

# MEMBER ALERT



Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc., Manager  
One Battery Park Plaza 31<sup>st</sup> Fl., New York, NY 10004 USA  
Tel: +1 212 847 4500  
Fax: +1 212 847 4599

<https://www.american-club.com>

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## GOOD CATCH UPDATE: *ENGINE FAILURE DOCK ALLISION*

Your Managers are pleased to present the latest instalment of the Club's *Good Catch* initiative:

- *Engine Failure Dock Allision* in [English](#), [new](#) and [traditional](#) Mandarin.

### GOOD CATCH from The American Club

#### Engine Failure Dock Allision

**Description**

A general cargo vessel was approaching the dock. The vessel's direct-drive diesel engine was in engine room control and the engine control room was manned. The Master and pilot had discussed the approach to the dock and agreed on the plan and how the two available tugboats would be used.

As the vessel began its approach to the dock, it was travelling at a speed of approximately 1 knot. The pilot ordered "stop" on the engine to allow the vessel to gradually slow. Shortly thereafter, he ordered "dead slow astern" for the engine and ordered the helm turned to "15° to port."

The Chief Engineer was in the engine control room and acknowledged the "stop" and the "dead slow astern" orders. However, the engine failed to restart. The Chief Engineer was immediately focused on directing the other engineers in diagnosing the problem and failed to inform the Master or pilot of the delay restarting the engine. It took several attempts over several minutes before they could get the engine restarted.

The Master and the pilot were on the bridge wing and due to concerns with other ship traffic in the area were unaware of the delay getting the engine restarted. With the engine in engine room control, no one on the bridge was actively monitoring the status of the engine. The pilot next ordered the engine "dead slow ahead" to align the vessel with the dock. Again, there was a delay getting the engine restarted. This time, the Master recognized that the engine hadn't responded as expected and called the engine room. The Chief Engineer indicated they were again having a problem and were working on it. After a delay, the engineers were able to get the engine started and respond to the "dead slow ahead" command. Due to the delay, the vessel did not start to turn as quickly as expected. The pilot gave emergency orders to both tugboats to try to slow the vessel and turn the bow. However, they were not able to prevent the vessel from contacting the fender system causing damage to the hull and the fender system.

The investigation determined that the technical difficulty getting the engine restarted was due to an accumulation of moisture in the starting air system. The investigation also concluded that the Chief Engineer failed to properly communicate with the Master and pilot regarding the problems restarting the engine or otherwise direct one of the other engineers to communicate with the bridge. Additionally, the investigation determined that better monitoring of the engine status on the bridge would likely have enabled the Master and pilot to recognize earlier that the engine was not performing as expected.

**Actual Damage**

The hard impact damaged some hull plating and internal structure on the vessel. It also damaged the fender system resulting in repairs costs that exceeded \$38,000.

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### Potential Injuries and Damages

Although the hull was breached in several small areas along the length of the scrape, the vessel's slow speed and the use of the tugboats prevented more extensive damage. Had the vessel's angle to the dock been steeper or the vessel's speed been higher, the hull damage would have been more severe. Additionally, the damage to the fender system was limited to one fender. Fortunately, the structure that attaches the fender to the dock was undamaged. Had the fender structure been damaged, the repairs would have been significantly more extensive.

### Prevention

- \* Any issues with the vessel's propulsion should be immediately brought to the attention of the Master and the pilot, especially when manoeuvring.
- \* The Chief Engineer should maintain full awareness of the situation at all times, and both direct the engineers and communicate with the bridge concurrently.
- \* Good bridge resource management should include diligent monitoring of the engine speed to ensure that the engine is responding and turning in the direction and speed ordered.
- \* A careful and planned approach to the dock is important as a safeguard against unforeseen circumstances that might involve the vessel propulsion, steering, an unexpected action by a tugboat, or delays with line handling.

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 good engine room and bridge resource management results in quick recognition and reporting of an engine problem... **that's a Good Catch, too!**

The American Club would like to specially thank Independent Maritime Consulting, LLC for their contribution to this document.

American Steamship Owners Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association, Inc.

<b>Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc. Manager</b>	<b>Shipowners Claims Bureau (Hellas), Inc.</b>	
<b>New York</b>	<b>Panama</b>	
tel: +1 212 847 4500	tel: +50 710 429 4187	
email: <a href="mailto:info@american-club.com">info@american-club.com</a>	email: <a href="mailto:info@scb-hellas.com">info@scb-hellas.com</a>	
	web: <a href="http://www.american-club.com">www.american-club.com</a>	
<b>Houston</b>	<b>SCB Management Consulting Services, Ltd.</b>	
tel: +1 346 223 9900	<b>Hong Kong</b>	
email: <a href="mailto:info@scb-usa.com">info@scb-usa.com</a>	tel: +852 3600 2900	
	email: <a href="mailto:info@scb-hk.com">info@scb-hk.com</a>	
<b>Shipowners Claims Bureau (UK) Ltd.</b>	<b>SCB Management Consulting (China) Co., Ltd.</b>	
<b>London</b>	<b>Shanghai</b>	
tel: +44 20 7788 0360	tel: +86 21 5366 5000	
email: <a href="mailto:info@scb-uk.com">info@scb-uk.com</a>	email: <a href="mailto:info@scb-cn.com">info@scb-cn.com</a>	
	fax: +86 21 5366 6100	

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[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.