

M.S. Notice 1 of 2000

Subject: Problem with Yokohama fenders.

In the summer of 1998, an offshore supply tug sank in the Gulf of Kutch due to the fury of the prevalent cyclonic weather. The vessel was mainly engaged to assist the tankers while berthing and unberthing at the LPO.

1. In the fateful day, the said vessel was anchored near the LPO. Upon receiving the cyclonic weather forecast, the Master shifted his vessel to deeper waters and anchored to his satisfaction. Due to the deteriorating weather, the vessel had kept the engines on standby at short notice. The four big Yokohama fenders mainly used for the lighter age operation were tied to the stern of the vessel. As the weather deteriorated, the four Yokohama fenders drifted to the port quarter of the vessel. The severe cyclonic wind and the drag of the fenders provided additional pull on the vessel and constrained the vessel on her port side. Due to the wind and the additional pull, the tug heeled over to the port side and with the increase in the wind, the heel increased progressively. The inclement weather prevented the crew to release the fenders. Though the Master tried to heave up the anchor, but his efforts were in vain and the vessel sank at the same position.

2. A fact-finding inquiry revealed that a cumulative effect of the drag due to the fender and the gusting wind led to this unfortunate incident. It is difficult to say that had there been no fenders then the vessel would not have met such fate, but, it can be said with certain degree of certainty that had the fenders been released, the vessel would have been able to heave up her anchor and maneuver to safety.

Having noted the above incident, the Director General of Shipping draws attention of all ship-owners, shipmasters and crew to the above incident and urges them to take preventive measures while handling large floating units which may be effected due to the excessive wind leading to destabilizing effect on the smaller crafts.

This issues with the approval of the Nautical Adviser to the Government of India.

Sd/-

(Capt. L. K. Panda)

Nautical Surveyor

For Nautical Adviser to the Govt. of India