were not qualified divers and ENS [REDACTED] doesn't know if they had completed the required PQS. LT Hill was the only qualified dive supervisor. LT Hill said she would supervise the dive from the water.

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ENS [REDACTED] did not observe a dive supervisor supervise from the water at dive school or during her dives with the MSST dive team.

The tenders utilized three separate spools of line to tend the divers. LT Hill was on the smallest spool of line. It did not have a crank.

This was going to be ENS [REDACTED]'s first dive in HEALY and her first cold water dive. This was BM2 Duque's first cold water dive.

ENS [REDACTED] was ENS [REDACTED]'s line tender.

After LT Hill and BM2 Duque were pulled out of the water, ENS [REDACTED] recalls the Commanding Officer stating, "this is your dive side" or words to that effect. ENS [REDACTED] then asked for the dive manual, for someone to contact a dive medic, and for the portable hyperlite decompression chamber. This was the first time ENS [REDACTED] had worked with this decompression chamber in HEALY. She had assembled the same model while at dive school, but is not qualified to operate the chamber.

Since her arrival aboard HEALY the dive team has not worked out together, but they were all in excellent condition. ENS [REDACTED] is a competitive tri-athlete and has competed in nationals and worlds. Her last competition was just prior to her arrival in HEALY. ENS [REDACTED] works out vigorously on a daily basis. BM2 Duque and LT Hill were also in excellent shape. ENS [REDACTED] observed both of them working out on a regular basis in the ship's exercise room. LT Hill had tentatively scheduled the next dive physical fitness for the upcoming inport period in Dutch Harbor Alaska.

The dive was conducted at the same time as ice liberty for the crew. Beer was available during ice liberty, but ENS [REDACTED] does not believe that anyone associated with the dive consumed alcohol. ENS [REDACTED] does not drink and LT Hill and BM2 Duque had the morale officer set two beers aside for after the dive operations.

The dive locker is not in exactly the same condition it was prior to the mishap. It is slightly more disorganized because ENS [REDACTED] looked through the locker to recover all of the paper dive records, as directed by the XO, to set aside for the investigation. The command provided the paper records ENS [REDACTED] found in the dive locker and in LT Hill's stateroom to the AIM board.

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