



National Transportation Safety Board

Marine Accident Brief

Determination of Probable Cause

Engine Room Fire and Eventual Flooding and Sinking of Fishing Vessel *Lucky Diamond*

Accident no.	DCA-12-LM-018
Accident type	Fire and subsequent sinking
Vessel	Uninspected fishing vessel <i>Lucky Diamond</i>
Location	Gulf of Mexico, southwest of Morgan City, Louisiana 29°22.08' N, 092°08.95' W
Date	May 10, 2012
Time	2200 central daylight time (coordinated universal time – 5)
Injuries/fatalities	1 crewmember with first-degree burns 3 crewmembers missing and presumed deceased
Environmental damage	Potential release of 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel and unknown quantity of lube oil
Weather	Isolated showers, 10- to 15-knot winds from the southeast, clear visibility, seas 2 to 4 ft., air temperature 75° F

The fishing vessel *Lucky Diamond* caught fire and burned for several hours before sinking in 40 feet of water about 2200 on May 10, 2012. The master of the vessel suffered first-degree burns to his face and eyes, and the remaining three crewmembers were lost and are presumed deceased. The accident location is shown in figure 1.

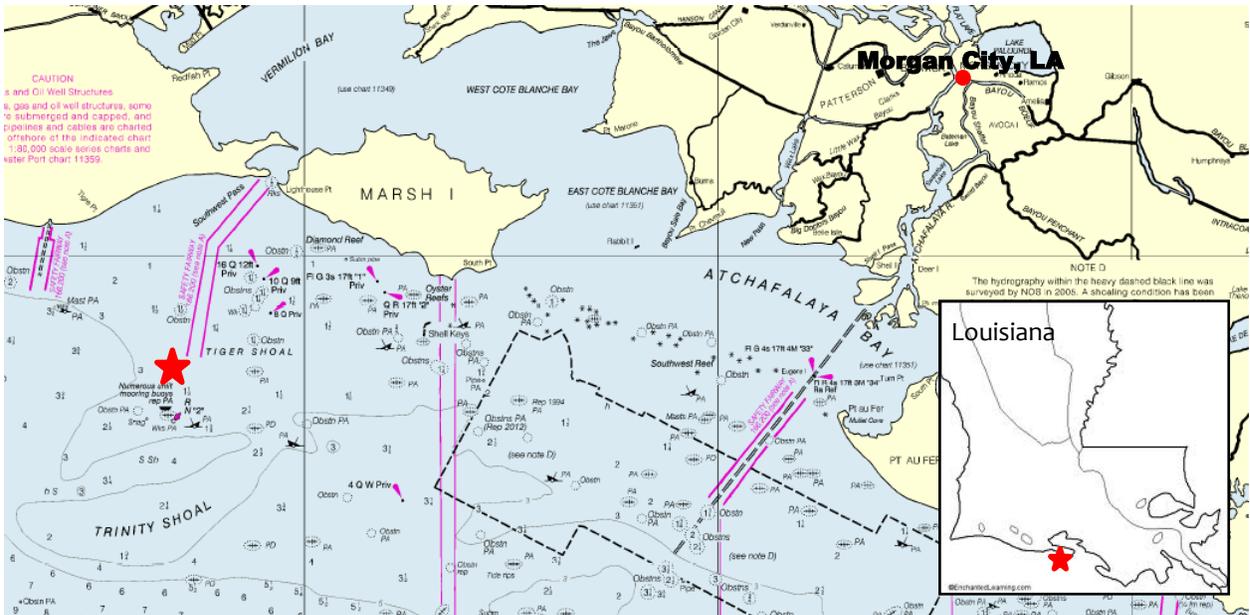


Figure 1. Red star indicates approximate location of the *Lucky Diamond* fire and sinking. (Background from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] chart 11340)

Engine Room Fire and Eventual Flooding and Sinking of Fishing Vessel Lucky Diamond

On April 28, 2012, the *Lucky Diamond* departed its homeport in Sabine Pass, Texas, for a month-long shrimping trip. On board the vessel were a master and three crewmembers. Around 1600 on May 10, 2012, the men stopped fishing for the day and moored the *Lucky Diamond* stern-to-stern with the anchored fishing vessel *Miss Carol*. The crew then had dinner and rested. Later that night at 2200, the master awoke to the smell of smoke in his stateroom and went to the galley area to investigate. He observed heavy smoke in the galley area and in the vicinity of the crew quarters. He also saw fire coming up through the deck area near the crew quarters where electrical supply cables from one of the vessel's diesel generators passed underneath the deck. (See "Vessel Drawings" for sketches of the vessel's main and lower decks.)

The master shouted to alert the crew and then opened the door to the crew accommodation space, but heavy smoke prevented him from seeing inside. The master tried unsuccessfully to fight the fire with onboard firefighting equipment, sustaining first-degree burns to his face and eyes during this effort. He then abandoned the vessel via the stern where he boarded the *Miss Carol*. At that time, the entire accommodation space of the *Lucky Diamond* was engulfed in flames, and the crew of the *Miss Carol* cut the mooring lines to the *Lucky Diamond*, setting the vessel adrift. The *Lucky Diamond* burned for several hours and then sank in about 40 feet of water.

On May 17, 2012, at 1155, divers with T & T Bisso, LLC, performed a penetration dive on the hull and remaining structure of the *Lucky Diamond*, which was resting on its keel and starboard side shell. The divers identified extensive fire and heat damage, including warped steel bulkheads, decks, and a water-tight door. They could not locate any human remains.

The status of the navigational, mechanical, propulsion, steering, and other vital systems on board the *Lucky Diamond* at the time of the accident could not be determined, but the master stated they were operational before the accident. The investigation could not determine which electrical generation system was energized at the time of the fire's ignition.

The fire and subsequent sinking of the *Lucky Diamond* resulted in the total constructive loss of the vessel. In addition, oil sheening was observed in the area of the Gulf of Mexico where the vessel sank.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the loss of the uninspected fishing vessel *Lucky Diamond* was a fire of unknown origin in the engine room followed by down-flooding of the interior compartments and eventual sinking of the vessel.

*Engine Room Fire and Eventual Flooding and Sinking of Fishing Vessel Lucky Diamond***Vessel Particulars**

Vessel	<i>Lucky Diamond</i>
Owner/Operator	TL&S Corporation, Stafford, Texas
Port of registry	Palacios, Texas
Flag	United States
Type	Uninspected fishing vessel
Built	Johnson Shipbuilding & Repair Bayou La Batre, Alabama, 1987
Official number	911160
Construction	Steel
Depth	13.5 ft. (4.1 m)
Length	92.2 ft. (28 m))
Width	27 ft. (8.2 m))
Gross tonnage	232
Engine power and type	2 Caterpillar 3412 diesels at 600 hp (447 kW) each
Cargo	70,000 pounds of shrimp
Crew complement	4

For more information about this accident, visit <http://www.nts.gov/investigations/dms.html> and search for NTSB accident ID DCA12LM018.

Adopted: February 1, 2013

The NTSB has authority to investigate and establish the probable cause of any major marine casualty or any marine casualty involving both public and nonpublic vessels under 49 *United States Code* 1131. This report is based on factual information provided by the US Coast Guard from its informal investigation of the accident. The NTSB did not conduct its own on-scene investigation.