

SYNOPSIS



At 2250 (UTC) on 1 January 2002, mv *Willy* grounded in Cawsand Bay, Plymouth Sound, after dragging her anchor. The accident was reported to the MAIB by SOSREP via the DTLR Duty Officer at 0030 on 2 January, and an investigation was started immediately. Safety Bulletin 1/2002 (**Annex B**) was issued on 18 January 2002 on the basis of preliminary findings.

The following factors contributed to the accident:

- The ship was exposed to strong south-easterly winds in Cawsand Bay which, together with pitching owing to her light condition and the swell, increased the loading on her cable and anchor.
- The amount of cable used was insufficient given the prevailing weather conditions, depth of water, nature of the seabed, and condition of the ship.
- The overall speed at which the anchor was dragged, limited the time available in which to take corrective action to about 16 minutes.
- The ship's movement was not detected immediately by the OOW because the position of the anchor had not been determined accurately, the bridge swinging circle had not been calculated or plotted, and the GPS guard zone was set at a distance almost three times the radius of the swinging circle.
- The master was not informed of the situation until about 7 minutes after the anchor had started to drag.
- The OOW did not start the main engine until ordered to do so by the master.
- The engine could not be started and made available in sufficient time to allow the ship to be manoeuvred clear of danger.
- No consideration was given to paying out additional cable to stop the anchor from dragging.

The safety recommendations to ship owners and masters contained in Safety Bulletin 1/2002 remain valid.