



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung

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The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation (BSU) hereby announces the publication of the Interim Investigation Report 301/21 on 21 September 2022. The report deals with the foundering of the fishing vessel RAMONA in the Elbe estuary, and is available for download at

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

Very serious marine casualty – Foundering of the fishing vessel RAMONA in the Elbe estuary on 21 September 2021

At about 0530 on 21 September 2021, the German-flagged fishing cutter RAMONA sailed from Cuxhaven into Helgoland Bight. Five people were on board, two crewmembers and three scientists of the Thünen Institut für Seefischerei Bremerhaven (Thünen Institute for sea fisheries, Bremerhaven). As the swell increased more and more, all present decided to head back to make further hauls in calmer waters for scientific evaluation.

At around 09:00, the master noticed that planks had come loose in the bow area and that the ship was taking on water. This water ingress was so severe that the master made a distress call at 09:21 and had all persons put on their survival suits and then let them climb into the life raft that had been brought along and had been activated in the meantime.

Shortly afterwards, the fishing cutter HOFFNUNG which arrived at the scene of the accident first, took all people on board and brought them to Cuxhaven. The rescue cruiser ANNELIESE KRAMER, DGzRS, tried to operate bilge pumps. However, the RAMONA took on water too quickly and foundered at 1026 in a water depth of approx. 7 m.

In the following days, the cutter was to be lifted. A salvage order was issued against the owner. However, because the tide caused the wreck to move constantly on the seabed, the hull disintegrated so quickly that the WSA Elbe-Nordsee in Cuxhaven decided on 19 October 2021 not to salvage it anymore.

This renders an investigation by the BSU - to which it is legally obligated in this case - much more difficult.

The BSU is currently in the process of preparing the investigation report about the very serious marine casualty. Since the BSU cannot meet the one-year deadline set by the European Union and transposed into national law by the Federal Republic of Germany for the publication of an investigation report after a very serious or serious marine casualty, the public is informed about the status of the investigation by way of issuing the above interim investigation report.

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