

Statement: [REDACTED]

To the best of my knowledge and recollection, these are the facts and events leading up to and including the dive on August 17 2006.

Prep for this dive began a few weeks ago when LT Hill informed us we may get to dive during science ops. We began going through the dive locker assembling working equipment the night before the anticipated dive. It had been some time since the dive locker and equipment had been used. A lot of the equipment was not labeled if it was leaky or broken. We spent the afternoon testing hosing and checking equipment. We found correct hoses to fit dry suits, non-leaking depth gauges, tested AGA masks, and tried on dry suits. We tested the tanks to see if they needed to be jammed and got all of our equipment ready. That dive was disapproved. When there was talk of ice liberty, we decided it would be a good opportunity to get a cold water familiarization dive in. Neither BM2 Duque nor myself had ever been diving in the ice. The last diving I did was on the 20 Oct 2005. We went back down to the dive locker, retested and inspected all of our equipment. We each had about 40lb of weight to take with us to combat the buoyancy of the dry suits. LT Hill was wearing a dry suit, BM2 and myself were wearing neoprene dry suits. We inspected the suits for holes and tears and tried them on to ensure a good fit. The suits had not been tested in the water since the last dive operations held during HEALY's 2005 patrol. Before heading to the ice LT Hill questioned us to see if we were in good health. She asked if we had eaten, if we were wearing contacts, had false teeth, were on any medication. This was the typical pre-dive check. I was feeling fine and was not on any medication. BM2 was wearing contacts. He also said he was taking a sports pill that was supposed to increase his metabolism, but said it was mostly just a vitamin. He said he didn't remember what it was called. LT Hill recruited DC3 [REDACTED], ENS [REDACTED], and LTJG [REDACTED] as line tenders. The line tenders helped walk divers to the water and dress. Once all equipment was at the water's edge, LT Hill held a dive brief. She went through line commands with line tenders. Then she described the dive. The first dive was to be just below the surface. It would be a roll in entry. We were then going to test the dry suits. The first dive was focused on getting comfortable with the gear, and identifying any problems. We were to check for leaking, get comfortable with the buoyancy of the suits, ensure the purge valves in the suits worked, and that the masks were not leaky. The second dive would be no more than 20 ft. We were going to get used to adjusting the buoyancy of the dry suits underwater, and moving around in them. The plan was for LT Hill to get in first, then BM2, then myself. There were no qualified divers on deck. LT Hill got in first and was floating fine at the surface. BM2 had problems with one of his gloves, but I couldn't tell from my position by the water what the problem was. He eventually got a new glove and got positioned by the water. He rolled in second. He too was floating fine on the surface. I rolled in last. I got in and felt water in my arms. I knew the neck on my suit was a little loose, but I thought with the hood on it would make a seal. I could feel more water enter. In addition even with the purge valve in my arm closed air kept streaming out. I had no buoyancy. I was wet and could not float. I tried the purge valve in both directions, but could not keep air in my suit. I made my way back to the ice and had my tender pull me out. I talked to LT Hill from the ice. She said there were no more suits that we hadn't already looked at, but that I could go up and look. ENS [REDACTED] and I headed back to the boat. On the way back we heard a pipe stating liberty would end at 1845. It was about 1815 when the pipe was made. There was no way I would find another dry suit, get suited up and back in the water before liberty expired. I decided to go up, change into some dry clothes and head back down to watch the dive. I changed and headed back down to the ice. On my way down the 10min pipe was made for liberty. When I got to the waters edge DC3 [REDACTED] and LTJG [REDACTED] said they had let out almost 100 ft of line and they were still asking for more. DC3 [REDACTED] had no more to give. I asked if they had been getting one pull back from the divers indicating that they were alright. They said they had. They tried again. There was no response. I was nervous. We gave them 4 good pulls to come back. There was no response. We started to pull them up slowly so they could decompress. We kept pulling slowly. It soon became clear that their lines had not gone under any ice, and that all the length that was let out was going directly downward. They were far deeper than they were supposed to go. We began to pull them up a little faster. BMCS [REDACTED] called for more people to come over. We started pulling them faster, but didn't want to cause damage if they were still breathing. When they came into view it was clear that they were unconscious. LT Hill still had bubbles coming from her mask. There were no bubbles coming from BM2 Duque. We pulled them to the surface. I was closest to BM2 so I got to the waters edge. I could see foam and blood coming out of his mask. I yelled for someone to help me get him out of the water. We pulled him out and took off his mask. He looked blue and bloated

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and was foaming blood. We turned him on his side. Someone was trying to open his mouth so we could clear his airway and start CPR. I looked over to LT Hill. She had been pulled out of the water, and people were starting CPR. She was very white. I yelled for someone to get a Dive Surgeon, or someone from the Dive school on the phone and to get me a dive manual. I knew if we could get them conscious we would have to get them in the portable chamber for decompression and transport. I was not confident in my decompression knowledge or in my knowledge of using the portable chamber. I also knew they needed more help than we could possibly provide on the boat. We were over 500 miles from shore and any qualified dive medic. All hands were helping finding the HSC onboard, getting stretchers, and oxygen. I do not know when they got oxygen. Once there were a lot of people doing CPR and transporting them to the clinic, I went to gather all the info I had about dive medicine. I brought it to the clinic where the chamber had been opened. I found the directions for operating the chamber in LT Hill's files. With the help of EMCM [REDACTED], MK2 [REDACTED], and LCDR [REDACTED], we set up the chamber and tested it. It would have been ready for use by 1930. Meanwhile, HSC [REDACTED], LTJG [REDACTED] and many crewmembers and scientists were working hard to get LT Hill and BM2 breathing. They were using the AED, and CPR. There were no signs of life. They called their death sometime around 2020.

PREPARED ON 18 AUG 2006

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