



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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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby gives notice that the Investigation Report 58/14 was published on 8 September 2016. The report deals with the collision involving the multipurpose vessel WILSON FEDJE and the inland vessel JADE in the port of Hamburg on 5 March 2014. This report – as well as all previous reports – is available on the website <http://www.bsu-bund.de> and can be downloaded.

Short version:

Less serious marine casualty - collision involving the multipurpose vessel WILSON FEDJE and the inland vessel JADE in the port of Hamburg on 5 March 2014.

On 5 March 2014 the Barbados registered WILSON FEDJE, collided with the oncoming German inland motor vessel JADE in the port of Hamburg in very dense fog on the northern Elbe. The WILSON FEDJE had sailed from Rotterdam. Different assessments of the imminent encounter situation on the bridges

of both ships preceded the collision. The JADE was heavily damaged as a consequence of the collision. However, the skipper managed to steer the ship to the embankment of the northern Elbe and deliberately grounding her there. The WILSON FEDJE only sustained very minor damages. After having determined that the JADE did not

require any assistance the largely undamaged WILSON FEDJE continued her voyage to her berth.

The investigation report was published on 8 September 2016 and is available on www.bsu-bund.de.

Long version:

Less serious marine casualty - collision involving the multipurpose vessel WILSON FEDJE and the inland vessel JADE in the port of Hamburg on 5 March 2014

At about 0802 on 5 March 2014, the Barbados-registered cargo ship WILSON FEDJE collided with the German-flagged inland motor vessel JADE in extremely dense fog with visibility of significantly less than 100 metres in places on the northern edge of the northern Elbe main fairway in the port of Hamburg level with the Seemannshöft pilot station.

The WILSON FEDJE had sailed in ballast from Rotterdam and was proceeding to her berth in the port of Hamburg under pilotage and shore-based radar guidance at the time of the accident. The large container ship XIN LOS ANGELES was sailing about 1 nm ahead of the WILSON FEDJE, also heading for Hamburg.

For her part, the fully laden JADE, carrying approximately 1,000 tonnes of soybean meal, left the port of Hamburg (Reihe-Hafen port) for Beidenfleth at 0700. After sailing out of the Köhlbrand secondary fairway, she proceeded downstream on the northern side of the northern Elbe main fairway in accordance with requirements. This vessel did not make use of any pilotage whatsoever.

There was radio contact between the WILSON FEDJE's port pilot and skipper of the inland motor vessel ALMERODE about nine minutes before the collision. The ALMERODE was approaching from the east and intended to turn from the northern Elbe main fairway into the Köhlfleet secondary fairway, which branched off to the south of her current position, after the passage of the XIN LOS ANGELES and preferably before the passage of the WILSON FEDJE. The WILSON FEDJE's pilot agreed to this request. A green-green encounter was agreed upon and corresponding information sent to the radar pilot, who had no objection given the general traffic situation but advised the two vessels about a vessel following the ALMERODE, i.e. also sailing downstream on the River Elbe. It later transpired that this was the JADE.

To implement the green-green encounter agreed with the ALMERODE, the WILSON FEDJE's pilot started to steer the ship into the northern part of the fairway at about 0755. At 0756, he notified shipping of this course alteration and the intention to return to the southern side of the fairway after passing the ALMERODE on VHF channel 74.

In the ensuing period, the WILSON FEDJE's pilot notified shipping of the position and destination of his ship several more times on channel 74. There was no communication with the vessel following the ALMERODE (the JADE), the name of which was still unknown to both the WILSON FEDJE's pilot and the radar pilot.

The WILSON FEDJE's pilot decided not to continue with his plan to return to the southern part of the fairway immediately after the green-green passage with the ALMERODE. On the one hand, he wanted to avoid crossing the heading line of the still anonymous oncoming JADE, which was approaching on the starboard side of the WILSON FEDJE. On the other hand, given the prevailing situation he assumed that the JADE would maintain her course even without a clear arrangement and that a green-green encounter of the two vessels would thus unfold without any complications.

The skipper of the JADE had apparently not followed the preceding communication concerning the intentions of the WILSON FEDJE on channel 74, however. Consequently, he believed that the approach with the oncoming WILSON FEDJE, which in his opinion was quite clearly on the 'wrong' side of the fairway, was not a readily manageable green-green encounter without complications, but reportedly feared that the WILSON FEDJE was on a collision course. To avoid a collision, the skipper of the JADE initiated a rigorous course alteration to starboard. By this time, the two vessels were already so close to each other that it was too late for a corresponding course alteration to starboard by the WILSON FEDJE. Despite the stop and subsequent full astern manoeuvre initiated on the bridge of the WILSON FEDJE immediately after the JADE's course alteration to starboard was recognised, the two vessels collided at 0802.

The WILSON FEDJE's bulbous bow ploughed into the port side of the JADE at an angle of about 90 degrees. The WILSON FEDJE parted from the JADE by moving astern shortly afterwards. The skipper of the JADE managed to manoeuvre the inland waterway vessel to the northern embankment of the northern Elbe under her own steam, where he deliberately grounded her. It was thus possible to prevent the JADE, which had sustained heavy water ingress as a result of the collision, from foundering. After reporting the accident to the vessel traffic centre (Hamburg Port Traffic), several unsuccessful attempts at contacting the JADE, and looking out for but not finding any crew members of the JADE overboard, the WILSON FEDJE, which only suffered very minor damage due to the collision, continued her journey toward her berth.

The JADE was lightened and her buoyancy temporarily restored in the days that followed. The inland waterway vessel was then towed to the Jöhnk-Werft shipyard in Hamburg-Harburg, where she was scrapped because a repair would not have been economically viable.

The accident did not result in any injuries, nor did it harm the environment.

The investigation report of the BSU deals with the actual and legal aspects of the accident at full length and arrives at the conclusion that the accident would probably not have occurred, if the inland motor vessel had been equipped with the AIS technology. This was already introduced in 2002, and enables the mutual identification.

The investigation report inter alia contains a safety recommendation addressed to the Federal Ministry of Transport and digital Infrastructure, the subordinate Directorate General Waterways and Shipping as well as the Hamburg Port Authority which is locally responsible for the port of Hamburg, aiming at a general carriage requirement for inland motor vessels analogous to regulations already applying to the river Rhine.

Volker Schellhammer
Director of the BSU

Liebe Miriam,
sehr gern, und Du bist auf einem guten Weg, auf einem manchmal steinigen Weg,
der nicht immer leicht ist und bei dem einem auch mal ganz normal die Puste
ausgeht und man nicht mehr weiter gehen mag,
aber du bist hier sehr tapfer und bist schon viel weiter als Du denkst.
Ich drück Dich,
Liebe Grüße
Petra