



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

पोत परिवहन, मंत्रालय

MINISTRY OF SHIPPING,

नौवहन महाविदेशालय / DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING

"जहाज भवन" / "JAHAZ BHAVAN"

वालचंद श्रीराचंद मार्ग / W. H. MARG,

मुंबई / MUMBAI - 400 001

टेलिफोन: 22613651-54

फैक्स : 91-22-22613655

E-Mail: dgship@dgshipping.com

Tele: 22613651-54

Fax: 91-22-22613655

Web: www.dgshipping.com

सं./ No :

दिनांक / Dated:

File No. 11-NT(95)/2010

02/05/2013

Casualty Circular No. 4/2013

Case of missing 5th Engineer from a Container ship

1. What happened?

On 27th December 2010 at 0430 hrs, a 5th Engineer, 22 years of age, was noted to be missing from a container vessel when he failed to report for his morning 4-8 watch. Vessel was en route from Navigantes, Brazil to Vitoria, Brazil, at the time of the incident.

2. How it happened?

2.1 The vessel left Navigantes (Itajai) on 25th December 2010 at 1942 hrs and was bound for Vitoria, Brazil. The 5th Engineer was keeping 4-8 engine room watches and had kept his 1600-2000 hrs on the evening of 26th. This was the 5th Engineer's first ship where he had completed almost 5 months.

2.2 The 5th Engineer was last seen on board at 0130hrs when he was reported to have consumed alcohol during the Christmas celebrations party. He was reported to be missing at 0400hrs when he failed to report for his watch. The duty motorman was sent to look for him who also informed the Chief Officer about the missing 5th Engineer. Thereafter a thorough search was initiated on board. At 0536hrs, the ship was turned around for a search in water and an urgency message was broadcasted at 0542 hrs. The search was carried out by 8 other merchant vessels and a Brazilian naval ship. The search was unsuccessful and was called off on 28th December 2010 at 1930hrs.

2.3 On the previous evening, the 5th Engineer was present in the mess room from 2030 hrs for the Christmas celebrations and was reported to have had his dinner at 2045hrs. He was last seen leaving the mess room at 0010hrs on 27th December 2010 when the 4th Engineer had advised him to go to sleep as he had to be back on watch at 0400hrs. The 5th Engineer had agreed and had gone to his cabin. He came back to the mess room half an hour later and was seen talking, dancing and singing with other crew members as part of the Christmas celebrations. He left the mess

room at 0130hrs and was reportedly in a drunken state but was able to walk and speak and appeared to be in his senses. As per the ship's staff, the 5th engineer could not have consumed more than 2-3 beers. This estimation was based on the number of cases of beer that the Master had issued and the number of persons who were present.

2.4 During the search on board, his cigarette lighter was found near the port gangway and it was suspected that he leaned over the railing, probably to vomit and fell overboard. Stains were noted on the ship's side at a later date which appeared to be vomit stains although this could not be ascertained with certainty. The 5th Engineer was noted to have vomited in the past after consuming spirits.

2.5 It was reported that the 5th Engineer had been facing family difficulties resulting from the separation of his parents. He could not choose between his father and mother and this had been causing him great anguish. It was reported that his emotions had been aggravated due to the Christmas celebrations on board.

2.6 A hand written letter addressed to a girl was found in the 5th Engineer's cabin, when his personal effects were being inventoried. As per the ship's staff, this was a girl from one of the bars in Brazil for which the senior officers on board had counseled him.

3. Why it happened?

3.1 It is possible that the 5th Engineer went out on deck to smoke near the ship side and lost his balance while smoking or lost his balance, when he was leaning overboard while vomiting.

3.2 The 5th Engineer was facing family difficulties due to the separation of his parents. The matter had caused him a great deal of anguish and he may have taken the decision to jump overboard as the Christmas celebrations had aggravated his emotions. Although, nothing has been specifically reported to substantiate the suicidal tendencies of the 5th engineer.

4. Lessons learnt.

4.1 Crew members should not be allowed to go out on open decks in an inebriated state and during hours of darkness. Procedures should be established and adhered to at all times, which would deter crew members from venturing out on deck when not allowed.

4.2 It is important that senior officers on board the vessel are suitably trained to provide at least the 'first aid' counseling and the matter is duly reported to the DPA, in cases where more professional help is considered necessary.



(Capt. Harish Khatri)
Dy. Director General of Shipping [Tech.]