

## SYNOPSIS



Shortly after 0500 on 31 October 2006, the 712 grt general cargo ship *Harvest Caroline* started to drag her anchor in strong northerly winds. The ship was blown about 8 cables until she grounded on the eastern side of Tanera More, Summer Isles, at 0545. The crew were alerted as the ship started to take the ground and, although the engine was quickly started, the ship could not be re-floated.

At 0614, a PAN PAN call was transmitted to Stornoway Coastguard by VHF radio. A SAR helicopter, the Lochinver ALB, the ETV *Anglian Prince* and a shore rescue team were immediately activated and a female passenger was winched off the ship by the SAR helicopter at 0727. Shortly after 0940, *Harvest Caroline* re-floated on the rising tide and was taken in tow by *Anglian Prince* to Ullapool, where she arrived the same day. There was no pollution, and damage to the vessel was limited to indentations to the hull plating in way of the engine room. There were no injuries.

The investigation identified a number of factors which contributed to the ship dragging her anchor and subsequently grounding, including:

- The selected anchorage position was inappropriate in view of the depth of water, the anchor cable available and the predicted weather conditions.
- The length of anchor cable deployed was insufficient to prevent the holding power of the anchor from reducing in the strong northerly winds.
- The dragging of the anchor was not detected because the nominated OOW was in bed.

A number of factors affecting the overall safe operation of the ship were also identified during the investigation. These included:

- The safety management of the ship did not meet the objectives of the ISM Code.
- The ship manager had very little experience or expertise in ship management and operations.
- The ship's safety management system had not been properly established when the Interim Safety Management Certificate was issued on 30 May 2006, and was not tailored to the ship's operation.

To prevent a similar accident in the future, the ship manager has revised its instructions regarding bridge manning requirements when the ship is at anchor and has fitted a watch alarm. It has also taken action to improve the standard of safety management on board its vessel.

The MCA is preparing a proposal for submission to the IMO in July 2007, which recommends the provision of standards of competency required by designated persons be included in the Revised Guidelines on the implementation of the ISM Code by Administrations.

Recommendations made to the MCA, the St Vincent and the Grenadines Maritime Administration, and INSB aim to improve the effectiveness of ISM verifications and audits. A further recommendation to the MCA aims to assist the monitoring of the quality of ships operating predominantly in UK waters.