



The Swedish Club

MONTHLY SAFETY SCENARIO

DECEMBER 2022

Collision in restricted visibility

Vessel A was a 2,692 TEU container vessel underway. Shortly after commencing the sea passage, visibility worsened and the vessel encountered dense fog with SW winds at Beaufort scale 6. On the bridge were the Master, OOW and a lookout. The Master had the conn. At 20:00 the Second Officer took over the watch from the Third Officer. The visibility was only 0.1 NM and the fog was persistent into the evening. The Master stayed on the bridge the entire time.

Vessel A was maintaining a speed of 17 knots on a course of 240 degrees, the vessel was sounding fog signals. Both the ARPA (automatic radar plotting aid) X-band and S-band radar were used and the ranges were changed between 3 NM and 6 NM.

C-12 minutes: Vessel B was on the port bow about 3 NM from vessel A, making a speed of 6 knots on a 010 degree course according to the ARPA. Vessel B was about 11 o'clock from vessel A and crossing from port to starboard. The closest point of approach (CPA) was 0.0 NM and so a risk of collision existed.

C-10 minutes: The Master saw the name of vessel B on the AIS and called it on VHF channel 16 but had no response. He also used the searchlight to flash at the direction of vessel B as a warning signal. It is unlikely that vessel B would have seen this.

C-5 minutes: The Master ordered hand steering and an alteration to port to 210 degrees, in order to let vessel B pass ahead of vessel A. Shortly afterwards vessel B started to alter to starboard, resulting in a distance of 0.5 NM between them. The Master on vessel A ordered hard to port.

Collision: The vessels collided, and vessel B struck the starboard side of vessel A. The Master on vessel A then saw that vessel B was a fishing vessel.

However, the Master of vessel A continued the voyage at the same speed and course. After a while the vessel traffic service (VTS) called vessel A and told them to stop and await the coast guard. At the time of the collision the fishing vessel was fishing by casting fishing pots overboard.



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Questions

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. How does COLREG 5 Look-out apply?
5. How does COLREG 6 Safe speed apply?
6. How does COLREG 7 Risk of collision apply?
7. How does COLREG 8 Action to avoid collision apply?
8. How does COLREG 19 - Conduct of vessels in restricted visibility apply?
12. What are our radar and CPA requirements?
13. What sections of our SMS would have been breached if any?
14. Does our SMS address these risks?
15. How could we improve our SMS to address these issues?
16. Is there any kind of training that we should do that addresses these issues?