

Multi-Purpose Ship Fu Lin 88 Major Marine Occurrence

Executive Summary

At approximately 0730 on 19 August 2021, the multi-purpose ship Fu Lin 88, owned by Full Link Co., Ltd., with ship management by Thriving Ship Safety Management Consultant Corp., and registered in Freetown, Republic of Sierra Leone, with a gross tonnage of 1,138 and IMO No. 8011562, experienced engine room flooding and developed a list while located approximately 13.5 nautical miles west of Boziliao, Sihhu Township, Yunlin County. Following the master's decision to abandon ship, the ship sank shortly thereafter. All 10 crew members were safely rescued, and no environmental pollution was 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.

After comprehensive investigation and analysis of the factual data, a total of 6 findings and 2 safety recommendations were obtained.

The investigation identified 6 findings:

1. A leakage in the main seawater piping system in the engine room, failure to fully close the sea chest inlet valve, and malfunction of the bilge pumping system were all contributing factors to the ingress of water, progressive listing, and eventual sinking.
2. The shipowner and ship management company failed to duly discharge

their responsibilities for ship management and oversight. Severe corrosion of the main seawater piping in the engine room was not identified during dry-docking, resulting in uncontrollable flooding, which ultimately led to the ship's listing and sinking.

3. Prior to the occurrence, two statutory certificates of Fu Lin 88 had expired, indicating that the management company and the master failed to properly maintain valid certification status onboard.
4. Fu Lin 88 did not comply with the requirements of its Minimum Safe Manning Certificate. The ship had previously operated outside its permitted trading area, thereby increasing navigational risk.
5. Taiwan's Port State Control risk-based inspection system exhibits discrepancies between scoring descriptions and actual assessment criteria, resulting in an inability to accurately reflect the risk profile of foreign-flagged vessels.
6. In addition, the system is not fully aligned with international practices and lacks advance access to the Tokyo Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) "black, grey, and white list" information on foreign ships. As a result, there is a risk that substandard ships are underestimated, and the system may be unable to effectively eliminate or mitigate the hazards posed by such ships, thereby compromising the objectives of safeguarding life at sea and protecting the marine environment.

Safety Recommendations

To Full Link Co., Ltd.

1. Strengthen the implementation of the Ship Safety Management System to enhance the quality of ship safety management and ensure the safe operation and navigation of ships.

2. Ensure proper management of statutory ship certificates and compliance with designated operational trading area restrictions, in accordance with the requirements of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code.

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.