



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby announces the publication of the Investigation Report 211/19 on 2 June 2021. The report deals with the collision of the traditional vessel No.5 ELBE and the container ship ASTROSPRINTER on the river Elbe on 8 June 2019. The report is available for download at

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

Collision between the traditional ship No.5 ELBE and the container ship ASTROSPRINTER on the river Elbe on 8 June 2019

At 1354 on 8 June 2019, a collision between the container ship ASTROSPRINTER, flying the flag of Cyprus, and the German traditional ship No.5 ELBE, a former pilot schooner, occurred on the river Elbe level with Stadersand.

The schooner had just turned around to return to Hamburg. After the turn, the fore sails sustained damages. While the crew was busy in gaining control of these sails, they failed to leave the wrong side of the fairway.

The No. 5 ELBE just missed the oncoming HANNA and then collided with the ASTROSPRINTER. On board the former pilot schooner, which was manned with 15 crewmembers and carried 28 passengers, eight people suffered mainly minor injuries. In the further course of events, the No.5 Elbe was able to reach the nearby mouth of the river Schwinge under her own steam and with the assistance of the DLRG-boat KIEK UT before grounding and foundering in front of the pier. Thanks to the fortuitous circumstances, that rescue forces of the Stade volunteer fire department

and the DLRG were in the vicinity due to another operation and the fact that the ship was in sheltered waters, all people could be rescued in good time.

The BSU believes that the accident was mainly caused by the way the ships command responded to the damages at the fore sails during the turn. The ships command focussed solely on the sails and not on leaving the wrong side of the fairway as quickly as possible in order to avoid the oncoming traffic. Based on the findings gained during the investigation, this is due to the insufficient watch organisation and inadequate situation awareness.

Moreover, it merits criticism that the ships command of the ASTROSPRINTER neither called the pilot schooner via VHF nor attempted to warn her by means of sound signals in the course of the approach.

The BSU arrives at the conclusion, that there is urgent need for action in order to enhance the watertight integrity of traditional ships carrying more than 12 passengers and thereby prevent the risk of future similar accidents. In addition, the report comprises further safety recommendations.

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

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

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