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HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Proper Bridge Resource Management

To : *Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers*

Summary

A collision incident occurred between a Hong Kong registered vessel and a coastal vessel in the Pearl River Delta. Investigation revealed that there was no bridge resource management on board the Hong Kong registered vessel to ensure that the navigating officer at bridge could handle his work properly when the workload was exceptionally high. This Note draws the attention of the ship managers, ship operators, masters and officers to the importance of proper deployment of bridge resources at all times, in particular, when navigating in areas where the risk of collision is high such as approaching or leaving port or around estuary areas.

The Incident

1. A collision incident occurred when a Hong Kong registered vessel collided with a coastal vessel in the Pearl River Delta. The collision caused heavy casualty and extensive damage to the coastal vessel. During the investigation one of the contributing factors was identified to be the improper bridge resource management.
2. The Master of the Hong Kong registered vessel left the bridge soon after the pilot disembarked and handed over the command to the navigating officer. At this juncture the vessel was in the Pearl River Estuary proceeding to sea, there were quite a number of duties such as keeping proper lookout, position checking, course change, position reporting to the Coastal Authority and speed changes that the navigating officer was still required to carry out.
3. Due to the need to attend to the various navigational duties without additional assistance, the navigating officer lost his attentiveness in keeping a proper lookout which resulted into the collision.

Lessons Learnt

4. Given the number of duties required to perform at the time and being the only officer on the bridge, the navigating officer was unable to keep a proper lookout.

5. In considering the deployment of bridge resources, the provisions in paragraph 16, Section A-VIII/2 part 3-1 of the Standard of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code, should be taken into account. In this collision incident, particular attention is drawn to the following sub-paragraphs:

...4) the additional workload caused by the nature of the ship's functions, immediate operating requirements and anticipated maneuvers; and

...8) activities taking place on board the ship at any particular time, including radiocommunication activities, and the availability of assistance to be summoned immediately to the bridge when necessary.

6. The attention of ship managers, ship operators, masters and officers is drawn to the lessons learnt above and they are reminded that bridge operating procedures for efficient deployment of bridge resources to deal with different workload situations should be laid down in the ship's ISM manual.

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