



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

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Transport and Digital Infrastructure

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) published the summary investigation report No 310/16 on 30 July 2020. The investigation report deals with a fire in the area of the combined boiler installation of the tank motor vessel WEICHSELSTERN. The report is available on

https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications_node.html

for download.

Fire in the area of the combined boiler with two injured crewmembers on board the tank motor vessel WEICHSELSTERN.

On 18 August 2016, the Portugiese flagged tanker WEICHSELSTERN anchored on the Neue Weser Nord roadstead. During the check of the engine room regularly carried out to prepare the engine for the night, an alarm sounded at the combined boiler. The technical watch officer attempted to restart the burner. Since this attempt failed, he called the technical officer responsible for the combined boiler installation. In the course of the attempts to restart the boiler, both officers went in the immediate vicinity of the burner in order to check the process. While they stayed there, all of sudden the burner's door burst open. Thereby, the still stable flame swept over an area of approximately 180°. Consequently, both officers sustained severe burns and a fire broke out.

Both officers could extinguish the fire by fetching hand-held fire extinguishers. The crewmembers arriving after having been alerted, administered first aid. Later on, an emergency physician flown to the ship arranged for the airlift of both injured crewmembers to a special hospital.

The experts commissioned by the BSU could not verify the assumption of an explosion causing the accident. Rather, the very defective repair welding at the burner's door locking made of grey cast iron is deemed the cause of the door bursting open.

The shipping company took extensive actions in order to remedy the issues detected in the course of the investigation or change them for the better. Therefore, the BSU could dispense with safety recommendations.

All investigation reports, safety recommendations as well as other publications of the BSU are available on

https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications/Publications_node.html .

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Director