

Fishing Boat YU SHAN No.168 and General Cargo Vessel BUNGO PRINCESS Major Marine Occurrence

Executive Summary

At 1505LT on November 12th, 2022, a ROC registered longline fishing vessel Yu San No.168. Gross tonnage of 49.25 and CT number: CT3-5988, collided with the Panama registered general cargo vessel Bungo Princess. IMO number is 9496654, gross tonnage 6736, around the northern boundary of the outbound channel of Keelung Port.

The Yu San No.168 fishing vessel suffered hull damage and began taking on water, ultimately leading to its sinking. The M/V Bungo Princess sustained multiple scratches on her port bow. The 7 crew members of the Yu San No.168 were successfully rescued by the Taiwan Coast Guard. Fortunately, No casualties or pollution resulted from this accident.

In accordance with the Taiwan's Transportation Occurrence Investigation Act and the Casualty Investigation Code of the International Maritime Organization, the TTSB is an independent transportation occurrence investigation agency responsible for conducting this investigation. The investigation team also included members from the Maritime Port Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, Fisheries Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, the Taiwan International Ports Corporation Ltd. (hereafter referred to as the TIPC), Owner of a fishing vessel in Yu Shan No.168 and the Dojima Marine Co., Ltd.

After comprehensive investigation and analysis of the factual data, a total of 9 findings and 7 safety recommendations were obtained.

The findings related to probable causes are as follows:

1. While the fishing vessel Yu San No.168 was heading to the area near Soudao Cape, there was restricted visibility at the time. The fishing vessel Yu San No.168 did not take appropriate evasive action in accordance with the relevant provisions of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) regarding lookout and safe speed. The fishing vessel Yu San No.168 did not make effective use of radar for assistance in lookout. It did not detect the approaching general cargo vessel Bungo Princess to its starboard bow.
2. After departing from the Keelung Port, the general cargo vessel Bungo Princess did not comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) regarding safe speed. It proceeded at full speed upon entering areas with restricted visibility and heavy traffic. when the general cargo vessel Bungo Princess observed that the fishing vessel Yu San No.168 was not taking the necessary evasive actions as required by regulations and continued to approach, it initiated a starboard turn by setting its course. Nevertheless, the rate of turn was relatively slow, and it did not avoid the collision between the two vessels in a timely manner.

The findings related to risk are as follows:

1. The Keelung Port Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), in handling port closure due to dense fog, had two operators who failed to effectively allocate their duties for continuous monitoring of vessel traffic dynamics within the channel. As a result, both operators on duty prior to the accident failed to detect the collision risk between the general cargo vessel Bungo Princess and the fishing vessel Yu San No.168.
2. The collision warning feature of the Vessel Traffic Service system was not activated, leading to the system's failure to provide advance warning and alert the operators at the Keelung Port VTS to the impending collision risk

between the general cargo vessel Bungo Princess and the fishing vessel Yu San No.168."

3. In Taiwan, there are currently no specific legal provisions the hierarchy of vessel traffic services (VTS), The VTS service areas have not been officially announced, and VTS operations are only conducted based on individual port VTS guidelines. This has resulted in the inability to effectively utilize the vessel traffic monitoring and warning functions recommended by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The other findings are as follows:

1. After the collision accident, the general cargo vessel Bungo Princess made multiple English-language reports to the Keelung Port Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). However, the VTS operators were unable to fully comprehend the messages from Bungo Princess until 40 minutes later when an off-duty operator returned to assist, enabling effective communication.
2. In accordance with International Maritime Organization the guidelines for vessel traffic services (VTS), there are currently no regulations in our country regarding the training course, holding appropriate certification, and employment of VTS personnel. Additionally, TIPC has not established competency standards for operators.
3. Reviewing the current Commercial Port Act and the existing scope of the Keelung Port's commercial port area, it is noted that the commercial port area of Keelung Port does not contain the channels and anchorage areas outside the harbor. Consequently, the Keelung Port Vessel Traffic (VTS) Service does not possess the functionalities required in accordance with the International Maritime Organization VTS guidelines.
4. Since the establishment of the TTSB before the occurrence of this accident, it

has dealt with 9 cases of fishing vessel sinking. In all of these cases, there were no emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) signals received from the fishing vessels. This absence severely impacted subsequent search and rescue efforts and further diminished the chances of survival for the crew members. After this accident occurred, our country's search and rescue authorities did not receive any distress signals from the fishing vessel Yu San No.168's EPIRB.

Safety Recommendations

With regard to the safety recommendation related to 「 To maintain navigational safety, please review the current promotion methods for installing Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) on national fishing boats, with the goal of preventing fishing boat crews from removing EPIRB after annual inspection (TTSB-MSR-23-10-001) 」 , the TTSB had previously submitted a similar safety recommendation in the case of 「 Fishing Vessel Hsin Chang Fa NO.88 (TTSB-MOR-23-10-005) 」 to the Fisheries Agency, Ministry of Agriculture. The aforementioned safety recommendation from the previous case has not been resolved. Therefore, the investigation team in this case does not recommend it again.

To the Fisheries Agency, Ministry of Agriculture

1. To enhance awareness among the crew members of fishing vessels, it is imperative that the navigating officer on duty maintains a proper lookout during maritime operations. In areas with restricted visibility or heavy traffic, due consideration should be given to the prevailing maritime conditions, and a safe speed should be employed to prevent accidents.

To Dojima Marine co., Ltd

1. Enhance fleet education and training. When navigating in areas of restricted

visibility or heavy traffic, vessels must operate at a safe speed. The OOW must adhere to relevant provisions of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) to avoid ship collisions.

To the Ministry of Transportation and Communications

1. Supervise the Maritime and Port Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, to refer to the relevant content of the International Maritime Organization Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) Guidelines and establish legal regulations regarding VTS, as well as standards for training course, holding appropriate certification, and employment of VTS personnel.

To the Maritime and Port Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications

1. With reference to the relevant content of the International Maritime Organization Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) Guidelines and establish legal regulations regarding VTS, as well as standards for training course, holding appropriate certification, and employment of VTS personnel.

To Taiwan International Ports Corporation, Ltd.

1. With reference to the Keelung Port operator Handbook, implement the division of responsibilities for operators at each position during periods of dense fog, effectively monitor the dynamics of vessels inside and outside the harbor to ensure the safety of harbor and vessel navigation.
2. With reference to the relevant content of the International Maritime Organization Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) Guidelines. Enhance the training of operators in system operation, incident response, and language communication skills to ensure the effective functioning of VTS.
3. Until regulations for the training course, holding appropriate certification, and

employment of vessel traffic service (VTS) personnel are established, it is recommended to refer to the relevant content of the International Maritime Organization VTS Guidelines to enhance the standards for the appointment of controllers.

Note: The final report of this occurrence investigation is published in Chinese. To facilitate understanding for non-Chinese readers, the Executive Summary has been translated into English. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, discrepancies may occur. In the event of any inconsistency, the Chinese version shall prevail.