Collision between Semi-Container Ships Ta Shin and Ta Hua

Major Marine Occurrence

Executive Summary

On 5 March 2020, the Taiwan-registered semi-container ship Ta Hua, owned by Taichin Shipping Co., Ltd. and managed by Kaochin Steamship Co., Ltd., with a port of registry at Port of Kaohsiung, a gross tonnage of 2,988, and IMO No. 9194086, was engaged in a supply voyage from Port of Taipei to Liaoluo Port. While berthing at Liaoluo Port at approximately 1053:08, Ta Hua collided with the semi-container ship Ta Shin, owned by Kaochin Steamship Co., Ltd., which was berthed at S4 Wharf. The bulbous bow of Ta Hua struck the port shell plating of Ta Shin, causing a breach in the port shell plating amidships of Ta Shin and minor scraping damage to the bulbous bow of Ta Hua. No injuries or environmental pollution were reported.

In accordance with the Transportation Occurrence Investigation Act, Taiwan, and the definition of major transportation occurrences specified therein, the Taiwan Transportation Safety Board was the independent agency in charge of investigating the marine accident. The organizations and agencies invited to participate in the investigation included the Maritime and Port Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications and Kaochin Steamship Co., Ltd.

After comprehensive investigation and analysis of the factual data, a total of 5 findings and 2 safety recommendations were obtained.

The findings related to probable causes are as follows:

1. The master of Ta Hua left the bridge without first confirming the actual engine response in the engine room in accordance with procedures,

resulting in the failure to immediately detect and stop the incorrect engine operation.

2. The actual bridge manning arrangement of Ta Hua during port arrival and departure operations was inconsistent with the requirements specified in Kaochin Steamship's Safety Management Manual. Prior to the occurrence, no deck officer was assigned to repeat engine telegraph orders and verify whether the main engine response was correct.

3. The chief engineer of Ta Hua was solely responsible for operating the main engine while simultaneously monitoring the temperatures of the main and auxiliary machinery in the engine room. This arrangement did not comply with the company's engine department safe operating procedures and engine watchkeeping requirements, increasing the risk of incorrect operation due to divided attention.

4. The supervisory authority did not verify that Ta Hua's actual manning arrangement during port operations was inconsistent with the company's Safety Management Manual.

5. Weather conditions, crew rest hours, and main engine abnormalities were excluded as contributing factors in this occurrence.

Safety Recommendations

To Kaochin Steamship Co., Ltd.

1. Review the company's Safety Management Manual regarding bridge and engine room resource allocation for ships during port arrival and departure operations to ensure that staffing arrangements are consistent with practical safe ship operations.

To Maritime and Port Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications

1. Implement and strengthen the evaluation and review mechanisms under the Regulations Governing Safety Management and Pollution Prevention for Ships engaged in offshore routes to ensure that onboard personnel arrangements are consistent with company Safety Management Manuals and meet the requirements for safe navigation.

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.