



**The Bahamas  
Maritime Authority**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS**

**M.V. VISION OF THE SEAS**

**IMO Number: 9116876**

**Official Number: 8000405**



**Report of the marine safety investigation into a man  
overboard in the Gulf of Mexico on the 8<sup>th</sup> December  
2017**

*The Bahamas conducts marine safety or other investigations on ships flying the flag of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas in accordance with the obligations set forth in International Conventions to which The Bahamas is a Party. In accordance with the IMO Casualty Investigation Code, mandated by the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Regulation XI-1/6, investigations have the objective of preventing marine casualties and marine incidents in the future and do not seek to apportion blame or determine liability.*

*It should be noted that the Bahamas Merchant Shipping Act, Para 170 (2) requires officers of a ship involved in an accident to answer an Inspector's questions fully and truly. If the contents of a report were subsequently submitted as evidence in court proceedings relating to an accident this could offend the principle that individuals cannot be required to give evidence against themselves. The Bahamas Maritime Authority makes this report available to any interested individuals, organizations, agencies or States on the strict understanding that it will not be used as evidence in any legal proceedings anywhere in the world.*

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- II. Royal Caribbean SMS regarding missing crew
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**SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Vision of the Seas is a 1998 built passenger vessel of 78,717 gross tons, registered in Nassau, Bahamas and operated by Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited.
- 1.2 The vessel sailed from Galveston, Texas on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 bound for Yucatan, Mexico (6<sup>th</sup> December) and then Cozumel, Mexico (7<sup>th</sup> December) before returning to Galveston with 2,179 passengers and 788 crew members aboard.
- 1.3 The vessel has 4, 5 and 6-day itineraries serving Cozumel, Yucatan (Progreso) and Costa Maya, Mexico leaving and returning to Galveston, Texas.
- 1.4 On 8<sup>th</sup> December, at 12:40 hours one crew member was reported as missing by his supervisor.
- 1.5 A vessel search was initiated and failed to locate the crew member.
- 1.6 Reviews were made of CCTV footage and the crew member was seen reporting to work early on 8<sup>th</sup> December and walking around the vessel's open decks.
- 1.7 At approximately 05:14 hours, he was seen on camera to climb over the stern rail between life rafts mounted aft. At this location the deck below extends further aft, the crew member then climbs back over the rail and walks to the aft port quarter where there is direct access to the sea below.
- 1.8 The CCTV has a blind spot where the crew member was last seen, his shadow is visible. He does not reappear on cameras covering the immediate areas.
- 1.9 The crew member was scheduled for onboard safety training at 09:30 hours, he did not attend. His absence was not investigated at this time. His work supervisor was unaware that he had not left work for the training.
- 1.10 The crew member's absence was noted because of his failure to report for work after the scheduled training session was completed.
- 1.11 Announcements for the crew member to report were made over the vessel's Public-Address system at 12:45 hours and at 13:16 hours both in crew areas and again at 13:40 hours in all areas.
- 1.12 At 14:45 hours Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (RCCL) Global Security Team were notified of the situation.

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- 1.13 At 15:47 hours the United States Coast Guard at Galveston were notified.
- 1.14 The crew member shared a cabin #1642 with his girlfriend, she was relocated to a separate cabin #2650. Cabin #1650 was sealed at 15:50 hours.
- 1.15 At 16:49 hours a full ship search was completed, the crew member remained missing.
- 1.16 The vessels command elected not to turn around to undertake a man overboard search, the last sighting of the crew member aboard (Security camera footage) had been over seven (7) hours earlier. The vessel had travelled approximately 142 nautical miles in this time period.

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**PARTICULARS OF VESSEL**

- 2.1 Vision of the Seas is a purpose-built passenger vessel registered at Nassau, Bahamas.
- 2.2 The vessel is in service in the United States market of the cruise industry.
- 2.3 The principle details as at 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017 were as follows:

Official Number	8000405
IMO Number	9116876
Length overall	278.94 metres
Breadth	32.2 metres
Depth	10.20 metres
Gross Tonnage	78,717
Net Tonnage	46,471
Call Sign	C6SE8

- 2.4 The vessel is powered by four Wartsila diesel generators connected to two Cegelec electric motors providing 34MW/46,249hp to twin fixed pitch propellers.
- 2.5 Vision of the Seas was built in 1998 at Chantiers de l’Atlantique in St Nazaire, France and was operated by Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines.
- 2.6 The vessel was first registered under the Bahamas Flag in 1998 and is entered with DNVGL Classification Society. At the time of the incident the vessel complied with all applicable statutory and international requirements and certification.
- 2.7 Vision of the Seas was subject to a Bahamas Maritime Authority Annual Inspection on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 in Civitavecchia, Italy with no deficiencies recorded.
- 2.8 The last Port State Control Inspection was carried out by the United States Coast Guard on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Following the inspection one deficiency was noted relating to a faulty sliding fire door which was rectified on completion and not contributory to the incident being investigated.

**3**

**NARRATIVE OF EVENTS**

- 3.1 All times noted in this narrative are given in the style of the standard 24-hour clock, without additional annotation and as local time in the Central Standard Zone (GMT-6 hours).
- 3.2 Vision of the Seas completed the following itinerary during this voyage:
- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 4 <sup>th</sup> December | Departed Galveston, Texas at 16:00 hours |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> December | Sea day                                  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> December | Arrived Progreso Mexico at 07:00 hours   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> December | Departed Progreso at 16:00 hours         |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> December | Arrived Cozumel at 09:00 hours           |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> December | Departed Cozumel, Mexico at 17:00 hours  |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> December | Sea day                                  |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> December | Arrived Galveston at 07:00 hours         |
- 3.3 The missing crew member is a citizen of Mauritius, born in 1993 with black hair, brown eyes and a height of 5 feet 07 inches.
- 3.4 The crew member joined Vision of the Seas on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017 as a Pool Cleaner.
- 3.5 The crew member had previously served on this vessel in the same role. A personnel review issued by his supervisor on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 during his previous contract, described his ability as meeting expectations in all categories and the recommendation to retain his services was endorsed.
- 3.6 He underwent basic familiarization training on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017 upon joining the vessel.
- 3.7 The crew member’s girlfriend, also from Mauritius, had joined this vessel two months earlier in the position of Assistant Waiter. At their joint request the vessel’s Human Resources Department assigned them a cabin together.
- 3.8 On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017, the crew member reported for work at 05:00 hours.

3.9 A review of CCTV recordings post incident reveals the crew member in the following locations (times to nearest whole minute), see Appendix I:

05:09 hours - on Deck 0 headed to elevators

05:10 hours – walking aft on Deck 9

05:10 hours – walking towards guest elevators

05:10 hours – entering elevator on Deck 9

05:11 hours – exiting elevator on Deck 5

05:11 hours – walking towards Deck 5 outer promenade

05:12 hours – walking aft on Deck 5

05:13 hours – walking around stern at Deck 5

05:14 hours – climbing over stern rail and then climbing back again

05:14 hours – walking across stern at Deck 5 towards Port side

05:14 hours – shadow on CCTV indicates crew member jumped overboard

3.10 The CCTV cameras that cover the decks in this area where the crew member would appear if he walked away from the blind spot do not show him onboard after 05:14 hours.

3.11 The crew member was carrying a red bucket which was later found against the handrail aft on the port quarter.

3.12 The stern section of Deck 5 is shown below, the positions that the crew member initially climbed over the stern rail and subsequently is believed to have jumped overboard are indicated. The location of CCTV cameras is marked on this diagram. The camera facing aft adjacent to the electrical box for the galley was impeded by a floodlight and did not have full coverage of the aft port quarter.

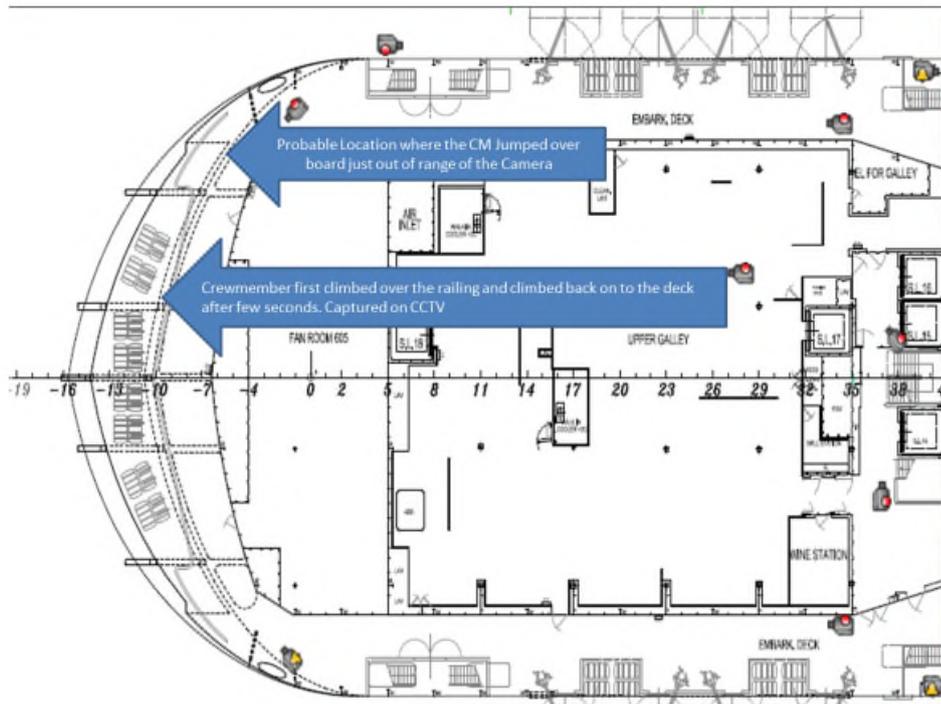


Figure 1: Stern section of Deck 5 showing prior movement and probable incident location

3.13 The initial position where the crew member climbed over the rail did not afford a direct access to the sea, Deck 4 below extends aft beyond Deck 5 as seen in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: View outboard of the stern rail on Deck 5 looking to starboard where the crewmember climbed between the liferafts at 05:14 hours on 08<sup>th</sup> December 2017

- 3.14 The last known location of the crew member affords a clear drop overboard to the sea. Figure 3 clearly shows the extension of Deck 4 aft, beyond Deck 5 at the initial position where the crewmember climbed over the hand rails.



Figure 3: Initial and final locations of where casualty climbed over the handrails

- 3.15 RCCL's policy for missing crew is included in Chapter 9 of the Safety Management System and outlines steps for ship searches, paging, and notification of authorities. This policy was followed once the crew member was established as a missing person.

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ANALYSIS

4.1 The vessel’s transit from Cozumel to Galveston on 8<sup>th</sup> December was as follows:

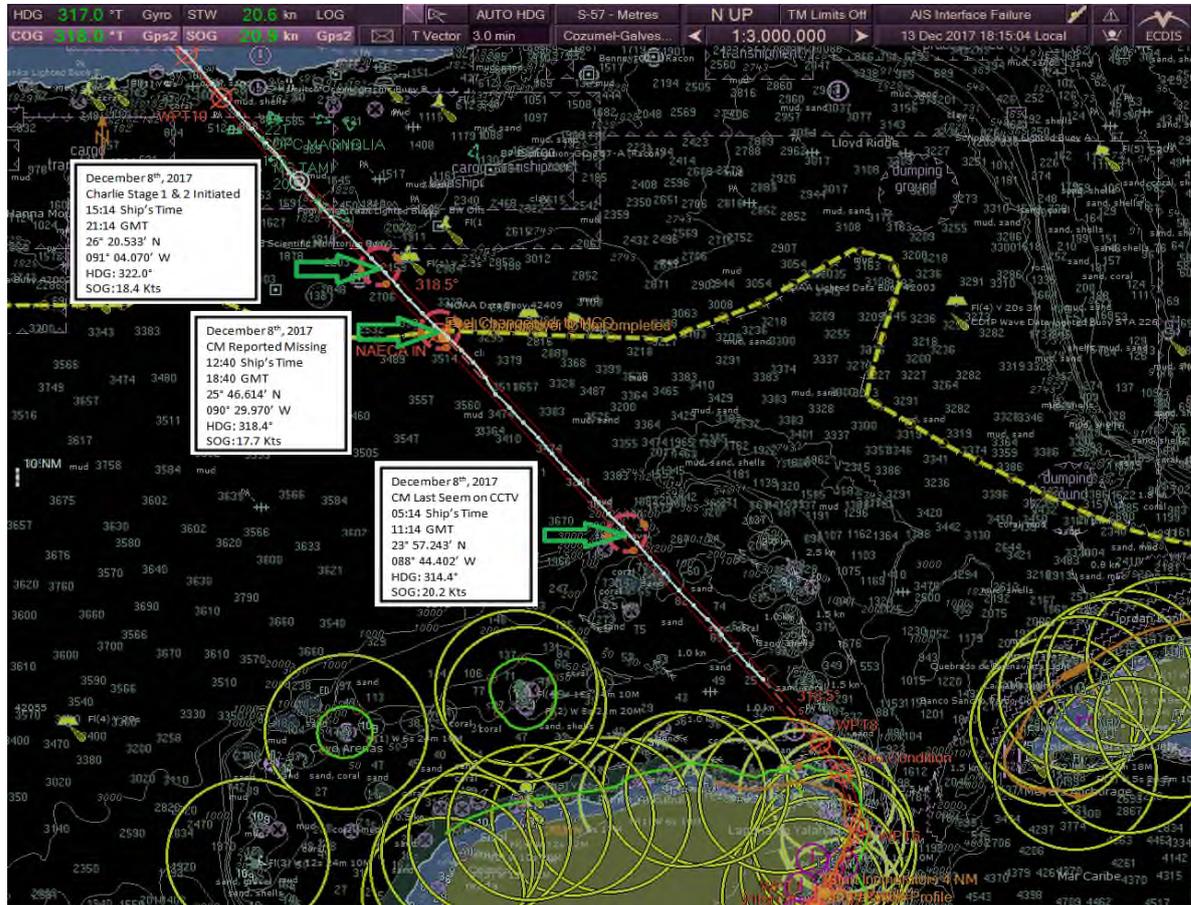


Figure 4: Ship’s transit from Cozumel to Galveston on 08<sup>th</sup> December

4.2 The vessel’s log records the weather conditions at 05:00 hours on 8<sup>th</sup> December as follows:

Latitude	23 53.7 N	Longitude	88 41.0 W
Course	315 Gyro	Speed	18.82 knots
Wind	SW Force 5	Seas	Force 3 Beaufort
Air temperature	24 Celsius	Sea Temperature	25 Celsius

4.2 The crew member is believed to have entered the water at 05:14 hours and was not determined to be missing for 7 hours. The vessel would have required a further 7 hours to return to the location where the crewmember was last seen on CCTV, arriving during darkness.

4.3 RCCL’s Missing Person policy is in Chapter 9 of the Safety Management System, the guidance to the Master contained therein has the following steps:

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### Public address announcements

- These were completed

### Check persons stateroom

- This was done once the crew member was reported missing.

### Contact ships medical staff

- No medical records – crew member onboard for 8 days.

### Search ships records – these include seapass system, stateroom door lock records, telephone records and CCTV

- Seapass not used
- Stateroom door not used by crew member after early morning on 8<sup>th</sup> December
- Full review of CCTV records.

### Question travel companions, family or friends

- 4.4 The investigation determined that these procedures were followed in full.
- 4.5 The missing crewmember is a 24-year-old single adult male, in apparent good health. The crewmember was sharing a cabin with his girlfriend of 6 years, also a 24-year-old from Mauritius.
- 4.6 He was last seen on CCTV at the stern of the vessel on Deck 5, camera coverage is blocked where it is believed he deliberately jumped overboard.



Figure 5: Camera view of stern blocked by floodlight (view looking aft on port side Deck 5)

- 4.7 The crew member's girlfriend was questioned at length, she had joined the vessel on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017. She described their relationship as normal for a couple with ups and downs.
- 4.8 Their relationship appears to have been strained over the girlfriend's association with another male crewmember onboard the Vision of the Seas that she had met on another RCCL vessel.
- 4.9 On the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> December, the crew member awoke at 04:30 hours, dressed and kissed his girlfriend, telling her he was going to work and left the cabin.
- 4.10 He was scheduled to attend onboard safety training at 09:30 hours but failed to do so. The investigation established there was a deviation from normal practice to identify a list of absentees at the outset of the session. This omission led to a delay to ascertain the missing crew members whereabouts.

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**CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The missing crewmember is believed to have deliberately jumped overboard from the aft port quarter of Deck 5 into the sea on 8<sup>th</sup> December at 05:14 hours.
- 5.2 There is no note or indication of intent prior to his disappearance.
- 5.3 There is no further sighting of him on the vessel from that moment onwards.
- 5.4 The time difference between his disappearance and discovery was due to his unknown location, whether he was at work or at a scheduled training session. If the trainer had reported him absent when training was to commence then his own work supervisor may have raised the alarm considerably earlier.

**6**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations for the operator:

- 6.1 A review of possible impediments to all cameras should be made and rectified where found.

**7**

**ACTIONS TAKEN**

- 7.1 The floodlight blocking the CCTV camera on the port side aft on Deck 5 with a view of the stern has already been relocated.
- 7.2 A new policy has been implemented to locate crew members who do not arrive at scheduled training sessions.

- I. Extracts from CCTV showing crewmember's transit to the stern**
- II. Royal Caribbean SMS policy regarding missing crew**
- III. General arrangement extracts including profile**
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**APPENDIX I – Extracts from CCTV**



1. Crewmember at 05:09 hours walking across deck 0 towards Deck 1 and elevator



2. Crewmember at 05:09 hours entering elevator at Deck 0

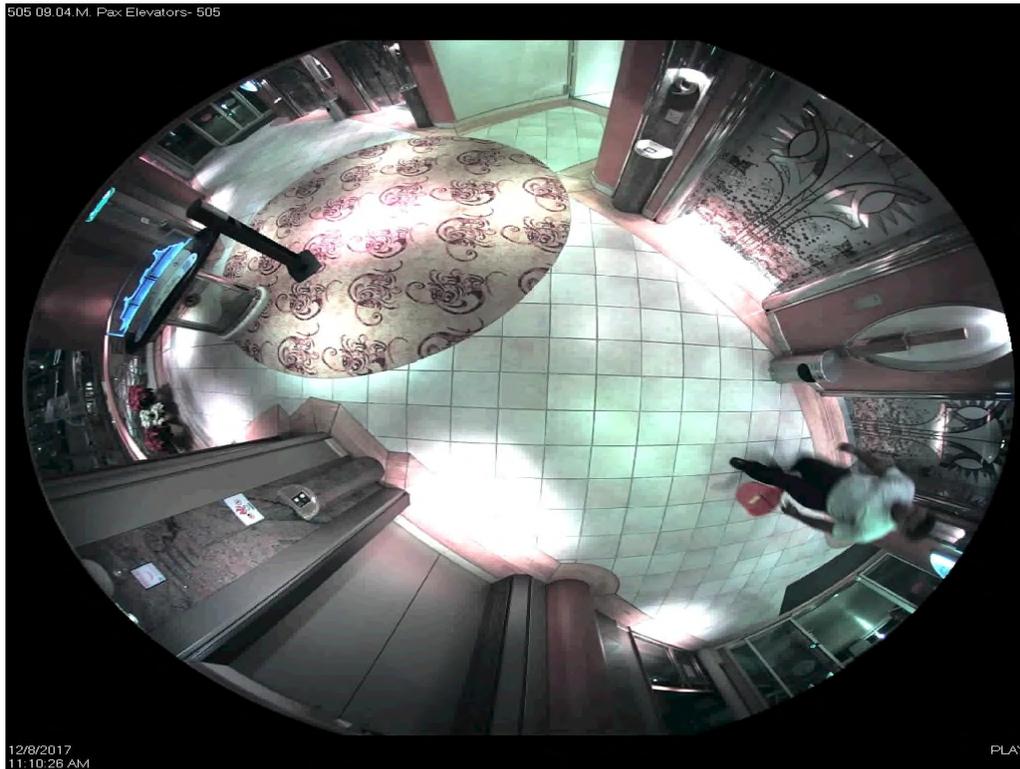
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**3. Crewmember at 05:10 hours walking aft on Deck 9**



**4. Crewmember at 05:10 hours walking towards guest elevators on Deck 9 aft**

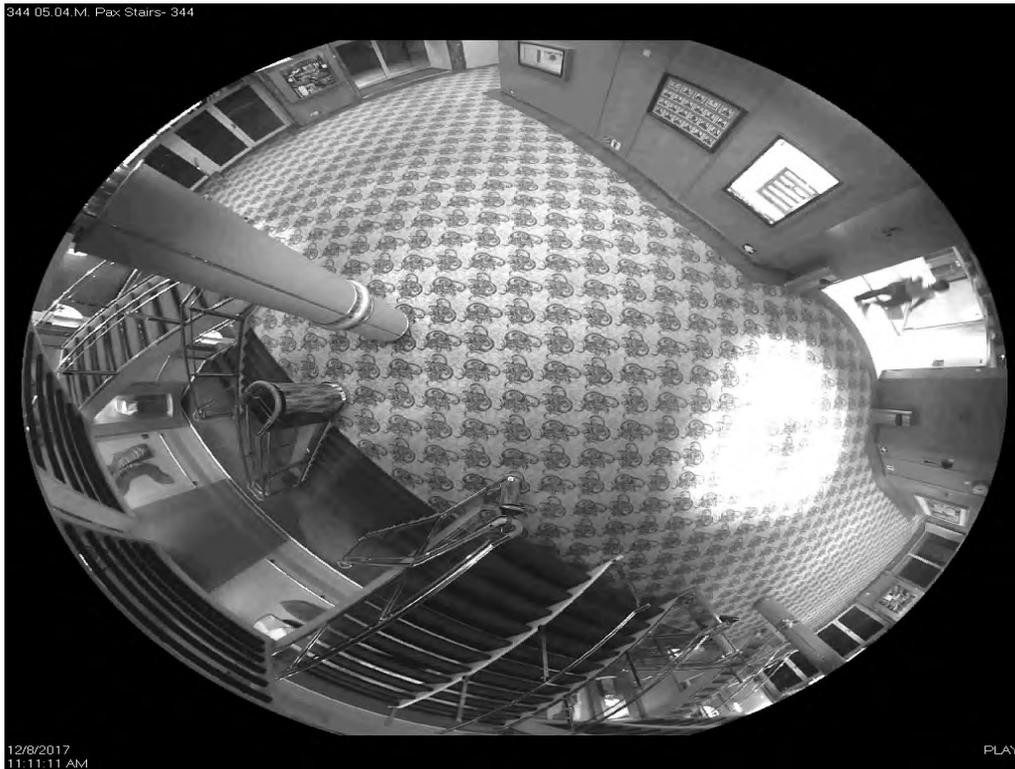


**5. Crewmember at 05:10 hours entering guest elevator on Deck 9**

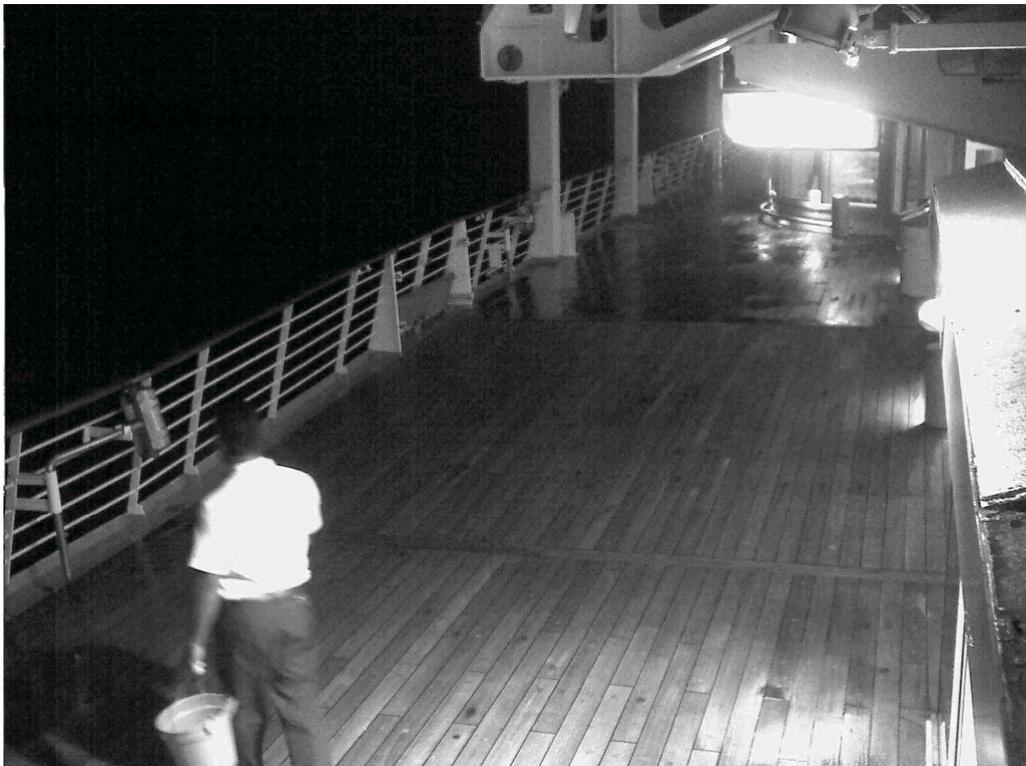


**6. Crewmember at 05:11 hours exiting the elevator on Deck 5**

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7. Crewmember at 05:11 hours walking towards Deck 5 outer promenade



8. Crewmember at 05:11 hours walking aft on Deck 5



9. Crewmember at 05:12 hours walking aft on Deck 5



10. Crewmember at 05:13 hours walking aft on Deck 5

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**11. Crewmember at 05:14 hours climbing over stern rail**



**12. Crewmember at 05:14:18 hours returning to stern rail and climbing over**

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13. Crewmember at 05:14 hours moving to port quarter on Deck 5



14. Crewmember at 05:14 hours shadow on bulkhead



15. At 05:14 hours glimpse of red bucket carried by crew member later found abandoned by handrail

APPENDIX II – Royal Caribbean SMS Policy (missing persons)

(manual section is applicable for above companies)

**SECURITY - RCL - TUIC - SKYSEA** **Revision 82 : October/10/2017**  
**Chapter 9 - Response to Reports of Allegations of Crimes, Reports of Missing Persons, and Serious Guest Conduct Policy Violations**  
[9.07 Responding to Missing Persons and Reports of Missing Guests/Crew](#)



**Policy**

The Master must immediately begin efforts to locate a guest/crew in the water if they were reliably observed going overboard. Global Security AND Marine Operations must be immediately (telephonically) notified in any overboard or suspected overboard situation. Unless responding to a reliable overboard sighting, the Master must notify Marine Operations prior to a decision to turn the ship around to conduct a Sea Search.

The Staff Captain must immediately begin shipboard efforts to locate any guest/crew who is reported or believed to be missing. Global Security must be immediately (telephonically) notified by the Staff Captain whenever a guest/crew is considered to be a Missing Person (see definition and examples below). Only the Staff Captain has the authority to reconcile SeaPass records when this system indicates a guest did not debark at the end of a cruise; and this may only occur after Global Security has been advised of the discrepancy.

(manual section is applicable for above companies)

**SECURITY - RCL - TUIC - SKYSEA** **Revision 82 : October/10/2017**  
**Chapter 9 - Response to Reports of Allegations of Crimes, Reports of Missing Persons, and Serious Guest Conduct Policy Violations**  
[9.07.3 Missing Shipboard / Missing at Sea](#)



**Policy**

If a report of a missing guest/crew is made to any crew member, then that crew member must: 1) Escort the person making the report to the Guest Services Desk and 2) Advise his/her immediate supervisor of the missing person report. If the reporting guest refuses to go to the Guest Services Desk, then the crew member must report this refusal to the Guest Services Desk and to his/her immediate supervisor. A Guest Services Desk employee must immediately complete the Missing Guest / Crew Report Form. (See form below.)

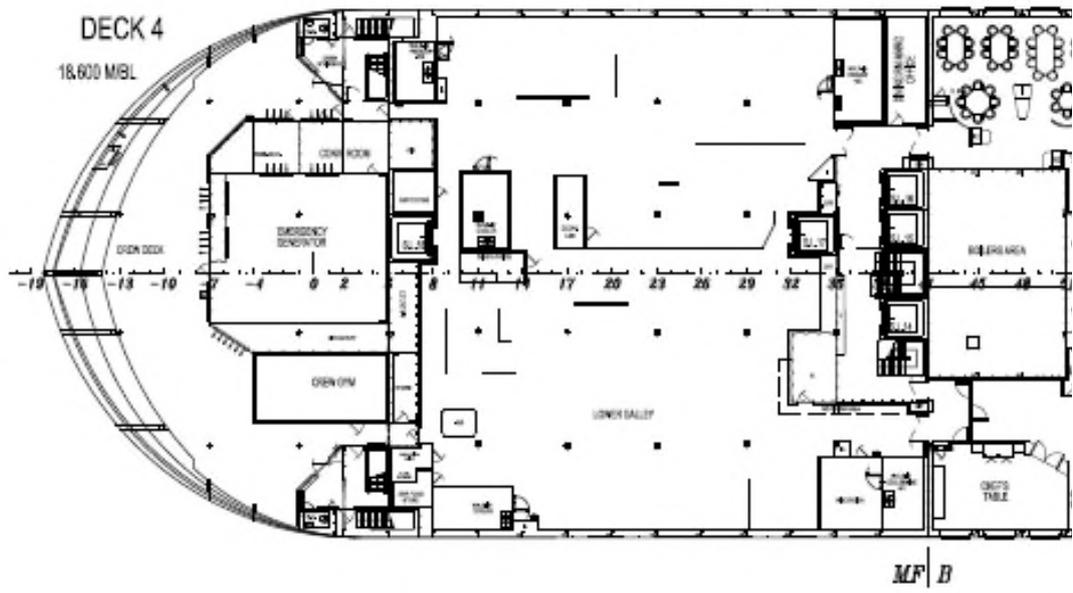
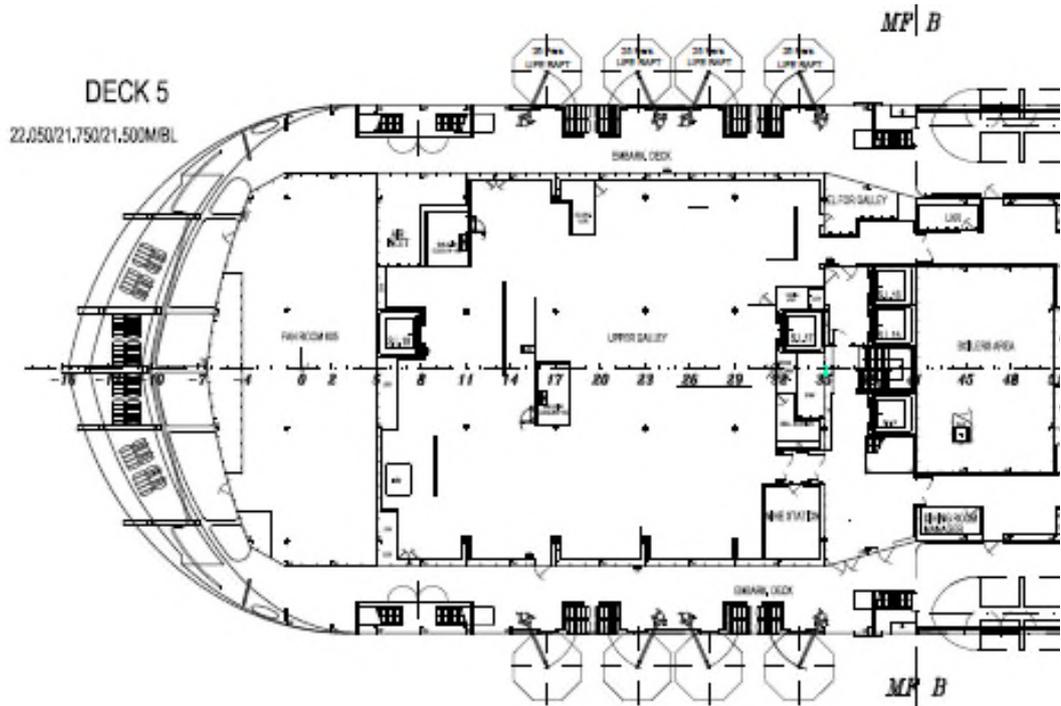


The Bridge, Staff Captain and the Security Officer must be immediately advised by the Guest Services Desk if any guest/crew is reported missing. The Bridge Officer must make a note of this report in the Bridge log and include the ship's position when the initial report is received. The Security Officer must take steps to locate the missing guest/crew as this is considered to be a security incident. The Staff Captain must immediately (telephonically) notify Global Security and Marine Operations if a missing guest/crew is considered to be a Missing Person (see definition).

Unless responding to a reliable overboard sighting, the Master must notify Marine Operations prior to a decision to turn the ship around to conduct a Sea Search. (If the ship is turned around in response to an overboard sighting, Marine Operations must be immediately advised.) The Staff Captain must also immediately notify Global Security. The Care Team (Miami) and if necessary, the ship's Medical Unit should be involved to support the family and friends of the missing person. (See Medical SQM for details.)



DECK 5 & DECK 4



**APPENDIX IV – Royal Caribbean Security Team Report**

**SECURITY TEAM REPORT**

**Initial Report:**

On December 8, 2017, at around 1240hrs Facilities Head Cleaner .... reported to ..... that one of his Facilities Cleaner .... 24y/o NAT-MUS from CC#1628 missing from his workstation, .... stated that CM ..... started his work at 0500hrs and he reported to his supervisor Head Cleaner (night shift) ..... As per .... he was assigned work at the pool area on DK 9.

**Action Taken:**

- Security Team was dispatched to do the search for missing Crewmember, SGS .... along with Head Cleaner .... and SS .... checked the Crew cabin but CM .... was not in the Cabin. Bridge was informed, CHSECO & Staff Captain was informed, and Staff Captain informed Master.
- At 1245hrs 1<sup>st</sup> Announcement made in Crew areas.
- At 1305hrs Bridge was informed.
- At 1316hrs. 2<sup>nd</sup> announcement made in crew areas.
- At 1340hrs 3<sup>rd</sup> announcement made in ALL areas of the ship.
- CCTV footage was reviewed and found that at around 0509hrs CM .... was leaving the Dk9 pool area and took the guest elevator to DK 5 and started walking towards Dk 5 STBD side all the way aft by the life raft station carrying a red bucket in his hand, at around 05:13:46hrs CM .... leaves the red bucket on the floor and climbs over the ship railing in between the life rafts, at 05:14:01 .... climbs back over the railing on to the ship and walks Fwd. out of CCTV Coverage . Only CCTV we can see after that is a shadow and slight bit of the red bucket he was carrying.
- Written statements were obtained from Facilities Head Cleaner ....., Head Cleaner ..... and SGS .....
- Staff Captain and Captain interviewed CM'S Girlfriend CM .... (Pos: Asst. Waiter) NAT - MUS. .... stated that she knew of no reason he would want to harm himself and they had not had an argument and as far as she was aware he had no problems at home. .... has been too upset to submit a written statement. For her own safety it was decided to isolate .... in a different cabin (2650) with a CTA available and Security Staff posted outside. Isolation log in use.
- Security Officer notified Global Security GSI .... via Hotline regarding a possible Missing Person situation at 1445Hrs.
- Security Officer instructed to Seal stateroom 1642.
- At 1520hrs Charlie Stage 1& Stage 2 was initiated by the Master.
- At 1530hrs CC# 1642 door lock read.
- At 1545hrs CC# 1642 was sealed and lockout programed.
- At 1550hrs CC# 1642 door handle Sealed with padlock and Crime scene tape.
- A clear view of crewmember jumping over board was not detected as the area was not covered by CCTV (blind area).

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- CCTV clearly showed a CM .... entering the area where he possible jumped over board and did not return back.
- At 1547hrs USCG Galveston, was informed telephonically about the missing person situation by Master.
- At 1649hrs whole ship search was completed but missing CM not found.

### Update:

The training he never attended was 10NSSA given by DSO. Generally our normal practice is to check the crew absentees from training, on completion of the training. On this particular day, the training finished and DSO went for lunch and would have checked the crew list to see who had missed training after lunch. During his lunch break he was informed of the missing crew ....

Procedure now in place for the SGS to check the list of non-attendees and contact their Supervisors whilst DSO is conducting the training.

We are not aware if a search was carried out by USCG.

**APPENDIX V – Additional photographs taken during investigation**



1. Location where crewmember initially climbed over stern rail between liferafts



2. View looking down over stern from Deck 5 in way of photograph 1 above



3. View looking down at location on Deck 5 aft port quarter, where crew member is believed to have jumped overboard