

Investigation Report 371/04

15. August 2005

very serious marine casualty:

Collision of MV MSC ILONA with MV HYUNDAI ADVANCE, on 7 December 2004 off Hong Kong / China

1 Summary of the marine casualty

On 7 December 2004 MV MSC ILONA was on her way from Chiwan, China, to Shanghai, China. MV HYUNDAI ADVANCE was at this time on a voyage from Yantian, China, to Singapore.

At about 21:35 h¹ the two vessels collided. The bulbous bow of MV HYUNDAI ADVANCE hit the port side of MSC ILONA on a level with the forward edge of the superstructures.

Both vessels remained floating. HYUNDAI ADVANCE continued her voyage shortly thereafter and was repaired in a yard in Singapore. MSC ILONA initially anchored at the scene of the accident, and later at an anchor position allocated to the vessel by the authorities. 1283 tonnes heavy oil flowed out of its destroyed wing tanks into the open sea. This largest case of environmental pollution in Chinese waters caused the competent authorities to act extremely conscientiously and cautiously. It was only several weeks after the collision and after extensive cleaning and emergency repair measures had been carried out that therefore MSC ILONA was allowed to leave her allocated anchor position and make for a yard in Singapore.

No personal injury was noted. The damage to the two vessels in the collision was considerable. Nothing is known about cargo damage sustained on board HYUNDAI ADVANCE; 62 twenty-foot and 22 forty-foot containers on board MSC ILONA were damaged by the collision.

2 Safety Recommendations

2.1 Lookout

The BSU recommends the operators of the vessels involved to remind the shipboard management vigorously of the importance of keeping a proper lookout. In order to take the given circumstances and conditions into account, it is also and in particular important to consider the traffic density, geographic and navigational hazards, and approach speeds to be expected. With an own speed of more than 20 kn and speeds to be expected of other vessels in the same range, in the least favourable case relative speeds of two vessels to one another of more than 40 kn result. This corresponds to an approach of about 7 cables per minute. In other words: when a radar in the 12 nm range is set centred, there are only 18 minutes between the first contact and the collision. If the available manoeuvring space is restricted on the grounds of the traffic situation or special geographic or navigational features, it is important to identify a possible close quarter situation at an early stage (depending on one's own manoeuvre data) to be able to take effective action. In order to be able to obtain and maintain a complete overview of the existing risk of a collision, an approach situation must be continuously checked and reviewed.

¹ All times in this report are local time = UTC + 8h

2.2 AIS

The BSU recommends that the operators of HYUNDAI ADVANCE in co-operation with the Korean Register of Shipping as classification society should check why no AIS signal could be received from the vessel and that they eliminate this inadequacy.

2.3 Voyage planning

The BSU recommends that the operator of MSC ILONA specify in its voyage planning procedure how the available information important for safe passage of the vessel are to be entered clearly in all appropriate charts and that it should be constantly available for the Nautical Officer of the watch.