

Collision

The very large ore carrier was approaching port. The pilot had boarded and the tugs were lining up to connect to the vessel. It was in the evening with clear skies and a light wind. At the same time vessel B was outbound from the port without a pilot as he had just disembarked.

Both vessels had all the required navigational equipment. The Master, 3rd Officer, pilot and helmsman were on the bridge of vessel A.

The Master and pilot had done a pilot exchange and the pilot had received a copy of the pilot card. Three tugs would assist our vessel during the berthing.

The vessel was making about 8 knots on a course of 300°, both steering pumps were switched on.

The Master first saw vessel B on the radar and visually when it was about 6 M away and at 10° on the starboard bow. Vessel B was plotted on the ARPA with a CPA of 0.5 M. Vessel B was shaping up to pass down the starboard side of our vessel. The starboard green light and mast lights could be seen. The pilot ordered the tugs to connect to the vessel as they were approaching the buoyed fairway. The pilot called vessel B on the VHF and asked to pass green to green which the Master on vessel B agreed with. One tug was connected forward, one on the stern and the third one was on standby.

About the same time the VTS called vessel B and informed it about our vessel being inbound. Vessel B's Master acknowledged



that they were aware of vessel A and that they would pass green to green.

When vessel B was about 0.8 M off the starboard bow it started to alter to starboard and towards our vessel.

The pilot on our vessel was alarmed by vessel B and called on the VHF and yelled "green to green vessel B" and at the same time ordered hard to port and slow ahead. Someone on vessel B replied "too close have to pass port to port" and continued to alter to starboard.

Pilot on our vessel ordered dead slow ahead and then full astern but it was too late and our vessel collided with vessel B's port side by cargo hold 2 and ripped the shell plating up to cargo hold 6. ■

Discussion

Go to the "File" menu and select "Save as..." to save the pdf-file on your computer.

You can place the marker below each question to write the answer directly into the file.



When discussing this case please consider that the actions taken at the time made sense for all involved. Do not only judge, but also ask why you think these actions were taken and could this happen on your vessel?

1. What were the immediate causes of this accident?

2. Is there a risk that this kind of accident could happen on our vessel?

3. How could this accident have been prevented?

4. What are our procedures regarding the use of VHF for collision avoidance?

5. How do we ensure that we are aware of the traffic situation while we speak on the VHF?

6. Do we use all navigational equipment on the bridge while sailing?

7. What sections of our SMS would have been breached if any?

8. Does our SMS address these risks?

9. How could we improve our SMS to address these issues?

10. What do you think was the root cause of this accident?

11. Is there any kind of training that we should do that addresses these issues?

Issues to be considered

Discuss the following COLREGS rules and also what other COLREGS rules would apply.

Rule 5

Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing, as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.

Rule 7

(a) Every vessel shall use all available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions, to determine if risk of collision exists. If there is any doubt such risk shall be deemed to exist.

(b) Proper use shall be made of radar equipment if fitted and operational, including long-range scanning to obtain early warning of risk of collision and radar plotting or equivalent systematic observation of detected objects.

(c) Assumptions shall not be made on the basis of scanty information, especially scanty radar information.

Rule 8

(a) Any action taken to avoid collision shall be taken in accordance with the Rules of this Part and shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, be positive, made in ample time and with due regard to the observance of good seamanship.