



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung

Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

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

Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation, P.O. Box 30 12 20 • 20305 Hamburg

Office building
Bernhard-Nocht-Str. 78
20359 Hamburg
Tel.: + 49 (0) 40 31 90 – 0
Fax: + 49 (0) 40 31 90 – 83 40
posteingang-bsu@bsh.de
www.bsu-bund.de

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+ 49 (0) 40 31 90 – 8321

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby gives notice that the Investigation Report 370/14 was published on 1 July 2016. The report deals with the foundering of the grab dredger ZANDER and drowning of two seamen on 24 November 2014 in the North Sea north of Norderney. This report – as well as all previous reports – is available on the website <http://www.bsu-bund.de> and can be downloaded.

Short version:

Foundering of the grab dredger ZANDER and two fatalities

The inland waterway vessel ZANDER was on a transfer voyage from Copenhagen to Eemshaven with two crew members. On 24 November 2014, one crew member was caught by a wave and washed overboard. At this point, the ZANDER was about 5 nm north of Norderney. At 0754, the ZANDER sent a distress call on VHF channel 16, reporting "Man overboard" and water ingress.

The ZANDER foundered at 0812, which was just before the first ship that had rushed to assist arrived at the scene of the accident. A SAR helicopter later located the two crew members floating lifeless in the water. They were then recovered by a rescue cruiser's tender. Attempts at resuscitation were unsuccessful.

The final investigation report was published by the BSU on 1 July 2016 and is available on www.bsu-bund.de.

Long version:

Foundering of the grab dredger ZANDER and two fatalities

The inland waterways vessel ZANDER was to be transferred from Copenhagen/Denmark to Eemshaven/Netherlands after her sale. Two Danish seafarers were engaged for the transfer. The ZANDER left Copenhagen in the early hours of 20 November 2014. At first, the vendor was on board to brief the two seamen. The ZANDER sailed into the Kiel Canal at Kiel on the morning of 22 November 2014. She halted the canal passage in the siding at Fischerhütte in the evening and continued on the following morning. The ZANDER left the lock at Brunsbüttel at 1239 on 23 November 2014 and headed for the sea. She proceeded to the end of the Elbe fairway and left the Elbe Approach traffic separation scheme at about 2000 in a south-westerly direction.

On the morning of 24 November 2014, the ZANDER was located in the inshore traffic zone between the island of Norderney and the Terschelling-German Bight traffic separation scheme. At about 0700 she reduced speed and drifted with wind and current in a south-easterly direction. At 0754 a crew member was caught by a wave on deck and washed overboard. Thereupon the ZANDER sent a distress call via VHF channel 16. She reported her position and water ingress. The distress call was acknowledged by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Bremen. The distressed vessel was advised that the Norderney's station rescue cruiser was en route to her. Immediately thereafter the ARY, operating a guard vessel for wind farms, established contact, advising that she was reportedly about 2.5 nm from the reported position and would arrive there in 10-15 minutes. Due to her low freeboard and equipment with a rescue net she was reportedly well-suited to rescuing a person out of the water. Due to her low freeboard and equipment, which includes a rescue net, she is reportedly especially well-suited to rescuing a person in the water. Two other guard vessels, the MARSDIEP and SEAGULL, also made contact and headed for the ZANDER. ETV NORDIC, which is deployed in the German Bight, was anchored about 1.5 nm south-east of the scene of the accident. She started her engines and weighed anchor.

On her approach the ARY noticed that the ZANDER was listing about 15-20° to port. Therefore, she called the ZANDER at 0805 and asked if she required assistance. The ZANDER rejected the assistance. Afterwards the ARY asked where the person in the water was and whether he was wearing a life jacket. The ZANDER replied that the person was windward of her and not wearing a lifejacket. At 0810 the ARY was two cables from the ZANDER, when she noticed a white cloud of smoke, and called the ZANDER for the last time via VHF and informed her that she would founder and that the person should abandon the ship taking a lifebuoy or lifejacket. The ZANDER did not respond anymore and foundered shortly afterwards over the stern.

The ARY's crew did not notice anybody abandoning the ZANDER. When she reached the position where the vessel foundered, she reduced her speed in order to prevent overrunning any survivors and turned several circles there. In addition to wreckage, a work jacket, a lifejacket, and a survival suit were floating in the water. Nobody was located. The rescue cruiser and the other two guard vessels arrived at the scene of the accident at about 0830. The SAR helicopter arrived at the scene of the accident at about 0835 and started the search. The helicopter located the first person at 0844 and the second at 0902. Due to the prevailing sea conditions, the helicopter crew was unable to recover the two individuals from the water using a rescue basket. They were then picked up by the rescue cruiser's tender. Attempts at resuscitation on the tender were unsuccessful.

Volker Schellhammer
Director