

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT TO CHIEF INSPECTOR OF MARINE ACCIDENTS

1 Legislation

The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Regulations, 2009 requires production of a summary annual report to the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents.

2 Reportable Incidents/Accidents 2016

1/2016 – MV VALIANT – 20 April 2016

On 20 April 2016 at approximately 1030, the general cargo vessel VALIANT made contact with the northern pier head of St Peter Port Harbour, during approach. Minor damage was caused to the starboard bow bulwark. A general pilot was embarked and was conning the vessel at the time.

An investigation concluded the following:

1. The pilot was intentionally close to the northern pier head due to the strong east-north-east wind so that he could make the sharp turn to starboard once in the pier heads towards No 5 berth.
2. The pilot was proceeding at minimum speed.
3. The pilot applied astern propulsion when he released the sheer of the vessel to starboard.
4. The pilot advised that he had thought the vessel was stopped when he stopped the astern propulsion which is when the contact occurred. Had he kept it on for just a few more seconds, he would not have made contact.

No further action was taken.

2/2016 – TRIDENT V – 22 April 2016

At approximately 1230 on 22 April 2016, the domestic passenger ferry TRIDENT V grounded on a charted, rocky reef in the Alligande Passage, on the approaches to Herm Island. On board, there were 35 passengers and 3 crew. No-one was injured and there was no pollution. However, there was significant damage to the starboard hull, skeg, propeller shaft, propeller and rudder.

The grounding caused a noisy bang and shuddering. The manoeuvrability of the vessel was significantly reduced. Despite the indications of the grounding, the crew initially assessed that the shaft had de-coupled from the gearbox. The Coastguard and passengers were notified of an engine problem however the grounding was not considered and no emergency procedures were followed on board. The passengers were transferred to a sister vessel and TRIDENT V was towed to St Peter Port harbour.

The investigation found that there had been insufficient passage planning for the voyage and ineffective navigational techniques; in particular, the reduced visibility and low tide were not properly considered.

Safety recommendations were made to Trident Charter Company and Guernsey Harbours, designed to ensure appropriate levels of proficiency in the conduct of safe navigation.

A full investigation report was published on the Guernsey Harbours website.

3/2016 – BEN VARREY – 08 June 2016

BEN VARREY grounded on approach to St Sampson's Harbour on 4th May 2016, at approximately 1720 local time. The vessel struck the northern edge of the rock armour encasing the Longue Hougue land reclamation site. Control of the vessel was not appropriate and remedial action to correct the behaviour of the vessel did not prevent the contact.

The vessel sustained damage to the port side, below the waterline by way of heavy scoring along a length of approximately 2.5m to double bottom tank no. 1. The position of the damage was approximately 6m to 9m from the bow and 0.8m above the absolute bottom of the vessel.

The vessel retained full manoeuvrability and, with the assistance of the St Sampson pilot launch, subsequently berthed in St Sampson's Harbour.

No pollution was caused and the vessel remained fully manoeuvrable. The potential consequences are significant pollution and damage to the environment as well as damage to manoeuvring systems and ultimately loss of the vessel.

The vessel was under compulsory pilotage.

An investigation concluded:

1. Weather and height of tide are not considered to have contributed to the grounding.
2. Concern has previously been raised over the general pilot's ability to manoeuvre vessels in and out of St Sampson's Harbour and restrictions have been applied by the Master Pilot for certain types of vessel.
3. During this accident, it is evident that the general pilot did not conduct a significantly robust manoeuvre to starboard nor did he apply full astern propulsion in adequate time to stop the vessel prior to grounding.
4. The speed of the vessel on approach is considered to be higher than recommended which is likely to have resulted in making it more difficult for the general pilot to stop the vessel in good time.

The General Pilot was suspended from piloting vessels in and out of St Sampson's Harbour until further experience was gained.

4/2016 – SARK BELLE – 08 June 2016

On departure from St Peter Port harbour on the morning of 08 June 2016, the domestic passenger ferry SARK BELLE suffered total main engine failure.

On investigation, this was found to be due to the engineer checks failing to open the salt water cooling valves to the main engines.

The passenger certificate of the vessel was temporarily suspended until the cause of the failure could be identified.

5/2016 – TRIDENT V – 08 June 2016

At approximately 1530 on 08 June 2016, the domestic passenger ferry TRIDENT V grounded on a charted, rocky reef in the Alligande Passage, on the approaches to Herm Island. On board, there were 19 passengers and 3 crew. No-one was injured and there was no pollution. However, there was significant damage to the port skeg, propeller shaft, propeller and rudder.

The grounding caused a noisy bang and caused the vessel to stop dead in the water, swinging to port. The manoeuvrability of the vessel was significantly reduced. The Coastguard and passengers were immediately notified of the grounding. All passengers were instructed to don lifejackets re-assured that the vessel was not taking water. The passengers were transferred to the St Peter Port lifeboat and TRIDENT V was towed to St Peter Port harbour.

The investigation found that there had been insufficient passage planning for the voyage and ineffective navigational techniques; in particular, the reduced visibility and low tide were not properly considered.

Safety recommendations were made to Trident Charter Company and Guernsey Harbours, designed to ensure appropriate levels of proficiency in the conduct of safe navigation.

A full investigation report was published on the Guernsey Harbours website.

3 Reporting and Communication

The Guernsey Harbours website includes a section on Marine Accident Investigation. Where appropriate, this site includes a retrospective synopsis of accidents and the recommendations made.

A pro-forma reporting document is also downloadable from the website.

The table below is a summary of the number of reports received over the past 5 years.

Year	Reports received
2012	2
2013	1
2014	4
2015	5
2016	5

4 Incidents investigated by other Authorities

None.



Chad Murray
Harbour Master

20 November 2017