

## **Investigation Report 86/13**

Date: 10 April 2013  
Very Serious Marine Casualty

### **1 Summary**

Am 10. April 2013 um 08:30 Uhr lief das deutsche Ausbildungsboot, die Segelyacht MERI TUULI des Typs X-Yachts 442 mit 5 Besatzungsmitgliedern von Peniche/Portugal mit dem Ziel Figueira da Foz aus. Die Reise wurde mit einer Distanz von 55 sm und einer Geschwindigkeit von 8 kn berechnet, so dass die Ankunftszeit bei Hochwasser etwa nachmittags gegen 16:30 Uhr gewesen wäre. Die MERI TUULI erreichte ihren Liegeplatz im Zielhafen nicht. Nach dem Segeleinholen krängte sie SW-lich der N-lichen Mole etwa an der 10 m Linie um 16:41 Uhr schlagartig durch eine Grundsee wahrscheinlich nach Bb. auf die Wasserlinie über, als sie durch eine steile, achterliche 5-6 m hohe Welle querschlug und ihre Steuerfähigkeit verlor. Dabei brach der Mast und 4 Besatzungsmitglieder fielen außenbords. Bei der Rettungsaktion verstarben ein Polizist und ein Besatzungsmitglied in einem halbstarren Schlauchboot, das gekentert war, nachdem zwei Besatzungsmitglieder der MERI TUULI bereits abgeborgen waren.

### **2 Safety Recommendations**

The following safety recommendations do not constitute a presumption of blame or liability in respect of type, number or sequence.

#### **2.1 Owner and operator of the MERI TUULI**

The BSU recommends that the sailing school inspect and possibly improve the life-saving appliances on its recreational craft, in respect of their adequacy on international voyages on the Atlantic, in particular. Based on the area of operation (high seas, coastal waters or sheltered waters), it is important to ensure that the equipment is arranged so that the risk of falling overboard is reduced as far as possible and reboarding is facilitated. In this context, it is important to assess whether on sailing craft smaller lifejackets are more suitable than multi-purpose jackets with greater buoyancy. With regard to lifelines, based on the challenges of the area of operation an assessment must be made as to whether a fall arrest system with crotch strap and shock absorber, which is separate from the lifejacket, should be provided and anchoring points appropriate for reducing the risk of injury during high roll moments are available on the craft.

Current and revised nautical charts must be available on board for the voyage.

#### **2.2 Skipper of the MERI TUULI**

In addition to the individual responsibility of each crew member, the skipper is required to verify the proper application of personal safety equipment and draw attention to risks. It is helpful to discuss situations together and define a strategy. The risk of recreational yachts capsizing due to crossing waves that are steep, high or breaking is high. Inasmuch, breaking waves should be avoided and the wave pattern continuously monitored.

Sailing directions from several sources should be used for voyage planning in foreign and unknown waters. The Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency keeps a wide variety of maritime literature in its library for that purpose.

The NAVTEX receiver should be set so that clarity is not lost and relevant messages are sorted.

In radio traffic, it may be easier to obtain port-related information if calls are more general, e.g. to all stations, or possibly to contact the harbour pilots and emphasise the purpose of the call in the process.

It is important to ensure that paper nautical charts are up to date in addition to the electronic nautical charts.

The ship's equipment, especially the navigation and radio equipment, the running and standing rigging (shrouds), as well as the engine and sails, must be checked before starting a voyage.

Prior to port entrances affected by high swell waves and depending on the weather situation, an assessment should be made as to whether a direct approach under sail into the area protected by jetties would be more favourable than first striking the sails and being exposed to rough sea.