

Casualty Circular No. 4 of 2004

F.No.11- NT(37)/2001

Dated 30th August 2004

Sub: Grounding of a Bulk Carrier

1. NARRATION.:

1.1 A bulk carrier of about 28,700GRT under Pilotage, sailed from the port of Portland, Australia, to a suitable anchoring area for the purpose to cleaning of holds. The vessels was in ballast and was drawing 6.5 mtrs.

1.2 After a short maneuvering the vessel was anchored using seven shackles of port anchor in an area approximately two nautical miles off the breakwater. The depth was ten fathoms. The nature of seabed was porous limestone. Guide to port entry recommended, not to anchor in the area in storms and gale.

1.3 During the next day, wind increased to Beaufort force Sly 5/6. The vessel was observed to be 0.37 nautical miles from original position. No action was taken to heave up the anchor.

1.4 A few hours later, wind force had increased to 7/8 with heavy swell. At this stage, the duty officer informed the master that the vessel was dragging anchor. Immediately anchor station were called and heaving of anchor was commenced. Attempts were made to contact port control, but in vain. While the anchor was being heaved, the vessel quickly swung to port and faced the north-eastern shore. Engines were ordered full astern with maximum power. By this time the port anchor was aweigh and the wind caught the vessel on her port quarter, swinging the vessel further to port. The Sly weather set / drifted her side ways towards the shallows. The echo sounder repeater showed the depth of water under the keel decreasing very rapidly. Soon, the wake ceased to move at or about midships. There was no effect of main engines running at full astern. Thereafter, echo sounder repeater showed erratic soundings. The vessel had run aground.