

# MEMBER ALERT



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## GOOD CATCH UPDATE: INCIDENT DAMAGES CAPTAIN'S PRIDE (COLREGS)

Steering drills to achieve and maintain compliance with Rule 5, Look-out, of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) should involve the engineers as well as the bridge team. Make a Good Catch by using "all available means" rather than relying on just one system to indicate a problem or a hazardous situation developing!

In this context, your Managers are pleased to present the latest instalment of the Club's *Good Catch* initiative:

- *Incident Damages Captain's Pride (COLREGS)* available in [English](#), [new](#) and [traditional](#) Mandarin.

**GOOD CATCH** from **The American Club**  
**Incident Damages Captain's Pride!**  
(COLREGS)

**Description**  
A panama size bulk cargo vessel appeared to lose steering while departing port. Fearing the worst, the Captain quickly sounded the danger signal to alert all other nearby vessels. The pilot aboard immediately called for assistance resulting in four tugs that rescued the vessel's aid. The vessel was maneuvered by the tugs to a safe anchorage so the steering failure could be identified and corrected. The local authorities required two tugs to stand by the vessel as a precautionary measure. Thereafter, the local port state control authorities and a classification society surveyor boarded the vessel to investigate the incident. A technical representative from the steering system manufacturer was also dispatched to the vessel. Then the crew discovered that a small set screw holding the arrow to the small shark in the old analog rudder angle indicator on the bridge had backed out just enough that the indicator arrow came loose and appeared to be stuck pointing in one direction (down). The steering system was actually working fine. **Wow, that was a bit embarrassing!**

**COLREGS Rule 5: Lookout**  
Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper lookout by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so to make full use of the human eye or other means of observation.

**Actual Damage**  
The actual cost for the tugs, the pilot (again), launches and the steering gear expert exceeded \$74,000 and the vessel was delayed for 3 days during which time she was placed off-hire by the charterers. Needless to say, the Captain's pride had also been bruised by the incident.

**Potential Damages**  
The poor reaction by the bridge team could have made an embarrassing situation worse. Convinced it was an emergency, the bridge team might have taken extreme actions such as dropping the anchor while the vessel's speed was above effective limits. The vessel could have traveled or swung outside the channel potentially impacting other traffic or grounding.

**THE AMERICAN CLUB** **GOOD CATCH** Incident Damages Captain's Pride (COLREGS) April 2023

**Prevention**

- Are steering failure drills conducted on your vessel? Do they involve the engineers as well as the bridge team? Are they realistic?
- Is achieving and maintaining compliance with Rule 5, Look-out, of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) discussed on your vessel?

What is meant by "all available means" in Rule 5 of the COLREGS?

When you identify a hazard before something goes wrong... **it's a Good Catch.**  
When you stop an operation before something bad happens... **it's a Good Catch.**  
When you use "all available means" and don't rely on just one system to indicate a problem or a hazardous situation developing... **that's a Good Catch, too!**

**THE AMERICAN CLUB**

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As a reminder, all *Good Catch* alerts and animations are posted at the Club's website at:

[https://www.american-club.com/page/good\\_catch](https://www.american-club.com/page/good_catch)

Your Managers recommend that Members take note of this information and be guided accordingly.