



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 14/15

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby gives notice that the investigation report No 276/14 was published on 4 September 2015. The report deals with the collision between the MV FRANCISCA and the MV RMS BREMEN in the Kiel Firth on 5 September 2014.

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

Collision between the MV FRANCISCA and the MV RMS BREMEN in the Kiel Firth on 5 September 2014

At 0211 on 5 September 2014, the outbound RMS BREMEN, flying the flag of Cyprus, collided with the inbound FRANCISCA, flying the flag of Antigua & Barbuda, level with the Friedrichsort beacon in Kiel Firth. The exact

scene of the collision remains unclear. The AIS recordings of the vessel traffic service indicate that the two vessels clearly passed one another. An electronic chart was on board both vessels.

Recordings of them also indicate that the vessels passed each other.

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

Long Version

Collision between the MV FRANCISCA and the MV RMS BREMEN in the Kiel Firth on 5 September 2014

At 0155 the RMS BREMEN left the Kiel Canal's lock in easterly winds of 4 Bft, light swell, and good visibility at 0155. The master and chief officer were on the bridge in the role of officer on watch (OOW) and of helmsman. At 0158 the course was reportedly altered on the leading lights. The red light buoy was reportedly steered for close to the starboard side during the approach to the Friedrichsort narrows. The FRANCISCA approached from the north. When she came into view with masthead lights and green sidelight on the port side at a distance of some 0.5 nm from Friedrichsort lighthouse, she was reportedly called on VHF and a whistle signal was sounded. There was no response from the FRANCISCA. Then the collision with the FRANCISCA occurred level with the lighthouse Friedrichsort. It was reportedly narrow off Friedrichsort and a course alteration of RMS BREMEN to starboard was said to have been out of question due to the alleged greater damage in the area of the engine room. The FRANCISCA approached Friedrichsort lighthouse from the north and altered her course to starboard in the direction of the Kiel Canal. Only the Chief Officer was said to have been on the bridge during the collision. Two able bodied seamen were on deck and prepared for entering the lock. An able bodied seaman on the forecastle reportedly saw a vessel with two top lights and a red side lights moving towards him. He reportedly warned his colleague, who stood at the winch on starboard side. The distance to the vessel reportedly decreased rapidly. At 0211 both vessels collided at an acute angle and scraped alongside each other. An able bodied seaman reportedly ran to the aft. The other able bodied seaman stood reportedly behind the foremast. After the collision the other vessel involved in the collision sailed away without giving a light signal and sounding the whistle.

No harm was caused to people and the environment. Both vessels sustained body damages at the bow and the deck and were instructed to call at a shipyard for repair of the damages. A detention order was initially issued with respect to the FRANCISCA. The BSU was unable to determine the exact scene of collision. Both vessels navigated with an electronic chart of the same type. According to the shore based recordings and the recordings on the ship-based electronic charts both vessel circumnavigates each other at large-scale. Only the time of the collision was consistent. During the analysis, the BSU completely relied on the satellite-based navigation systems (GPS). The scene of collision could not be determined exactly in retrospect since the received ships position could not be verified by a second system, such as radar recordings. There were no indications on disturbances in reception or deliberately executed manipulations of the GPS-signals.

The BSU issued safety recommendations addressing the Waterways and Shipping Administration with respect to the backup of radar recordings and the officers on watch on the vessels involved with respect to the verification of the ships positions. Moreover, the BSU issued a safety recommendation addressing the vessels owner relating to the improvement of the equipment facilitating the navigation with reduced crews and observance of the rest periods of the crew on board the FRANCISCA and the BSU recommends that the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) develops a circulation model of the Kiel Firth.

Volker Schellhammer
Director

New method to verify reported vessel positions - JRC ...

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05.01.2015 - The JRC, in collaboration with the Italian coast guard service, has developed a new method to verify whether ship positions reported with the.