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Major failures found in 2020 Navy ship fire

Sailor faces arson charge, but dozens blamed in report

Associated Press

WASHINGTON – A Navy report has concluded there were sweeping failures by commanders, crew members and others that fueled the July 2020 arson fire that destroyed the USS Bonhomme Richard, calling the massive five-day blaze in San Diego preventable and unacceptable.

While one sailor has been charged with setting the fire, the more than 400-page report, obtained by The Associated Press, lists three dozen officers and sailors whose failings either directly led to the ship's loss or contributed to it. The findings detailed widespread lapses in training, coordination, communication, fire preparedness, equipment maintenance and overall command and control.

"Although the fire was started by an act of arson, the ship was lost due to an inability to extinguish the fire," the report said, concluding that "repeated failures" by an "inadequately prepared crew" delivered "an ineffective fire response."

It slammed commanders of the amphibious assault ship for poor oversight, and said the main firefighting foam system wasn't used because it hadn't been maintained properly and the crew didn't know how to use it **THEY WERE PROBABLY ATTENDING THE ALL IMPORTANT REQUIRED DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MEETING**. The report is expected to be released today.

U.S. Navy officials on Tuesday said that while crews at sea consistently meet high firefighting standards, those skills drop off when ships move into maintenance periods. The Bonhomme Richard was undergoing maintenance at the time of the fire. **HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON A SHIP IN THE YARDS.?**

During maintenance there are more people and organizations involved with the ship, including contractors. And the repairs often involve equipment and chemicals that present different hazards and challenges. **ONCE AGAIN, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON A SHIP IN THE YARDS**

The report describes a ship in disarray, with combustible materials scattered and stored improperly. It said maintenance reports were falsified, and that 87% of the fire stations on board had equipment problems or had not been inspected.

It also found that crew members didn't ring the bells to alert sailors of a fire until 10 minutes after it was discovered. Those crucial minutes, the report said, caused delays in crews donning fire gear, assembling hose teams and responding to the fire.

Sailors also failed to push the button and activate the firefighting foam system, even though it was accessible and could have slowed the fire's progress. "No member of the crew interviewed considered this action or had specific knowledge as to the location of the button or its function," the report said.

The report spreads blame across a wide range of ranks and responsibilities, from the now retired three-star admiral who headed Naval Surface Force Pacific Fleet – Vice Adm. Richard Brown – to senior commanders, lower ranking sailors and civilian program managers. Seventeen were cited for failures that "directly" led to the loss of the ship, while 17 others "contributed" to the loss of the ship. Two other sailors were faulted for not effectively helping the fire response.

Adm. William Lescher, the vice chief of naval operations, has designated the commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet to handle any disciplinary actions for military members. The Navy officials said the disciplinary process is just beginning. One official said the key challenge in making improvements will be addressing the "human factor," including leadership skills and ensuring that everyone down to the lowest ranking sailors understands their responsibilities, and can recognize problems and correct them.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the report ahead of its public release. **I BET**

Specifically, the report said failures of Vice Adm. Brown; Rear Adm. Scott Brown, the fleet maintenance officer for the Pacific Fleet; Rear Adm. William Greene, the fleet maintenance officer for U.S. Fleet Forces Command; Rear Adm. Eric Ver Hage, commander of the regional maintenance center; Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar, commander of Navy Region Southwest; Capt. Mark Nieswiadomy, commander of Naval Base San Diego; and Capt. Tony Rodriguez, commander of Amphibious Squadron 5, all "contributed to the loss of the ship."

The report also directly faults the ship's three top officers – Capt. Gregory Thoroman, the commanding officer; Capt. Michael Ray, the executive officer; and Command Master Chief Jose Hernandez – for not effectively ensuring the readiness and condition of the ship.

“The execution of his duties created an environment of poor training, maintenance and operational standards that directly led to the loss of the ship,” the report said of Thoroman. And it said Ray, Hernandez and Capt. David Hart, commander of the Southwest Regional Maintenance Center, also failed in their responsibilities, which directly led to the loss of the ship.

The report only provides names for senior naval officers. Others were described solely by their job or rank.

More broadly, the crew was slammed for “a pattern of failed drills, minimal crew participation, an absence of basic knowledge on firefighting” and an inability to coordinate with civilian firefighters.

“The loss of the USS Bonhomme Richard was a completely avoidable catastrophe,” said U.S. Rep. John Garamendi, D-Calif., chairman of the House Armed Services readiness subcommittee. He said he read the report “with shock and anger,” and will look into the matter carefully to “determine the full extent of the negligence and complacency that occurred.”

The ship was undergoing a two-year, \$250 million upgrade pierside in San Diego when the fire broke out. About 115 sailors were on board, and nearly 60 were treated for heat exhaustion, smoke inhalation and minor injuries. The failure to extinguish or contain the fire led to temperatures exceeding 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit in some areas, melting sections of the ship into molten metal that flowed into other parts of the ship.

Due to the damage, the Navy decommissioned the ship in April. In August, Seaman Apprentice Ryan Mays was charged with aggravated arson and the willful hazarding of a vessel. He has denied setting the fire.

The blaze began in the lower storage area, which Mays' duty station had access to, according to a court document. Investigators found three of four fire stations on the ship had evidence of tampering, including disconnected firehoses, and highly flammable liquid was found near the ignition site.

Efforts to put out the fire were hampered because the ship's crew and other outside fire response departments and organizations were not coordinated, couldn't communicate effectively, hadn't exercised together and weren't well trained, the report said.

The report, written by Vice Adm. Scott Conn, included a number of recommended changes and improvements that have been endorsed by Lescher. The Navy set up a new fire safety assessment program that conducts random inspections, and has taken steps to increase training. As many as 50 of those inspections have already been done, and officials said they are finding good results. **WHAT THE FUCK TOOK YOU SO LONG?**

The Navy also conducted a historical study, looking closely at 15 shipyard fires over the last 12 years. It found recurring trends including failures to comply with fire prevention, detection and response policies.

As a result, Navy leaders are expanding the staffing and responsibilities of the Naval Safety Center, to perform audits and unannounced assessments of Navy units. The final costs are still being calculated. **LOOKS LIKE THE NAVY ITSELF IS RESPONSIBLE, 15 FIRES IN 12 YEARS, HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?**

WOW 15 SHIPYARD FIRES IN 12 YEARS WHAT THE FUCK IS THE NAVY DOING? WHAT WAS THE NAVY DOING FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS WHILE THIS WAS GOING, ON OBVIOUSLY PULLING THEIR PUD. NAVY LEADERS ARE EXPANDING THE STAFFING AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NAVAL SAFETY CENTER TO PREFORM AUDITS AND UNANNOUNCED ASSESSMENTS OF NAVY UNITS. THE FINAL COSTS ARE STILL BEING CALCULATED. LET ME GUESS, A COUPLE BILLION DOLLARS PISSED AWAY.

AND WHILE I'M ON MY SOAP BOX AND I HAVE A FEW MINUTES I'D LIKE TO SHARE MY OPINION, REMBER ITS MY OPINION, EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO ONE.

TODAY I LOOKED UP HOW MANY ADMIRALS THE NAVY CURRENTLY HAS WOULD YOU BELIEVE 282 DURING WW2 WE HAD 14. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. IT SEEMS THE MORE ADMIRALS WE HAVE THE MORE FUCKED UP WE ARE.

EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND IT SEEMS THERE IS ANOTHER SHIP COLLISION OR ANOTHER SHIP AGROUND. LISTED BELOW 14 SHIPS BETWEEN 2001 AND 2016. **WHAT THE FUCK?**

2001 USS GREENVILLE COLLISION

2001 USS DOLPHIN FLOOD / FIRE

2002 USS OKLAHOMA CITY COLLISION

2003 USS HARTFORD COLLISION

2005 USS SAN FRANCISCO COLLISION

2005 USS PHILADPHIA COLLISION

2006 USS MINNEAPOLIS COLLISION

2007 USS NEW PORT NEWS COLLISION

2009 USS NEW ORLEANS COLLISION

2009 USS HARTFORD COLLISION

2011 USS MIAMI FIRE ARSON

2012 USS SAN JACINATO COLLOSION

2012 USS MOUNTPELLEIR COLLISION

2013 USS JACKSONVILLE COLLOSION

TODAY'S NAVY HAS LOST IT'S MIND, FROM THE FAT LEONARD DEBACULE (DID I DO ANYTHING WRONG?) TO PROBLEMS WITH THE SEAL ORGANAIZATON, (SAILORS TURNING AGAINST THEIR CHIEFS) WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY NAVY?

TO REDUCE STRESS ON NEW SAILORS IN BOOTCAMP AND SUBMARINE SAILORS UNDER EXTREME STRESS, NOT LONGAGO THE NAVY INSTUTED EASTERN PHILOSOPHY TO BOOTCAMP SAILORS AND SUBMARNIES CREWS, THEY CLAIM, GETTING BACK TO THE BASICS OF THE MIND, THE BODY, THE SOUL AND RECOGINIZING THAT ARE ALL INTRIGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.WHAT A BUNCH OF HOOEY, IF YOU CAN'T TAKE THE STRESS MABE SUBMARINE LIFE IS ARE FOR YOU. THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO GO TRU A VERY DIFFICULT QALIFACTION PROCESS TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN HANDLE THE STRESS.

TODAYS NAVY CAN'T GET OUT OF THEIR OWN WAY. WE CAN'T BUILD A CARRIRE WHERE THE ELEVATORS WORK CORRECTLY, SCRATCH THAT WORK AT ALL. I AM NOT BLAMING THE SAILORS.

ON OUR NEWEST CARRIERS THE FORD AND BUSCH THERE ARE UNBELIVABLE PROBLEMS WITH THE PLUMBING. IT CLOGGS UP AND WE DOES NOT HAVE ANY WHERE NEAR THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT IT WILL CARRY WITH A FULL COMPLET IS ON BOARD.THE PLUMBING MUST BE FLUSHED WITH ACID AT ABOUT 4000,000 DOLLARS A FLUSH. DON'T WE HAVE ROJECT MANAGERS THAT SIGN OFF ON THESE JOBS? I GUESS WE WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR THE REPAIRS EVEN THOUGH THE CARRIERS ARE STILL IN THE SHIPYARD. WHATS NEW?

THE FLEET OF LCS SHIPS AND I USE THE WORD SHIP LOOSLY THEY ARE KNOWN AS LITTLE CRAPPY SHIPS OVER 30 BILLION DOLLARS WAS PISSED AWAY ON THIS DEBACULE AND ITS STILL NOT OVER THEY ARE STILL TRYING TO FIX THESE PIGS. IMPOSSIBLE. FOR THE MOST PART THEY DON'T GET UNDERWAY, IF THEY DO THEY TRAVEL WITH YARD TECHS OR GET TOWED BACK TO PORT.

IN TODAYS NAVY YOU CAN MARRY YOUR BOYFRIEND AND WE WILL PAY FOR YOUR SEX CHANGE OPERATION. I FEEL CERTAIN THESE SAILORS WILL BE OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY WITH ABSOLUTY NO PHYSIOLOGICAL BAGGAGE OR MEDICAL ISSUES .YEA RIGHT, TRANSGENDER CRAP IS OUT OF CONTROL. LESS THAN 1% OF THE US POPULATION IS IN CONTROL OF THE US POLICY. NOTHING GOOD WILL HAPPEN WITH THIS POLICY. YOU KNOW, IF I HAD A HEART CONDITIO THAT COULD BE CORRECTED WITH AN OPERATION THE NAVY WOULD NOT ACCEPT ME INTO THE SERVICE, SO WHY ARE THESE PEOPLE WITH ALL KINDS OF MENTAL BAGGAGE ALLOWED IN? I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND THE MADNESS.

DEFEND THE COUNTRY. WORRY ABOUT THE THREAT FROM CHINA. FORGET ABOUT ALL THE SOCIAL FLAVORS OF THE WEEK. IF YOU HAVE A COMMENT GOOD OR BAD LET ME KNOW. JUST MY OPINION
BMC(SS) MICHAEL SHORT

