



# 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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## PRESS RELEASE No. 15/20

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby announces the publication of the Summary Investigation Report 129/20 on 6 October 2020. The report deals with the lock gate allision by motor vessel RIMINI on 17 May 2020 in the Alte Nordschleuse lock Brunsbüttel. The report primarily serves as a summary of the accident events and is available for download at

<https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/News>

The multi-purpose vessel RIMINI, sailing under Dutch flag, had an allision with the Alte Nordschleuse lock gate at Brunsbüttel on 17 May 2020. The ship was about to embark on her east-bound Kiel Canal passage.

As is customary, the Kiel Canal pilot asked for a demonstration of the controllable pitch propeller system's functionality immediately after coming on board on the evening of May 17. The test was uneventful and they began entering the lock.

When it came to the first attempted reduction in speed there was no change in propeller pitch, so that the speed could not be brought down. The Chief Engineer immediately rushed to the engine room and carried out an on-site reset of the system, which was successful, so that the desired speed reduction could be carried out quickly.

Directly in front of the lock the situation recurred: When the vessel was to be stopped completely, the pitch propeller system did not react and froze on a low positive pitch. There was no time for another reset. Several attempts were made to reduce the speed using different manoeuvres. These efforts resulted in a speed reduction but not in a complete stop, so that the RIMINI collided head-on with the inner lock gate at 9:54 pm.

An immediate inspection showed that nobody was injured. The lock gate was severely dented and its hydraulics damaged; the RIMINI's stem plating was deformed above the water line.

Following the accident a number of repairs and service works were carried out, leading to the reassignment of Class with conditions, and enabling the RIMINI to continue her journey three days later.

A loose contact that, in the opinion of the BSU, the ship's command could not have foreseen, and was extremely unfavorable in its very first occurrence, is thought to be the cause of the problem.

The damaged lock gate was recovered within weeks of the accident. Repairs are expected to continue until the end of 2020.

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

<https://www.bsu-bund.de/EN/Publications>.

Ulf Kaspera  
Director