

Investigation Report No. 36/14

Date: 26 May 2016

Serious marine casualty

Collision between the WES JANINE and STENBERG on the Nordwest-Reede anchorage off Brunsbüttel on 16 January 2014

1 Summary

On 16 January 2014, the WES JANINE was en route from Bremerhaven to St. Petersburg. The ship arrived at Brunsbüttel under pilotage in the early hours of the morning. Since only limited operation of the Kiel Canal locks was possible due to technical problems, she had to first lie in an anchorage off Brunsbüttel for an extended period. The ship's command and pilot opted for a position in the Nordwest-Reede anchorage, where the WES JANINE anchored between the STENBERG and RIJNBORG at 0200¹. The ship rotated up until about 0345 due to the turning of the tide. The WES JANINE's pilot continued to monitor the behaviour of the ship until 0356 and then left the bridge. The WES JANINE started to drift at anchor at about 0450. The officer on the bridge in charge of the navigational watch did not notice this initially or there was no appreciable response. The pilot was not requested to go to the bridge until 0518, at which point the distance to the STENBERG was 80 m. The convergence was not noticed on the STENBERG until even later. The two ships had converged even further when the main engine was started on the WES JANINE. As a result of this, the STENBERG's anchor cable was caught by and then blocked the WES JANINE's screw. The WES JANINE then drifted further towards the STENBERG and the two ships collided. The bow of the STENBERG sustained minor damage in the process. Three containers and the hull was dented on the WES JANINE. Attempts were initially made to separate the two ships with the help of a tug. This was not possible. The STENBERG later slipped her ground tackle, i.e. the anchor and chain, and was then able to continue her voyage. The WES JANINE was later moved back to the anchorage with the help of two tugs, during which manoeuvring was severely impaired by having to drag the STENBERG's ground tackle. The WES JANINE was towed to a shipyard for repair work sometime after.

Nobody lost their life or was injured as a result of the collision between the two ships and no environmentally hazardous substances escaped.

¹ All times shown in this report are CET = UTC + 1.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

1.1 Ship's command of the WES JANINE

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the ship's command of the WES JANINE review the accident. In particular, the bridge team's duties while laid up in an anchorage and the appropriate use of navigational aids should be revisited in the process. With regard to co-operation with pilots, it is further recommended that the ship's command review the guidelines and practises in the sense of bridge team management.

1.2 Shipping company of the WES JANINE

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the shipping company of the WES JANINE review the accident within the company in respect of the navigator's duties in an anchorage and use of navigational aids. With regard to bridge team management, the principles of co-operating with pilots should also be intensified further.

1.3 Elbe Pilots' Association

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the Elbe Pilots' Association review the accident as part of further training within the Association. In particular, communication within the bridge team should be addressed in the process.