

Shipping casualty during routine boat Drill at anchorage.

Casualty Circular No. 16 of 2009

(Regulatory/Guidance/Information)

NO:11-NT(72)/2008

Dated: 04.08.2009

Subject: Shipping casualty during routine boat Drill at anchorage.

NARRATIVE

A container ship, flag - Indian, age approx 16 years, GRT - 11892. sailed out from an Indian port for another Indian port on 01.8.2008. The length of the voyage was only 18 hours. The vessel arrived at the outer anchorage of destined port on 02.8.2008 at 1354 hrs. The ship's crew was engaged in lowering the starboard life boat at 1400 hrs. just few minutes after anchoring of the ship under the supervision of the Master and additional 2nd officer. This operation was accomplished successfully. The senior officer along with Able Bodied (A.B.) seaman, fitter and two numbers of ratings entered the boat at 1410 hrs. The boat was lowered to water level and made water borne. After completion of this exercise, the boat was re-hooked for hoisting at 1445 hrs. While the boat was being hoisted and reached almost at the level of boat deck, it slipped off from the hook and fell into the water from height little below the boat deck level. During the said operations, 5 persons were in the life boat. They sustained injuries and were sent ashore for medical treatment. The starboard life boat also was extensively damaged and landed ashore for permanent repairs. The vessel obtained dispensation from the Flag Administration to undertake the intended voyage without this life boat. However, the shipowner placed 3 No. additional life rafts in lieu of damaged starboard life boat.

OBSERVATIONS/ANALYSES

- In accordance with drill schedule for year 2008, the starboard life boat was not required to be lowered.
- There was no berthing prospect announced by the port for the vessel for 02.8.2008 (i.e. the day the vessel anchored).
- The Drill was arranged in a great hurry immediately after the anchoring of vessel.
- The Engineer officer though a part of the Muster list did not participate in the boat Drill.
- The senior officer, AB and Junior officer who sustained injury were not part of the required team in accordance with the Muster list.
- The drill was not conducted in a systematic manner as emergency alarm to alert the crew on the emergency situation was not sounded.
- The hoisting and lowering operation was done with frequent stoppages allowing the slack on the boat wire fall to develop. Perhaps the frequent jerking movements dislodged the life boat from the hooks.
- Physical and circumstantial evidences show that nothing other than human error attributed to this casualty.. A fatigue and incompetence on part of the operating crew was one of the few elements, which caused damaged to the life boat and injuries to the crew in the boat.

RECOMMENDATIONS/LESSONS LEARNT

- The SOLAS 1974 Regulation 20.6.3 chapter III and Flag State [Casualty Circular No. 9 of 2005](#) relating to launching of life boat without any person should be strictly complied with by the ship's crew.
- The fundamental principles of observance of good seamanship by all crew members during such operations should be strictly adhere to.
- Launching of life boat is considered not only key ship board operations but also critical in nature. Therefore, the Master and other senior officers have an obligation to exercise extra ordinary skill and duty to care for the crew involved in this operations.
- The Designated Person Ashore (DPA) and the Master should make sure that the statutory training manual encompasses detailed procedure for such type of operations.
- The Master of the vessel should comply strictly with the Planned Maintenance Schedule (PMS) for the life boats/ its launching appliances.
- The Master/Safety Officer of ship should provide effective training to the crew and ensure that all members participate in the scheduled boat drill as specified in the ship's Muster list.

Sd/-

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