

Investigation Report No. 262/14

Date: 12 April 2017

Very serious marine casualty

Foundering of the fishing vessel ANDREA and death of a crew member in the Baltic Sea off Lippe on 16 August 2014

1 Summary

The fishing vessel ANDREA sailed out of the port of Lippe in Schleswig-Holstein shortly after 0500 on 16 August 2014. The owner, who also commanded the fishing vessel, and another crew member were on board. At about 0530, they arrived at the sea area off Hohwacht, some 1.5 nm away, where two flounder nets had been set on the day previously. Since the north-westerly wind and waves were increasing, the crew was in a hurry to haul in the nets, which is why each net was stowed in a large barrel immediately, i.e. without emptying the fish. These some 200-litre barrels were situated on the port side of the fore section during the return voyage. Neither barrel was secured.

According to the report of Germany's National Meteorological Service (DWD), a force 4-5 Bft westerly wind prevailed. Gusts of up to 6 Bft were possible. Significant wave height stood at 0.5-1 m. Water temperature stood at 19°C.

The fishing vessel was turned onto a more westerly course for the approach to the port of Lippe. The sea now came from the starboard side. The fishing vessel suddenly heeled heavily to starboard on the back of a wave, causing the two net barrels to slide to starboard, too. The fishing vessel started to list as a result, enabling the next wave to clear the bulwark. She then capsized and foundered quickly.

The skipper was able to get out of the wheelhouse and move away from the fishing vessel. He managed to keep his head above water with the help of floating objects until he was rescued. The other crew member was missing from this point in time. Neither fisherman was wearing a lifejacket or buoyancy aid at the time of the accident.

The skipper was discovered and rescued at least 30 minutes later by the crew of another fishing vessel, the LAURA, which happened to be in the vicinity.

An extensive search involving helicopters and boats was started after it became known that the second crew member of the ANDREA was missing. Stretches of beach were also searched in the process. The search was unsuccessful, however. The body of the crew member was recovered on 25 August 2014 in the sea area off Heiligenhafen.

2 Safety Recommendation(s)

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

2.1 Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure introduce an obligation to equip with Cospas-Sarsat EPIRB or Cospas-Sarsat PLB devices, for small fishing vessels operated

by one or two person(s), in particular, so as to significantly improve the options for alerting in an emergency.

2.2 Prevention Division of BG Verkehr

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the Prevention Division of BG Verkehr include a recommendation in the Maritime Manual for small fishing vessels operated by one or two person(s) to equip with Cospas-Sarsat EPIRB or Cospas-Sarsat PLB devices, so as to raise awareness of the issue among their operators further.