

## **Investigation Report No. 168/16**

**Date: 17 May 2016**

**Very Serious marine casualty**

**Fatal person-overboard accident involving a crew member of the fishing vessel PESORSA CUATRO 150 nm west of Ireland on 17 May 2016**

### **1 Summary**

On 17 May 2016, the German-flagged fishing vessel PESORSA CUATRO was fishing for crab some 150 nm west of Ireland. During the fishing process, a crew member went overboard at around 1730<sup>1</sup>. The crew member had previously climbed onto the observation deck with other employees in order to identify the next fishing gear marker buoy from there. The exact course of the accident was not observed. The casualty was only noticed when he was already in the water. Despite the immediate return to the scene of the accident, the casualty could only be rescued in an inanimate state. The crew's immediately initiated attempts at resuscitation were unsuccessful and the casualty was later pronounced dead. Following that, the PESORSA CUATRO returned to A Coruña. The BSU's investigation on board began after the vessel's arrival on 20 May 2016.

It was established during the investigation that the casualty had not been wearing an inflatable lifejacket<sup>2</sup>. It was also established that the guard rail surrounding the observation deck was not completely closed. The BSU believes this was the reason the fisherman fell overboard.

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<sup>1</sup> All times shown in this report are UTC (Central European Summer Time -2 hours). UTC equals board time.

<sup>2</sup> An inflatable lifejacket is part of the Personal Protective Equipment. This means in the report an automatically inflatable lifejacket when in contact with water. The inflated floating body shell assures that the head of an unconscious person is kept above the water. The lifejacket has a minimum buoyancy of 150 N and a CE marking.

## **2 Safety Recommendations**

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

### **2.1 Owner: Seamar GmbH**

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the owner ensure that the obligation to wear automatically inflatable lifejackets be enforced on board its fishing vessels if there is a risk of falling into the water while working on the deck.

### **2.2 Owner: Seamar GmbH**

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends the owner to take into active consideration the typical work processes during catch and processing while carrying out the necessary regular risk analyses on board in the future in order to identify and eliminate potential hazards in the work process.

### **2.3 Ship Safety Division of BG Verkehr**

The Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation recommends that the Ship Safety Division of BG Verkehr urges their surveyors to include operating procedures during the fishing process more extensively in the scope of the surveys carried out with respect to labour legislation.