



Master Pilot Dock Allision

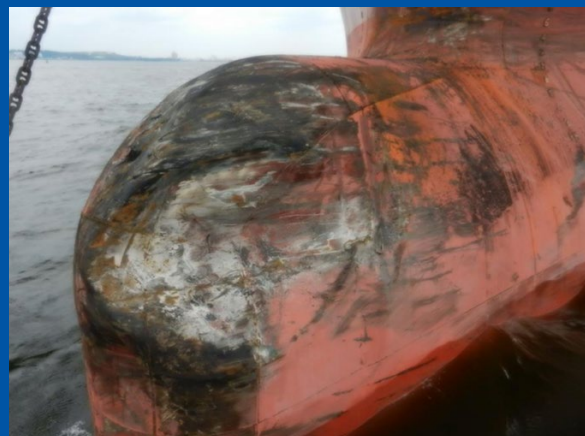
Description

A break bulk carrier picked up the pilot prior to entering port. The Master-pilot exchange was held. They discussed the vessel's handling, condition of the propulsion system, the weather, expected traffic, and the planned use of two docking tugs. In addition to the Master and the pilot, the 2nd Mate and a helmsman were on watch on the bridge. The 2nd Mate had propulsion control and was also monitoring the vessel's radar and position.

The pilot was giving helm and engine commands as he brought the vessel past the breakwaters and started up the river. At that point, the vessel was traveling at a speed of 7 knots. As the vessel approached a substantial turn in the river, the pilot ordered the rudder to 25° to starboard. He quickly realized that was insufficient when he saw that the vessel's rate of turn was less than he thought it would be. He then quickly ordered "right full rudder" and ordered the engine "back full." Although the rudder and the engine responded quickly, the vessel allided with a nearby dock causing damage to the vessel's bow and to the dock structure.

In his statement after the incident, the Master indicated that he thought the pilot was proceeding too fast but did not say anything. He had deferred to the pilot's judgment because of the pilot's familiarity with the port and because it was the Master's first visit to the port. The Master also said that he handed the pilot the vessel's pilot card but did not recall if the pilot actually reviewed it.

Tests of the steering system indicated that the system was functioning normally and that there were no delay responses in the system. A review of the information in the voyage data recorder showed that the response of both the helmsman and 2nd Mate to the commands from the pilot were correct and without appreciable delay. When interviewed, the 2nd Mate also indicated that he felt the vessel was proceeding faster than was prudent. He did not feel it was his place to say anything since the pilot knew the port and because he saw that the Master was monitoring the pilot's actions closely.



Actual Damage

The damage to the vessel was limited to the bulbous bow. The damage to the dock was more extensive as a large portion of the fender system was destroyed and the concrete dock structure was also damaged. Repair costs exceeded \$163,000.

Potential Injuries and Damages

Damage to both the vessel and the dock could have been worse. It was fortunate that a barge that had been moored at the damaged dock had been moved less than an hour previously otherwise it would have been damaged as well.

Prevention

- ★ A good Master-pilot exchange is critically important and should never be treated as a formality.
- ★ The planned route and vessel speed should be discussed during the Master-pilot exchange including challenging navigation conditions and locations.
- ★ The Master should trust his/her judgement and should immediately raise any concerns related to pilot actions or inactions.
- ★ Good bridge resource management includes creating the atmosphere where everyone on the bridge, including junior crew members, should feel empowered to speak up if they see an error or believe something is not safe.

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 take extra time for a detailed and proper Master-pilot exchange and speak up if you believe something isn't safe...

that's a Good Catch, too!



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American Steamship Owners Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association, Inc.

Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc., Manager

New York

tel +1 212 847 4500 fax +1 212 847 4599
email info@american-club.com web www.american-club.com

Houston

tel +1 346 223 9900
email claims@american-club.com

Shipowners Claims Bureau (UK) Ltd.

London

tel +44 20 7709 1390
email claims@scb-uk.com

Shipowners Claims Bureau (Hellas), Inc.

Piraeus

tel +30 210 429 4990 fax +30 210 429 4187
email claims@scb-hellas.com

SCB Management Consulting Services, Ltd.

Hong Kong

tel +852 3905 2150
email hkinfo@scbmcs.com

SCB Management Consulting (China) Co., Ltd.

Shanghai

tel +86 21 3366 5000 fax +86 21 3366 6100
email claims@scbmcs.com