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Authorities Continue To Investigate Collision of 2 Boats by Elliott Key

All 9 people sent to the hospital have been released, authorities said

By Myriam Masihy | Tuesday, Jun 11, 2013 | Updated 12:58 AM EDT

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With its bow completely torn apart, fiberglass shredded and wood exposed, the 26-foot Wellcraft boat that capsized in Biscayne Bay Sunday afternoon was brought in to the Homestead Bayfront Park Marina aboard a barge. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission spokesman Jorge Pino spoke about the crash between the Wellcraft and a 36-foot Carrera speedboat.

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With its bow completely torn apart, fiberglass shredded and wood exposed, the 26-foot Wellcraft boat that capsized in Biscayne Bay Sunday afternoon was brought in to the Homestead Bayfront Park Marina aboard a barge.

The vessel, owned and operated by Ernesto Antonio Calzado and carrying a female passenger, capsized after colliding with a 36-foot Carrera speedboat operated by Natalie Villa de Rey and carrying 15 other people, according to authorities.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission spokesman Jorge Pino said Monday that "the Carrera was heading west towards Black Point Marina" near Sands Cut in Elliott Key when the other vessel collided with it in "a T-bone-type accident."

The accident sent nine people to the hospital. Eight were transported via ambulance and a ninth was

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airlifted to Kendall Regional Medical Center. FWC officials said the man that was airlifted had head and leg trauma. Pino said everyone has since been released.

According to Tow Boat U.S. operators, who salvaged the Wellcraft, the damage was so massive it is a total loss.

FWC officials say the impact of the crash was so violent, they're surprised no one lost their life.

"Most of the people on board the 36-foot Carrera ended up in the water, it's a miracle that we didn't have anybody drown," Pino said. Nobody was wearing life jackets at the time the boats collided as they both traveled at about 25 to 30 knots.

A recent Team 6 investigation showed the primary cause of death in boating accidents is drowning. Investigators are now looking into what caused this crash.

"We're still in the midst of looking at all of the details but it doesn't appear that alcohol played a role," Pino said. He added that perhaps carelessness or "the inability to maintain a proper lookout played a role."

So far no one has been cited in the crash.



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