



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

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Transport, Building and Urban Development

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) published the investigation report No. 248/12 on 31 October 2013. The report deals with the collision involving the MV BLUE ANGEL with the MV ARUNI RICKMERS anchoring off Busan on 12 July 2012.

Upon request the report will be forwarded. Alternatively this report – as well as all previous reports – is available on the website www.bsu-bund.de and can be downloaded

Abstract

Serious marine casualty – Collision MV BLUE ANGEL – MV ARUNI RICKMERS

On 12 July 2012 the MV BLUE ANGEL, flying the Maltese flag, collided with the MV ARUNI RICKMERS, flying the German flag. At the time of the accident the ARUNI RICKMERS anchored in the area of the “South Outer Harbour” in Busan/South Korea in restricted visibility. BLUE ANGEL, in ballast, was en route, from Luoyuan (People’s Republic of China) to Busan since 10 July 2012. It was planned to take bunkers before proceeding to Tacoma (USA). According to the log book the sea passage ended at 0948 on 12 July 2012. Her destination was the area „South Outer Harbour“. The vessel had received the instruction to anchor at anchor position N4.

While anchoring VTS Busan instructed the master at 1121 to change the anchor position since the distance to MV ARUNI RICKMERS was deemed to close. In doing so the collision occurred.

The investigation report was published on 31 October 2013. It is a translation of the investigation report, prepared by the leading Maltese investigation authority in cooperation with the BSU, into the German language. The Maltese Version is relevant.

Summary

Serious marine casualty – collision MV BLUE ANGEL – MV ARUNI RICKMERS on 12 July 2012 in Busan/South Korea

At 1130 on 12 July 2012 the MV BLUE ANGEL, flying the Maltese flag, and the MV ARUNI RICKMERS, flying the German flag, collided in the anchorage area “South Outer Harbour” off Busan/South Korea in restricted visibility. BLUE ANGEL departed in ballast from Luoyuan/People’s Republic of China on 10 July 2012. .

The next port of call was Tacoma/USA. In order to take bunkers and change the crew the vessel proceeded to the port of Busan/South Korea. AT 0948 on 12 July 2013, after end of the sea passage, the anchor manoeuvre in the anchorage area “South Outer Harbour” in Busan started. The vessel was instructed to proceed to the anchor position N4 by the VTS. Dense fog prevailed; visibility was below one nautical mile.

At about 1040 the fog cleared and visibility improved. The vessels covered by the radar could now be seen from the bridge. Several vessels anchored in the anchorage area N4. At 1121 BLUE ANGEL dropped the port anchor on the position 35° 03, 3’N 129° 02,4’E.

The distance of her starboard bow to the next vessel, ARUNI RICKMERS, was less than 2,5 cables. At 1122 VTS BUSAN established contact to BLUE ANGEL by VHF and instructed the master to weigh anchor and anchor either west or east of the anchorage area N4, since the distance of the current anchor position to the other anchoring vessels was under the mandatory distance of 4 cables.

At about 1125 the master had already weighed anchor and ordered the engine to “Dead Slow Astern”. Through this manoeuvre the BLUE ANGEL moved near to a bunker vessel, lying alongside of another vessel at the aft side of the BLUE ANGEL. In order to prevent a contact with the bunker vessel and possible damage to the environment the master subsequently gave the engine commands “Dead Slow Ahead”, “Slow Ahead” and “Full Ahead” and in order to pass the ARUNI RICKMERS anchoring there “Hard to Starboard”. ARUNI RICKMERS was now at the starboard bow of BLUE ANGEL:

Although BLUE ANGEL had clearly passed the bow of ARUNI RICKMERS, her amidships section on the port side bumped on to the bulbous bow of ARUNI RICKMERS on 1130, followed by a further contact on aft on the port side. The impact resulted in a significant damage of the shell plating at the side of BLUE ANGEL.

According to the radar images of the VTS the vessel was on the position 35° 02,21 N 129° 03,64 E at the time of the accident. At 1135 both vessel had passed each other. The master of ARUNI RICKMERS informed the harbour authorities and ordered the rescue boat to be made ready as a contingency measure. The accident did not lead to a crew member being injured and no harmful substances were released.

Navigating in anchorage areas with a high traffic volume and restricted visibility is basically difficult and subject to risks. There is a risk of close quarters situations or damages caused by collisions with other anchoring vessels. IN this case the situation aggravated additionally by a failed first anchor manoeuvre and the request of the VTS to change the anchor position.

The missing interaction of the crew members in the decision making process during the 2 anchor manoeuvre was considered an important influence and could be an indication of the quality of the safety related leadership on board.

Volker Schellhammer
Director of the Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation