



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung

Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

Federal Higher Authority subordinated to the Ministry of
Transport and Digital Infrastructure

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Press Release 7/15

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby gives notice that the investigation report No 155/14 was published on 3 June 2015. The report deals with the Allision of the ferry ADLER EXPRESS with the pier. Upon request the report will be forwarded. Alternatively this report – as well as all previous reports – is available on the website <http://www.bsu-bund.de> and can be downloaded.

Short version:

Serious marine casualty – Allision of the ferry ADLER EXPRESS with the pier

At about 1052 on 4 June 2014 the MV ADLER EXPRESS collided with the pier during her berthing manoeuvre in the port of Wittdün/Amrum, resulting in the ferry sustaining considerable damage to her bow area above the waterline.

The accident led to six persons being sustaining not life-threatening injuries, as well as 43 persons sustaining

minor injuries with fractures, bruises and internal injuries. Taking all together 233 passengers and 6 crew members were on board the ferry. Several injured persons were air-lifted in hospitals in the proximity. The accident is due to an unforeseeable technical deficiency of the manoeuvre lever at the main conning position of the ADLER EXPRESS.

The investigation report was published on 3 June 2015 and can be downloaded from the website www.bsu-bund.de

Long version:

Serious marine casualty – Allision with the ferry ADLER EXPRESS with the pier

At about 1052 on 4 June 2014 the MV ADLER EXPRESS collided with the pier during her berthing manoeuvre in the port of Wittdün/Amrum, resulting in the ferry sustaining considerable damage to her bow area above the waterline. The accident led to six persons sustaining not life-threatening injuries, as well as 43 persons sustaining minor injuries with fractures, bruises and internal injuries. Taking all together 233 passengers and 6 crew members were on board the ferry. Several injured persons were air-lifted to hospitals in the proximity.

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation determined that when the maneuvering lever (joystick) was set to full astern quickly (lever as far as it would go) at the main conning station, the engine rpm dropped to its lowest idling speed and the water-jet propulsion system's control flaps remained in the preceding position.

The engine speed control is transmitted with the lever through a brass segment on a cogwheel which is located on a shaft of the signal potentiometer. When set to "full astern" the resistance measurement of the potentiometer revealed an "infinite value" for the engine speed control. As a consequence the incorrect value dropped to idling speed and there was no thrust per position of the manoeuvring lever. The further investigation revealed that a lock screw of the cog wheel on the shaft of the potentiometer had loosened leading to the steering signal transmitted not matching the sailing mode.

The accident is due to an unforeseeable technical deficiency of the joystick at the main conning position of the ADLER EXPRESS.

The following precautions are recommended in order to ensure a safe ship operation:

Instructions for passengers:

Passengers should be informed by announcements and/or notices that they should

1. remain seated or in a secure position throughout the berthing manoeuvre
2. keep stairways and passageways clear throughout the berthing manoeuvre and
3. only proceed to the exits after the ship has moored safely in the port or at a berth

Reverse propulsion system

The reverse propulsion system of the ship shall be checked regularly. The reverse propulsion system shall be tested before the berthing manoeuvre. Preventive maintenance measures for parts of the reverse propulsion system shall be provided for in the maintenance plan.

Volker Schellhammer
Director