



# 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 – 83 11  
Fax: + 49 (0) 40 31 90 – 83 40  
[posteingang-bsu@bsh.de](mailto:posteingang-bsu@bsh.de)  
<http://www.bsu-bund.de>

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**+ 49 40 31 90 – 83 21**

**email: [posteingang-bsu@bsh.de](mailto:posteingang-bsu@bsh.de)**

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) published the investigation report No 32/19 on 16 January 2020. The report deals with the grounding of the MV BORE BANK after a steering gear failure. The report is available on

[https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications\\_node.html](https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications_node.html)

for download.

### **Grounding of MV BORE BANK after steering gear failure level with buoy 18 of the sea channel Rostock on 17 January 2019**

On 17 January 2019, the Finnish-flagged Ro/Ro-ship BORE BANK was en route from Kotka (Finland) to Rostock. At 0530 in the morning, the pilot embarked on the ship and the passage of the sea channel started. At 0547, the pilot noticed, that he could not steer the ship and asked the third nautical officer (NO) to take over the manual steering. Thereupon, the third officer switched over, but noticed that he was unable to steer the ship as well. The rudder did not respond.

The master then took hold of the joystick with which all is overwritten and set the rudder hard to port. The BORE BANK actually began to turn to port. Since the sea channels eastern breakwater was already extremely close to the bow, the master and the pilot quickly decided, as the situation demanded, that compensating for the turn to port would be too dangerous, since the ship would strike the breakwater while turning back into the fairway over starboard. Therefore, the turn to port was not stopped and the BORE BANK grounded with her forecastle.

The crew could not detect any damages to the ship's hull. The main engine and steering gear operated properly again.

The pilot notified VTS Warnemünde of the grounding and requested tugs. With the concerted efforts of three tugs and her own main engine, the BORE BANK was refloated at 0740. At 0900, the BORE BANK was made fast at the pier with the assistance of the tugs. The loading and discharging operations and investigation of this accident started.

It was not possible to clarify the cause of the steering gear failure with the data available. The BSU is aware of the fact that repeatedly steering gear failures occur which causes cannot be clarified due to the lack of a sufficient data basis. This is because there is no obligation to record technical steering gear data. From the perspective of the BSU, the frequent steering gear failures pose an enhanced risk potential, particularly in narrow channels or in environmental sensitive sea areas.

This report recommends the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure to advocate for an amendment of SOLAS at the International Maritime Organization with respect to the specification of an internal error log in steering gears in order to henceforth minimize steering gear failures by analyzing error logs and thus enhance safety of sea.

All investigation reports, safety recommendations and other information published by the BSU are available on

[https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications\\_node.html](https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications_node.html)

Ulf Kaspera  
Director