



Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung
Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation
Federal Higher Authority subordinated to the Ministry of Transport
and Digital Infrastructure

Interim Investigation Report
pertaining to Investigation Report 44/16

Very Serious Marine Casualty

Foundering of the fishing vessel CONDOR
on 6 February 2016 approx. 3.5 nm
east of the Baltic island of Fehmarn

6 February 2017

Pursuant to the second sentence of Article 28(1) of the Law to improve safety of shipping by investigating marine casualties and other incidents (Maritime Safety Investigation Law – SUG) in conjunction with Article 14(2) of Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector, the Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation publishes an interim report within a period of 12 months of a very serious or serious marine casualty if it is not possible to complete the corresponding investigation report within that period.

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1 FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.1 Photo of the fishing vessel CONDOR



Figure 1: Photo of the PESORSA CUATRO

1.2 Ship particulars: CONDOR

Name of ship:	CONDOR
Type of ship:	Fishing vessel
Nationality/Flag:	German
Port of registry:	Burgstaaken/Fehmarn
Fisheries Code:	SB 14
Call sign:	DKAV
Year built:	1943
Building yard:	Wendlandt yard, Wollin (West Pomeranai)
Length overall:	16,10 m
Breadth overall:	5,10 m
Draught (max):	35
Gross tonnage:	2,40
Engine rating:	206 kW
(Service) speed:	8 kts
Main engine:	MAN Dieselmotor, Type D2876
Speed (max)	8 kts
Hull material:	Wood (GRP-cover)
Manning on the day of the accident :	2

1.3 Voyage particulars fishing vessl CONDOR

Port of departure:	Burgstaaken (Germany; Island of Fehmarn)
Port of call:	Burgstaaken (Germany, Island of Fehmarn)
Type of voyage:	Coastal fisheries east of Fehmarn (day trip)
Draught at time of accident:	No information
Manning:	2

1.4 Marine casualty information

Type of accident:	Very serious marine casualty
Date/Time	06/02/2016, about 1136 CET
Location:	Baltic Sea, 3,5 nm east of Fehmarn Staberhuk
Latitude/Longitude:	Approx. φ 54°25,4'N λ 011°24,0'E
Voyage segment:	Return voyage after fishing
Consequences:	Foundering of the fishing vessel, death of both crewmembers

1.5 Shore authority involvement and emergency response

Agencies involved:	Waterway Police Schleswig-Holstein, MRCC Bremen, German Maritime Search and Rescue Association, Federal Police
Resources used:	Waterway Police boat Fehmarn, Federal Police boat NEUSTRELITZ, Federal Police helicopter, rescue cruiser BREMEN and Hans HACKMACK, fishing vessel FALKLAND
Actions taken:	After the notification about the missing fishing vessel had been received, search measures immediately initiated by sea and by helicopter; wireless tracking (AIS, VMS ¹ , VHF)
Results achieved	And subsequent recovery of both deceased and drifting crewmembers

2 Summary

On 6 February 2016, the German fishing vessel CONDOR foundered about 3.5 nm east of the Baltic Sea island of Fehmarn. The fisherman on board drowned in the Baltic Sea.

On 0647² on the day of the accident, the fishing vessel left her port of registry Burgstaaken (island Fehmarn) for a day fishing voyage east of the island of Fehmarn. At about 1130, the CONDOR started her return voyage after several abundant so called catches³ of about 3000 kg fish had been heaved on deck. Only a few minutes later, the fishing vessel capsized and foundered at about 1136 at a wind force of 5 Bft and a wind sea with short waves of about 1 m in the Baltic Sea. At the scene of the accident the water depth is around 20 m, and the temperature of the Baltic sea stood at 3° at the day of the accident.

Because the fishing vessel had not arrived in Burgstaaken a few hours after her estimated time of arrival, the fisherman cooperative notified the Waterway Police. The Police immediately initiated an extensive search for the missing fishing vessel and her crew.

At about 2000 the Waterway Police boat FEHMARN spotted objects drifting in the water which presumably belonged to the missing fishing vessel (fish box and towing gear). Shortly afterwards, the helicopter crew involved in the search spotted two lifeless persons nearby. These were clearly identified as the 2 crewmembers of the

¹ VMS = Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) satellite monitoring system for fishing vessels

² All times in the report: CET = UTC + 1 hour

³ Fisheries term= procedure of heaving the net filled with fish

fishing vessel after having been recovered and taken to Burgstaaken. The fishing vessel herself could not be detected so that it had to be assumed she foundered.

On 9 February 2016, the BSH-vessel DENEK, commissioned with the search for the foundered fishing vessel, located the wreck on the sandy bottom of the Baltic Sea.

The dives carried out subsequently by the police and the BSH did not provide any indications whatsoever as to why the fishing vessel foundered. The fishing vessel lay, as far as visible, with her starboard side largely undamaged on the sea bottom.

Since neither the accident investigation of the Waterway Police nor environmental and shipping police aspects required a salvage of the fishing vessel, the BSU decided to have the CONDOR salvaged in the course of the safety investigation initiated after receipt of the accident report.

ON 7 March 2016, "Baltic Taucherei- und Bergungsbetrieb Rostock GmbH", commissioned by the BSU managed to heave the fishing vessel out of the water after having carried out extensive preparations.

On 8 March 2016, the fishing vessel was placed on the buoy yard Warnemünde/Hohe Düne (outlying area of the Waterways and Shipping Office Stralsund). Thanks to the careful handling of the fishing vessel by the salvage company when she was raised, transported and put ashore, she was available to the BSU for the necessary investigative measures in a largely intact condition in the month that ensued.

The inspection of the wreck by the investigation team of the BSU on 8 March 2016 revealed that the foundering of the fishing vessel was neither caused by another vessel, an obstacle nor a fire or explosion. The intactness of the shell plating of the CONDOR gave rise to the conclusion that the fishing vessel did not founder due to a water ingress and tear and wear of the material, respectively, (crack or breaking of the shall plating).

Therefore it is reasonable to assume, that the accident is due to stability issues in combination with technical issues with respect to the ship's engine, steering gear or winches.

The BSU commissioned two external experts to clarify the hydrostatic and technical aspects, respectively. Moreover, the LKA Hamburg (State Office of Criminal Investigation) rendered administrative assistance and carried out a so called laser scanning for the purpose of a detailed measuring of the fishing vessel.

The heeling test already planned in the course of the stability inspection could not be carried out, since the locally responsible Waterways and Shipping Office Stralsund expressed massive safety concerns vis a vis the BSU with respect to the temporary lowering of the fishing vessel into the water.

Therefore, the expert commissioned by the BSU had to limit himself on the calculation. In so doing, he could refer, inter alia, to the aforementioned results yielded by the laser measurements with respect to dimensions of several parts of the fishing vessel. These parts were weighed on the occasion of the dismantling of the fishing vessel on the buoy yard compound by means of a crane weigher.

The investigation also focused on the questions as to whether the life rafts on the fishing vessel did not inflate after the fishing vessel had foundered and the emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) installed on the vessel did not work. It should have emitted an automatic distress signal.

The life raft as well as the EPIRB complied with the international mandatory specifications. The master had let them maintain in the course of the periodic maintenances by authorized service partners of the manufacturer before the accident.

The BSU established contact to the manufacturer of both safety appliances and they rendered support in searching for the causes for the malfunction.

The investigations of the BSU and the experts commissioned were meanwhile concluded. The BSU is currently preparing the investigation report about the very serious marine casualty. Since the time limit of one year set by the European Union and implemented into national law by the Federal Republic of Germany, to publish an investigation report after a very serious or serious marine casualty has occurred, cannot be satisfied, the public is informed by issuing the aforementioned Interim Investigation Report.