



香 港 商 船 資 訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Falling of containers causing hull damage

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

Summary

Containers on board a Hong Kong registered container vessel fell overboard and pierced the bunker oil tanks causing devastating oil spill. This information note draws the attention of the shipowners, ship managers, ship operators and officers the lessons learnt in the accident.

The Incident

1. A Hong Kong registered container vessel lost 31 containers overboard in gale force weather during cyclone off the coast of southeast Queensland, Australia. About 270 tonnes of fuel leaked into the sea as a result of the damage to the bunker tanks caused by the overboard containers. The oil spilled into the sea causing serious pollution.
2. The investigation into the incident conducted by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau revealed that the condition of the cargo lashing equipment was poor and its maintenance and inspection programme was inadequate.

Lessons Learnt

3. The maintenance of cargo securing gears is of vital importance to ship stability, safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment. A maintenance and inspection programme should be established and implemented to ensure the condition of the cargo securing gears are properly maintained at all times.
4. The attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, master and officers of container vessels is drawn on the lesson learnt above.

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