



**Bundesstelle für Seeunfalluntersuchung**  
Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation

## **Interim Investigation Report**

**Very Serious Marine Casualty 301/21**

**Foundering of the fishing vessel RAMONA in the  
Elbe estuary on 21 September 2021**

21 September 2022

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 the second sentence of Article 14(2) of Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector, the Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation publishes an interim investigation 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.

This interim investigation report should not be used in court proceedings or proceedings of the Maritime Board. Reference is made to Article 34(4) SUG.

The German text shall prevail in the interpretation of this interim investigation report.

Issued by:  
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## 1 FACTUAL INFORMATION

### 1.1 Photograph of RAMONA



Figure 1: Fishing vessel RAMONA, already foundering<sup>1</sup>

### 1.2 Ship particulars fishing vessel RAMONA

Name of ship:	RAMONA
Type of ship:	Fishing vessel
Nationality/Flag:	Germany
Port of registry:	Cuxhaven
Fisheries call sign:	CUX9
Call sign:	DFNZ
Year built:	1961
Shipyard:	Hans Dedegge in Neuhaus at the river Oste
Length overall:	15.05 m
Breadth overall:	5.00 m
Draught (max)	1.90 m
Gross Tonnage	33
Engine rating:	147 kW
Main engine:	Caterpillar
(Service) Speed	8 kn
Hull material:	Wood
Minimum safe manning:	2

<sup>1</sup> Source: DGzRS (German Maritime Search and Rescue Service).

### 1.3 Voyage particulars fishing vessel RAMONA

Port of departure: Cuxhaven (Germany)  
Planned port of call: Cuxhaven (Germany)  
Type of voyage: Coastal fisheries and research trip  
Draught at time of accident: Not specified  
Crew: 2  
Fellow travellers: 3

### 1.4 Marine casualty information / Incident in maritime shipping

Type of marine casualty: Very serious marine casualty;  
Foundering due to water ingress  
Date/Time: 21.September 2021 at about 0921, master reported  
water ingress to the VTS  
21 September 2021 at about 1026 foundered  
Location: North of light buoy.8, Großer Vogelsand  
Latitude/Longitude:  $\varphi$  54°01,3'N  $\lambda$  008°26,3'E (scene of the foundering)  
Voyage segment: Sailing (Interruption of fishing operations)  
Place on board: Bow  
Consequences: Foundering of the fishing vessel, nobody injured,  
environmental pollution by operating fluids  
(especially diesel fuel)

Extract from navigational chart DE103 (INT 1412), BSH<sup>2</sup>

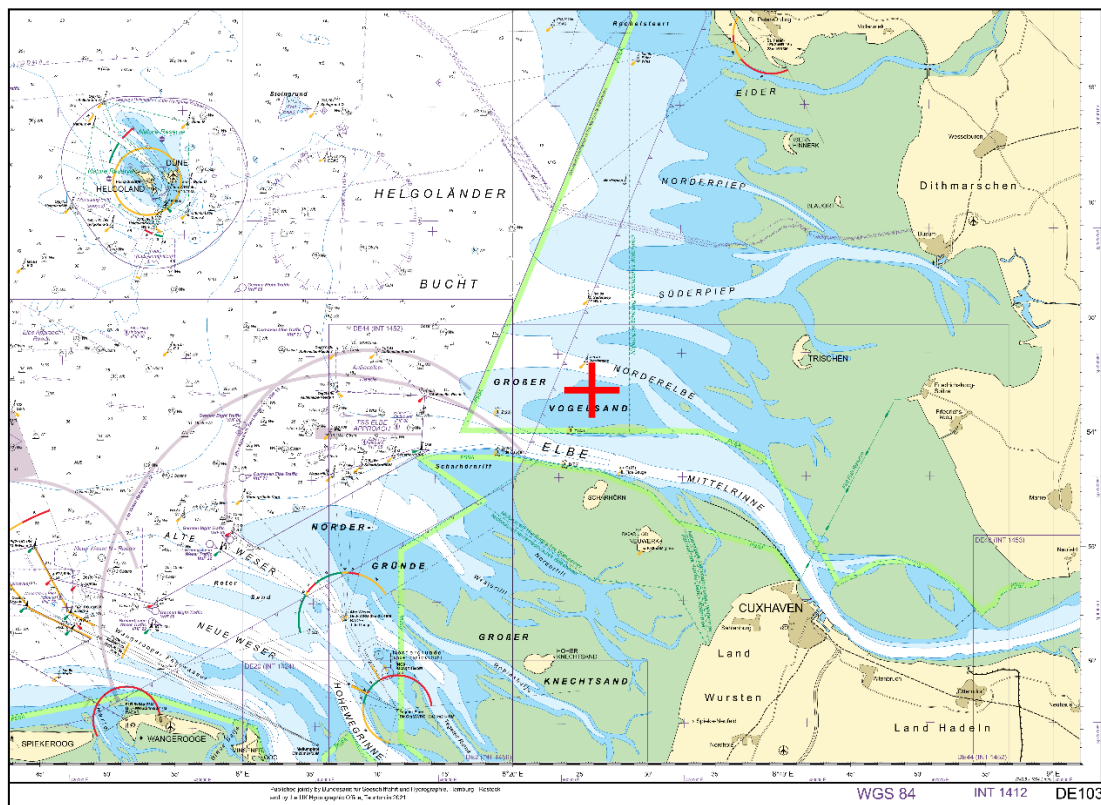


Figure 2: Scene of the accident

**1.5 Shore authority involvement and emergency response**

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Involved parties: | MRCC Bremen; DGzRS (German Maritime Search and Rescue Service); Waterways Police Hamburg; VTS Cuxhaven; WSA (Waterways and Shipping Office) Elbe – North Sea; Fishing vessel HOFFNUNG  |
| Resources used:   | Rescue cruiser ANNELIESE KRAMER; Waterways Police Boat SYLT; Survey vessel VOGELSAND; Fishing vessel HOFFNUNG  |
| Actions taken:    | Recovery of all five people from the life raft by the crew of the fishing vessel HOFFNUNG<br>Publication of a temporary notice to mariners by the WSA Elbe-North Sea to warn shipping of the dangers posed by the wreck of the fishing vessel. |

<sup>2</sup> BSH = Bundesamt für Seeschifffahrt und Hydrographie (Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency).

## 2 SUMMARY

At about 0530<sup>3</sup> on 21 September 2021, the German-flagged fishing vessel 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<sup>4</sup> 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 vessel 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 quick and foundered at 1026 in a water depth of approx. 7 m.

In the following days, the fishing vessel 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.

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<sup>3</sup> All times in the report are CEST = UTC + 2 hours.

<sup>4</sup> Colloquial for: pull a filled trawl on board.



Figure 3: The loose planks at the bow of the RAMONA<sup>5</sup>

Figure 3 shows the protruding planks at the RAMONA's bow. Unfortunately, the figure is only available in poor quality. However, the BSU is grateful for the presence of mind of the crew of the rescue cruiser ANNELIESE KRAMER who took photos in this distress situation. This way, investigations into the cause of the accident at least get some clues.

The following figure 4 shows the course of the voyage of the fishing vessel, recorded by the AIS-Portal Marinetraffic. The voyage starts in the morning at about 0530 by leaving the port of Cuxhaven and ends with the last AIS-Signal at 1008. The rescue cruiser ANNELIESE KRAMER confirmed the complete foundering of the fishing vessel RAMONA at 1026.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbrüchiger (German Maritime Search and Rescue Service).





Figure 4: Course of the voyage of the RAMONA and the scene of the accident<sup>6</sup>

The BSU was notified of the foundering of the fishing vessel RAMONA on 21 September 2021. Shortly afterwards, the investigation team established contact to her master and to the agencies involved in crisis management, in order to obtain information about the accident and the subsequent emergency measures. With regard to the technical condition of the fishing vessel, the related survey results and the current certificates, the investigation team reviewed the ship's file maintained at BG Verkehr. In addition, the BSU established contact with the engineering firm commissioned to organize and carry out the salvage operation to obtain information on the progress of activities in this regard.

The evaluation of all the above findings has been completed in the meantime. 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.

<sup>6</sup> Source: [www.marinetraffic.com](http://www.marinetraffic.com).