



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 Interim Investigation Report 282/20 on 26.08.2021 about the grounding of the bulk carrier RUBINA on the Weser after the failure of the steering gear on 27 August 2020. The Interim Investigation Report provides information on the subject, the course and the current state of the investigation. The report is available for download at

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

Serious marine casualty – Grounding of the bulk carrier RUBINA after steering gear failure on the river Weser

At about 2155 on 27 August 2020, the Portugal/Madeira flagged bulk carrier RUBINA ran aground on the river Weser.

On the evening the accident took place, the RUBINA was sailing northbound on the Weser. Both steering gears were running. A helmsman was steering using the hand wheel.

At around 2155, the helmsman intended to return the rudder to midships from an angle of about 15° starboard. Initially nothing happened, despite a correct hand steering wheel position; the rudder remained at 15° starboard. After a few seconds, the steering control system automatically switched from hand wheel to tiller, accompanied by a clearly audible and visible alarm.

The ship's command directly switched the controls back to manual steering. At the same time, the rudder angle changed to hard starboard (45°) and again remained there, still without reacting to rudder angle inputs from the hand wheel. The vessel's rate of turn, already high at that point, accelerated even further.

Despite an immediately initiated full-astern manoeuvre, the RUBINA's prow ran aground within moments. Fortuitously, this happened in a relatively "innocuous" position on the Weser.

After salvage operations were completed on the following day, the RUBINA was towed to a waiting pier in Brake.

The investigation report is nearing completion.

All investigation reports, safety recommendations as well as other BSU publications are available at

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

Ulf Kaspera
Director