

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As the full investigation report will not be published within 12 months of the accident date, this interim report is published, pursuant to Regulation 14(2)(b) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and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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Interim report on the investigation of the engine room fire and subsequent fatality on board *Moritz Schulte* in Antwerp, Netherlands on 4 August 2020

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

Factual information

On 4 August 2020, the Isle of Man registered LPG tanker *Moritz Schulte* had an engine room fire while discharging a cargo at Antwerp. The fire broke out between two of the tanker’s diesel generators, close to a fuel filter that was being cleaned by the tanker’s third engineer (3/E).

Courtesy of Etienne Verberckmoes, www.marine.traffic.com



Prompt actions by the crew to shut down the space limited the spread of fire; however, the crew muster identified the 3/E was missing. This prevented the release of the fixed CO₂ fire-extinguishing system, and the master ordered the fire party to enter the engine room and search for the missing engineer.

The crew’s initial attempt to find the 3/E was unsuccessful, but he was later found lying unconscious on the deck close to an escape ladder by a shore fire team and he was recovered ashore. The 3/E died in hospital 8 days later due to smoke inhalation.

Investigation

This investigation is being carried out by the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) on behalf of the Isle of Man Administration in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the MAIB and the Red Ensign Group Category 1 registries of Isle of Man, Cayman Islands, Bermuda and Gibraltar.

The investigation has considered all aspects of the accident to determine the causes and circumstances of the fire and the 3/E’s death. It has also considered underlying factors that might have contributed to both events.

Actions taken

In response to the accident, the vessel manager has completed its own internal investigation and has taken immediate action to reduce the likelihood and consequences of further engine room fires.

Ongoing action

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

SHIP PARTICULARS

Vessel's name	<i>Moritz Schulte</i>
Flag	Isle of Man
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
IMO number	9220794
Type	LPG tanker
Registered owner	Bernhard Schulte GmbH & Co. KG
Manager(s)	Bernhard Schulte Ship Management (UK) Ltd
Operator	Unigas International
Construction	Steel
Year of build	2002
Length overall	128.80m
Gross tonnage	8234
Minimum safe manning	14
Authorised cargo	Ethylene

VOYAGE PARTICULARS

Port of departure	Braefoot Bay, Scotland
Port of arrival	Antwerp
Type of voyage	Short international
Cargo information	4521Mt Ethylene
Manning	23

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION

Date and time	4 August 2020
Type of marine casualty or incident	Very Serious Marine Casualty
Location of incident	Alongside Terminal 383, Antwerp
Place on board	Auxiliary engine platform A
Injuries/fatalities	One fatality
Damage/environmental impact	Localised intensive fire damage in engine room
Ship operation	Cargo discharge
Voyage segment	Alongside
External & internal environment	Sunny and clear, air temperature 30°C, wind 9mph ESE
Persons on board	23