

SUMMARY ACCIDENT REPORT	<i>COLLISION BETWEEN THE FV O.231-DEN HOOPE AND THE OIL TANKER SEASONG</i>	Date
7		30-06-2023

SUMMARY

The time indications in this report are stated in Central European Time, i.e., UTC+1.

A collision between the Belgian fishing vessel O.231-DEN HOOPE and the Maltese oil tanker SEASONG occurred on 21 March 2023 around 11:07 hours. The collision occurred in the Channel, approximately 6 nm south of the Greenwich Light Vessel, at position N 50° 48' 44", E 000° 01' 13", as shown in Figure 1.

The collision resulted in material damage only and both vessels were able to continue their voyage by their own means.



Figure 1 - Location of collision

The track of the MT SEASONG is shown in blue, the track of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE is shown in brown.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

The MT SEASONG was underway from Algeciras, Spain, to Skagen, Denmark, following a course of about 074° in the recommended traffic flow between the TSS Casquets and the TSS Dover Strait at a speed of 15,5 kn. The captain, an officer of the watch, a lookout and a helmsman were present on the bridge.

The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was engaged in fishing transverse to the direction of the recommended traffic flow between the TSS Casquets and the TSS Dover Strait. The skipper was present on the bridge. Both the AIS and the lights and day marks of the fishing vessel indicated that the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was engaged in fishing.



Name	SEASONG	O.231-DEN HOOPE
IMO number	9290438	9222089
LOA	244 m	37,83 m
Width	42 m	8,56 m
Manager	Thenamaris – Athens, Greece	De Vierterre BVBA, Ostend, Belgium
Flag	Malta	Belgium

Around 10:45 hours, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was manually plotted on the radar aboard the MT SEASONG. At that time, the fishing vessel followed a southerly course of about 162°. The distance between both vessels was about 6 nm and the CPA was 1,2 nm.

At about 10:53 hours, after retrieving her nets, the fishing vessel started to turn over SB. The distance between both vessels at that time was about 3,5 nm.

When the MT SEASONG noticed that the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was starting to manoeuvre, the officer of the watch on board the MT SEASONG instructed the helmsman to switch to hand steering.

Meanwhile, on board the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE, the mate had joined the skipper on the bridge. There was no communication between both vessels.

At about 10:56 hours, both vessels sailed on an opposite heading, as shown in Figure 2.

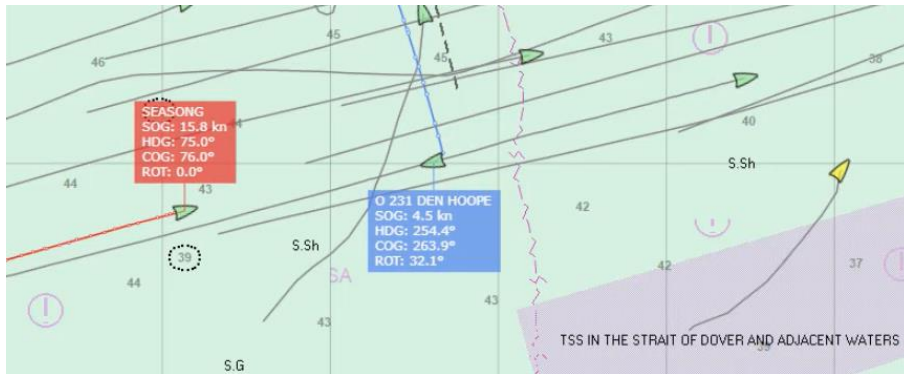


Figure 2 - Positions at about 09:56 am

On the radar on board the MT SEASONG the target of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was shown in red indicating a danger of collision, as the CPA was 0,08 nm. The distance between both vessels was about 3 nm at that time.

Subsequently, on board the MT SEASONG, it was decided to swerve to port to keep out of the way of the fishing vessel and to keep out of the way of an overtaking vessel on the SB side, as shown in Figure 3.

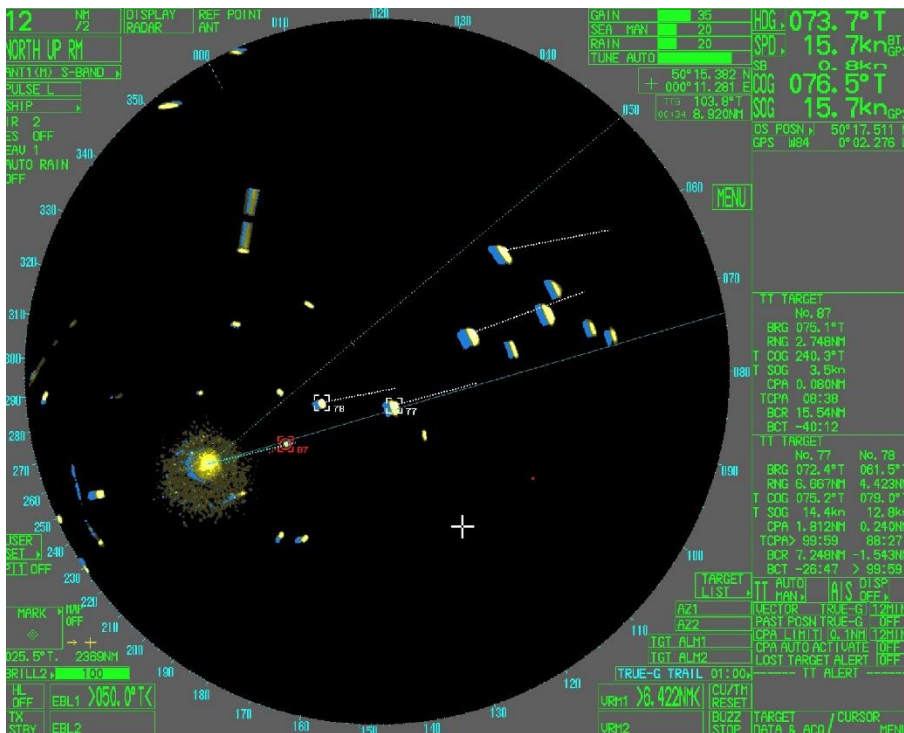


Figure 3 - Radar on board MT SEASONG

The speed of the MT SEASONG remained unchanged. There was no communication between both vessels.

The following minutes, the heading of both vessels changed, as the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was turning over SB to sail on a northerly course while the MT SEASONG was turning to port with the intention to keep out of the way of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE.

At about 11:00 hours, the FV reached a heading of 316° and maintained this course at a speed of about 4,5 kn. The heading of the MT SEASONG at that time was 062°, but still decreasing, and the speed at that time was still 15 kn. The CPA between both vessels at that time was about 0,444 nm.

Between 11:00 hours and 11:04 hours, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE maintained a heading of about 316° at a speed of about 4,5 kn. During the same period of time, the heading of the MT SEASONG changed further to 045°. The speed remained unchanged. The CPA between both vessels at that time was about 0,156 nm.

At 11:04 hours, the MT SEASONG was hailed by FV O.231-DEN HOOPE on VHF 16. The conversation continued on VHF 10 in standard English. The MT SEASONG requested the FV to keep out of the way of the sea-going vessel given the constantly changing course of the FV.

As a reply, the FV requested the MT SEASONG to keep out of the way of the FV.

The MT SEASONG then argued that she kept out of the way of the FV but was prevented from doing so any further by the constantly changing course of the FV.

After a brief denial from the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE, the conversation stopped without outcome. Meanwhile, the MT SEASONG turned hard to port and reduced speed.

At 11:06 hours, the MT SEASONG hailed FV O.231-DEN HOOPE on VHF 16 and requested her to keep out of the way of the MT SEASONG. This call was not answered.

Meanwhile, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE had turned hard to SB and the horn of the MT SEASONG sounded.

At 11:07 hours, the MT SEASONG collided with the top of the derrick of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE. The MT SEASONG still had a speed of 7,5 kn at that time. Shortly thereafter, the PS stern of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was also hit by the turning MT SEASONG. The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE briefly hailed MT SEASONG on VHF 16, but this call was not answered.

Meanwhile, the MT SEASONG turned over SB in an attempt to keep out of the way of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE.

After the collision, the MT SEASONG was put back on course to continue her voyage in TSS DOVER STRAIT. The speed of the MT SEASONG increased again to 15,5 kn.

The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE put her derricks inside and was able to continue her voyage by her own means.

At 11:31 hours, the MT SEASONG hailed FV O.231-DEN HOOPE on VHF 16 to inquire about the damage on board. This was the first radio contact between both vessels after the collision.

Thereafter, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE set course towards Ostend where she put into port at around 02:00 hours on 22 March 2023.

The visible damage on board the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was mainly limited to the derrick, as shown in Figure 4. No damage was found on board the MT SEASONG.



Figure 4 - Damage to PS derrick

ANALYSIS OF THE ACCIDENT

The accident occurred just outside the TSS. The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was engaged in fishing. Initially, there was no danger of collision.

As the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was carrying out a manoeuvre to turn 180° in front of the SB bow of the MT SEASONG, a collision course developed between both vessels.

However, this collision course was only temporary as the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was in the process of turning and would keep out of the way of the oncoming MT SEASONG.

On board the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE it was assumed that the MT SEASONG would maintain her course and speed. The MT SEASONG did not maintain course and speed and made a course change to port to avoid a collision, while the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE was still manoeuvring.

A course change to starboard was assumed impossible for the MT SEASONG because of an overtaking vessel. This overtaking vessel transmitted no AIS signal.

There were no sound signals and there was no communication between both vessels.

While carrying out her manoeuvre, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE did not notice that the MT SEASONG was swerving to port. This became clear when the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE reached her new course and noticed that the course of the MT SEASONG had changed to 065°.

During the following minutes, the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE maintained her course and speed, and the MT SEASONG continued to swerve further to port, creating a new collision course.

The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE then called the MT SEASONG by VHF, but no agreement could be made. Meanwhile, the MT SEASONG turned hard to port and then hard to starboard to keep the stern clear of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE.

The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE swerved hard to starboard, but it was impossible to avoid a collision between both vessels.

After the collision, the MT SEASONG continued her voyage. Only 24 minutes later, the MT SEASONG hailed the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE on VHF 16 to inquire about the status on board.

CAUSE

The FV O.231-DEN HOOPE wanted to turn 180° such that the MT SEASONG could maintain her course and speed. However, this manoeuvre gave rise to a course change on board the MT SEASONG because the intentions of the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE were not clear.

The gradual course change to port of the MT SEASONG could not be visually detected on board the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE and thus led to a collision course in which both vessels had to swerve hard to minimise the impact of the collision.

SAFETY LESSONS

1. FV O.231-DEN HOOPE - Make the intentions of a manoeuvre clear to the other vessel. Sound signals and VHF communication can help.
2. MT SEASONG - The alteration of course to avoid collision shall be large enough to be readily apparent to another vessel observing visually or by radar.
3. Manoeuvres of both vessels to keep out of the way of the other vessel just before the collision resulted in minimal impact. However, the MT SEASONG continued her voyage at full speed immediately after the collision.

24 minutes after the collision, the MT SEASONG contacted the FV O.231-DEN HOOPE via VHF to inquire about the damage on board. The MT SEASONG was at that time almost 5 nm away from the location of the collision and consequently could no longer provide assistance if needed.

The independent investigation into the cause of this accident was conducted by FEBIMA, the **Federal Bureau for the Investigation of Maritime Accidents**:

www.febima.be



**Federal Bureau for the Investigation
of Maritime Accidents**