

Interim report on the investigation of the engine failure and fire resulting in injury to one crewman on board *Finlandia Seaways* 11 nautical miles east of Lowestoft on 16 April 2018

The information contained in this interim report is based on investigations to date. Readers are cautioned that there is the possibility new evidence may become available that might alter the circumstances as depicted in this report.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

At 2003 UTC on 16 April 2018, the Lithuanian registered ro-ro cargo vessel *Finlandia Seaways* suffered a catastrophic main engine failure and subsequent engine room fire while on passage 11 miles east of Lowestoft, England.

The vessel's 12-cylinder MAN medium speed diesel engine suffered a connecting rod small-end failure that caused metal debris to be thrown through the crankcase entablature into the engine room.

The third engineer, on duty in the engine room when the fire started, managed to escape, but suffered significant smoke-related lung, kidney and eye injuries.

INVESTIGATION

The UK MAIB investigation, which has been carried out with the close cooperation of the Lithuanian Transport Accident and Incident Investigation Division and the engine manufacturer, identified a procedural issue with the connecting rod refurbishment process employed by the vessel manager's engine maintenance contractor. It was concluded that damage caused during the maintenance process had initiated a fracture that led to the sudden and catastrophic failure of the main engine.

Other vessels that might have been affected by the working practices employed by the maintenance contractor have been identified and their engines have been surveyed.

ONGOING ACTION

A draft report of the MAIB investigation is nearing completion and will be distributed to key stakeholders for a 30-day consultation in due course.

Extract from The United Kingdom Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 – Regulation 5:

"The sole objective of a safety investigation into an accident under these Regulations shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of such an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame."

As the full investigation report will not be published within 12 months of the accident date, this interim report is published, pursuant to Regulation 14(2)(b) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012.

NOTE

This report is not written with litigation in mind and, pursuant to Regulation 14(14) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame.

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SHIP PARTICULARS

Vessel's name	<i>Finlandia Seaways</i>
Flag	Lithuania
Classification society	Lloyd's Shipping Register
IMO number/fishing numbers	9198721
Type	Ro-ro cargo
Registered owner	DFDS A/S
Manager(s)	AB DFDS Seaways - Lithuania
Construction	Steel
Year of build	2000
Length overall	162.58m
Gross tonnage	11530
Minimum safe manning	13
Authorised cargo	Freight vehicles

VOYAGE PARTICULARS

Port of departure	Zeebrugge
Port of arrival	Rosyth
Type of voyage	International
Cargo information	4 passengers, heavy goods vehicles
Manning	19

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION

Date and time	16 April 2018, 2003 (UTC)
Type of marine casualty or incident	Serious Marine Casualty
Location of incident	11nm east of Lowestoft
Place on board	Engine room
Injuries/fatalities	One injury
Damage/environmental impact	Main engine structural damage; fire damage in engine room
Ship operation	On passage
Voyage segment	Mid-water
External & internal environment	South-westerly wind, slight sea
Persons on board	23