



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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34/16

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Date

E-Mail: posteingang-bsu@bsh.de 14 October 2016

Press Release 18/16

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby gives notice that the Investigation Report 34/16 was published on 14 October 2016. The report deals with the grounding of the CSCL INDIAN OCEAN in the river Elbe on 3 February 2016. The investigation report is available on www.bsu-bund.de

Short version:

Grounding of the CSCL INDIAN OCEAN in the River Elbe on 3 February 2016

On 3 February 2016, the large container ship CSCL INDIAN OCEAN, flying the flag of HONG KONG, was en route from Felixstowe to Hamburg. At about 2210 the first alarm sounded on the bridge, then the rudder failed. All measures taken by the pilot and the crew

could not prevent the ship from grounding off Grünendeich. The ship did not sustain damages, and no environmental pollution occurred. After two attempts to refloat the ship had failed, it was only possible to refloat the INDIAN OCEAN with

the assistance of 12 tugs on 9 February 2016.

The BSU published the final investigation report on 14 October 2016. The report is available on www.bsu-bund.de.

Long version:

Grounding of the CSCL INDIAN OCEAN in the River Elbe on 3 February 2016

On 3 February 2016, the large container ship CSCL INDIAN OCEAN, flying the flag of HONG KONG was en route from Felixstowe to Hamburg. At about 2016, the pilots were replaced off Brunsbüttel. Besides both Elbe pilots, an officer in charge of the watch, a helmsman and a look-out were on the bridge.

At about 2210 an alarm which could not be attributed initially sounded on the bridge. Shortly afterwards it became clear, that the rudder did not react anymore. The responsible pilot immediately recommended STOP ENGINE and FULL ASTERN. Moreover, the anchor was to be manned and the bow thruster activated. The two oncoming ships were informed so that they could carry out an evasion manoeuvre on time.

Meanwhile, a crewmember had gone into the steering gear room and restarted the steering gear. At 2215 the rudder responded again. The manoeuvres HART TO STARBOARD and HALF AHEAD ordered then were insufficient and the CSCL INDIAN OCEAN grounded at 2220 south of buoy 116.

The damage assessment carried out immediately by the crew did not reveal any leakages.

From 2255 onwards attempts were made to tow the ship back into the fairway, first with one tug, ultimately with up to 6 tugs. This did not succeed and it was therefore decided to wait for the next high tide.

The second attempt to tow the ship back into the fairway with 7 tugs on 4 February at about midday did also not succeed.

Now the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies assumed the coordination of the third attempt to tow the ship into the fairway. After extensive preparations, 12 tugs succeeded in towing the ship back into the fairway at 0200 on 9 February 2016. The ship could continue her voyage to the port of Hamburg.

No environmental pollution could be detected.

This investigation revealed that an additionally installed safety system, the SAFEMATIC, was incorrectly installed, so that its activation blocked the steering gear.

Volker Schellhammer
Director