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Container ship "ALEXANDRA RICKMERS"

LOOSE MOORING ROPES DURING SUDDEN GUST OF
NNE WIND
IN PORT OF KOPER
ON
JULY 09, 2015

National occurrence no: 2/2015
EMCIP casualty No: 3393/2016

Extract from
The Slovene Maritime Act
(Accident Investigations)
Article 200.a

The purpose of the investigation of maritime accidents in accordance with this Act is not a determination of liability or blame, but determining the causes of the accident and prevents similar accidents.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AB	-	Able seaman
AIS	-	Automatic Identification System
ALB	-	All Weather Lifeboat
ARPA	-	Automated Radar Plotting Aid
BA	-	British Admiralty
BNWAS	-	Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System
CA	-	Certifying Authority
CoC	-	Certificate of Competency
COG	-	Course over the ground
COLREGS	-	International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea 1972 (as amended)
CoSWP	-	Code of Safe Working Practices
CPA	-	Closest Point of Approach
CPP	-	Controllable pitch propeller
DGPS	-	Differential global positioning system
DSC	-	Digital Selective Calling
ECDIS	-	Electronic Chart Display and Information System
EU	-	European Union
GMDSS	-	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GPS	-	Global positioning system
Gt	-	Gross tonnage
IMO	-	International Maritime Organisation
ISM Code	-	International Safety Management Code
Kt	-	Knot
LED	-	Light emitting diode
MMSI	-	Maritime mobile service identity
Nm	-	Nautical miles
NPD	-	Nominated Departure Point
OOW	-	Officer of the watch

RAM	-	Restricted in Ability to manoeuvre
SAN	-	Surveyor Advice Note
SAR	-	Search and Rescue
SMC	-	Safety Management Certificate
SMS	-	Safety Management System
SOG	-	Speed Over Ground
SOLAS	-	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974, as amended
STCW	-	International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978, as amended
T	-	Tonne
TSS	-	Traffic Separation Scheme
USB	-	Universal serial bus
UTC	-	Universal Time Co-ordinated
VDR	-	Voyage Data Recorder
VHF	-	Very High Frequency (Radio)
VTS	-	Vessel Traffic Services

TIMES: all times used in this report are UTC+2 unless otherwise stated

SYNOPSIS

On July 08, 2015 because of strong low pressure over Genoa Bay, Slovene Meteorological office ARSO issued a weather warning regarding the possibility of sudden strong Tramontane wind gusts. Tramontane is temporary wind blowing from the North. It blows in any season; it can be strong and dangerous. Usually it changes to Bora (strong NE wind).

Gust is a sudden, brief increase in speed of the wind. According to weather observing practice, gusts are reported when the peak wind speed reaches at least 16 knots and the variation in wind speed between the peaks and lulls is at least 9 knots. The duration of a gust is usually less than 20 seconds.

Tramontane is a classical name for a northern wind. The exact form of the name and precise direction varies from country to country. The word came to English from Italian *tramontana*, which developed from Latin *trānsmontānus* (*trāns-* + *montānus*), "beyond/across the mountains", referring to the Alps in the North of Italy.

In Slovenia a word *tramontana* is used for a strong northerly (hurricane) wind that blows from the Alps to the Venice bay over Trieste, Slovenian coast and Istria with gusts sometimes as high as 200 km/h (usually 80 km/h). It has a transitional nature (from 2 to 4 hours in Koper bay) and it often quickly turns to a Bora. With its hurricane powers it can uproot trees and it often damages boats as it crashes them to the coast.

Weather conditions in the area of Slovene coast during the summertime are as follows:

- The summer season extends from June through September. Summer weather in the northern Adriatic Sea is generally warm and dry with light winds. Strong Bora or Tramontane events are uncommon. The mild weather results from the great continental low pressure area that replaces the Eurasian winter anticyclone. The low is centred over southwest Asia, with an extension westward over Asia Minor.
- Thunderstorms are most frequent during the summer, but only average three or four times per year. The storms occasionally form over the coastal terrain and move over the port area. Thunderstorms normally last only 2 to 4 hours in the Koper area.

Forecast availability:

The Hydrometeorological Institute of Slovenia (ARSO – Agencija Republike Slovenije za Okolje) maintains a web page on the Internet for dissemination of weather forecast information in Slovene and English languages. There are numerous

automatic weather stations throughout the country, four of them are situated on coastal region – Port of Koper, Slovene Maritime Administration, Piran and Portoroz Airport.

ARSO regularly issuing a weather warning directly to Slovene Maritime Administration, weather warnings are also regularly transmitted via coastal radio stations. For Northern Adriatic (including Koper Bay) Rijeka radio is heard without any obstructions.

On July 9, 2015 at early morning hours, sudden gust of Tramontane wind hit the area of the port, causing four ships, berthed on the South berths, to lose their berthing ropes, luckily not all of them. Due to the immediate action by the crews and tugboats operating inside the port, none of the ships were thorn from their berths and start drifting inside the port area. Gust lasted only for few minutes.

After the emergencies, moorings were strengthened with additional mooring lines and everything went to normal aftermath.

No damage to ships or berths occurred.

SECTION 1 – FACTUAL INFORMATION

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION

Date and Time	July 09, 2015 at 00:30
Type of marine casualty or incident	Lose mooring lines due to sudden NNE wind gust
Location of incident	Port of Koper area
Place on board	Ships at berth
Injuries/fatalities	No
Damage/Environmental impact	No damage occurred
Ship operation	Berthed ships
Voyage segment	At berth
External & Internal environment	Gust of NNE wind 25,3 m/s (50 knts)
Persons on board	

SECTION 2 – ANALYSIS

On July 9, 2016 a sudden gust of NNE wind struck in the area of Port of Koper. Weather warning was issued previous day, but weather warning did not reach all the ships, performing cargo operations in the Port of Koper.

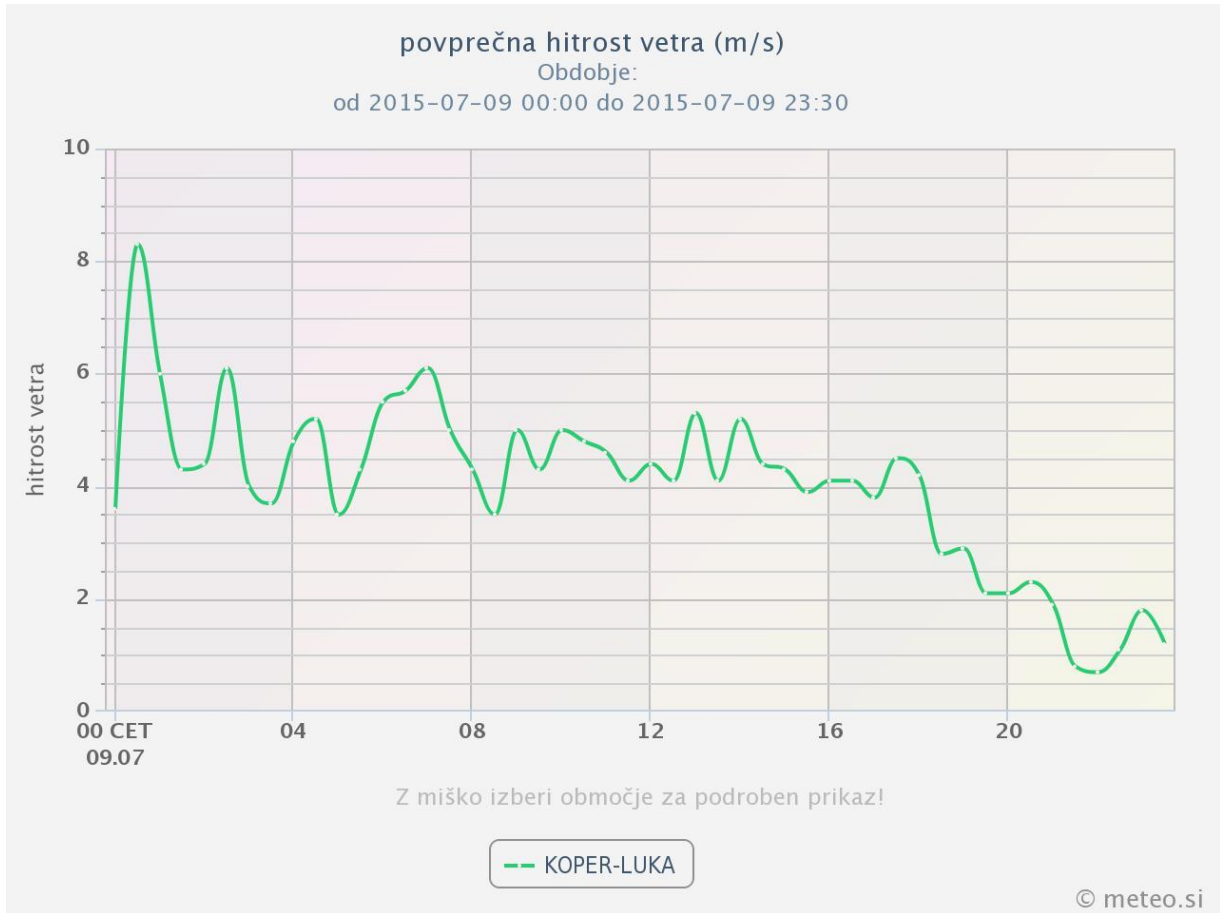


Figure 1: Average speed of wind (m/sec), Port of Koper, July 9, 2016

Ships were alongside the berths with normal mooring arrangements.

At 00:30hrs local time a sudden gust of NNE wind gale force 9 Bf (25,3 m/s) (Figure 1) hit the coastal area. Only four ships berthed on South berths were affected due to the location of the berths.

Container ship "Alexandra Rickmers" arrived in Koper from Trieste (Italy) and departed to Gioia Tauro (Italy).

Crew was on high alert and strengthen her mooring lines before gale force wind starts blowing, causing ship just to be pushed few metres from the berth, without any danger to be thorn from it.



M/V »ALEXANDRA RICKMERS«

CALL SIGN: ELVX4
GROSS TONNAGE: 26.131 T
YEAR BUILT: 1997

FLAG: LIBERIA
LOA/LPP 195,30m / 185,50m
IMO NO: 9152739

After half an hour, gale force wind stops and port operations went to normal operating condition.

Due to the early warning and huge experience of the port management and all port services, gale force winds did not cause any damage to the ships or equipment.

SECTION 3 – CONCLUSIONS

It appeared once again that good cooperation between METEO office, Maritime administration and port management is crucial for safe operation of the port and safety of the ships.

Weather forecast predicted gale force wind with great accuracy, management of the port informed vessels and therefore no damage happened.

SECTION 4 – ACTION TAKEN

No further action was taken.

SECTION 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS

No recommendations have been made.