

SYNOPSIS



At 0429 UTC on 23 April 2001, the French-registered fishing vessel *Saint Jacques II* collided with the Maltese-registered product tanker *Gudermes* about 14 miles east-north-east of Dover harbour. The MAIB began an investigation into the accident that day.

Gudermes was following the south-west lane of the Dover Strait Traffic Separation Scheme in the vicinity of the South Falls Bank, while *Saint Jacques II* was crossing the south-west lane on passage to the Falls Bank fishing grounds. The collision occurred after the two vessels had been on a steady bearing relative to each other for about 16 minutes. CNIS had warned all ships in the area via VHF Channel 16 radio broadcasts

that a vessel, later identified as *Saint Jacques II*, was contravening Rule 10c of the Collision Regulations.

The collision was directly caused by:

- *Saint Jacques II*'s watchkeeper being either distracted or asleep, and thus failing to maintain a proper lookout or take avoiding action;
- *Gudermes*' action to avoid a collision being taken too late.

An indirect cause was *Saint Jacques II* crossing the south-west lane on a heading against the flow of traffic.

Recommendations addressed to the owner of *Saint Jacques II* are aimed at ensuring that all of its vessels keep an effective lookout and comply with Rule 10 of the Collision Regulations. Other recommendations to the MCA and the French administration are aimed at improving safety in the Dover Strait TSS.

The MAIB wishes to express its appreciation of the co-operation extended by the Bureau des enquêtes techniques et administratives après accidents et autres événements de mer (BEA mer) during the course of this investigation.