

SYNOPSIS

At about 0854 Universal Co-ordinated Time (UTC) on 9 March 1999, a collision occurred between the 9.96m fishing vessel, *Beverley Ann II*, and the 42,447gt vehicle carrier *Cypress Pass*. Tyne Tees Coastguard informed the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) of the incident by telex at 0915 that day. Captain P Kavanagh carried out the investigation.

Cypress Pass was on passage from Amsterdam to Jarrow Slake on the River Tyne, making good a speed of 15.7 knots and steering 304° (G) to make a course of 302° (T). On the bridge, keeping watch, were the master, the third officer and a lookout. The visibility was between 1 and 2 miles, which was further reduced in squalls.

Beverley Ann II, crewed by the skipper and a deckhand, was trawling at a speed of just over 2 knots and heading in an east-south-east direction. The skipper saw a large echo appear on the edge of the radar screen at 3 miles but he did not make a full appraisal of the risk of collision. The radar had only limited facilities with which to determine if the vessel was on collision course. After a while, the skipper saw a ship very close on his starboard bow and he could see down both sides of the ship. In an attempt to avoid a collision, he stopped and then reversed both engines. However, the port bow and the mast of the fishing vessel made contact with the port shoulder of the ship. Damage to the fishing vessel was slight.

Once the fishing vessel had passed down the port side of the ship and had cleared the stern, the skipper called Tyne Tees Coastguard to report the incident. The skipper said that his vessel was not in immediate danger and that neither he nor his deckhand were injured. He then called *Cypress Pass* and told the watchkeepers that their vessel had been in collision. Up to this point, the officers had been totally unaware of the presence of *Beverley Ann II* and that any incident had occurred.

Cypress Pass continued on to the anchorage off the River Tyne and *Beverley Ann II* returned to North Shields.

The cause of the accident was twofold:

- *Beverley Ann II* - the skipper did not make a full appraisal of the risk of collision when the echo of *Cypress Pass* appeared on his radar screen, and took no avoiding action until the ship appeared at short range bearing down on him.
- *Cypress Pass* - the officers and lookout did not observe the fishing vessel either by radar or visually, and were therefore not keeping a proper lookout.

Recommendations are addressed to the skipper/owner of *Beverley Ann II* and to the management company of *Cypress Pass*.