

Extract from The United Kingdom Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 – Regulation 5:

“The sole objective of a safety investigation into an accident under these Regulations shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of such an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”

NOTE

This report is not written with litigation in mind and, pursuant to Regulation 14(14) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame.

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Interim report on the investigation of the collision between the container ship *Solong* and the oil/chemical tanker *Stena Immaculate*, resulting in one fatality, 14 nautical miles north-east of Spurn Head at the entrance to the Humber Estuary, England, on 10 March 2025

The information contained in this interim report is based on the various aspects of the investigation completed to date. Readers are cautioned that there is the possibility new evidence may become available that might alter the circumstances as depicted in this report.

BACKGROUND

On 27 February 2025, the USA registered oil/chemical tanker *Stena Immaculate* (**Figure 1**) departed Agioi Theodoroi, Greece with a cargo of 220,204.5 barrels¹ of aviation fuel on board. The tanker was bound for Killingholme, England, and was expected to berth on 11 March 2025.

The Portugal registered containership *Solong* (**Figure 2**) was engaged in fixed trade in the North Sea, sailing between Rotterdam, Grangemouth and Hull. On 10 March 2025, its containerised cargo included various products including some designated as dangerous goods.

Image courtesy of Jeff Bowden (MarineTraffic.com)



Figure 1: *Stena Immaculate*

Image courtesy of Howard Parsons (MarineTraffic.com)



Figure 2: *Solong*

FACTUAL INFORMATION

As *Stena Immaculate* approached the Humber Estuary on 9 March 2025, the officer of the watch contacted Associate British Ports (ABP) Vessel Traffic Services Humber and was advised to proceed to anchor at a position 5 miles to the north of the Humber light float and 2 miles clear of any pipeline. At about 1830², *Stena Immaculate*'s master manoeuvred the vessel as directed to a position north of ABP Humber's area of responsibility where it anchored. There were eight other vessels anchored in the same area.

By 2000 on 9 March 2025, *Solong* had departed Grangemouth, Scotland, disembarked the pilot and commenced its passage to Rotterdam, the Netherlands. *Solong*'s planned passage followed a route the vessel had used in the past. The master remained on watch until shortly before 2300, then handed the watch over to the second officer (2/O) and retired to bed.

¹ A unit of volume used for the carriage of cargo on oil tankers (220,204.5 barrels equates to 35,009.7m³).

² All times in this interim report are universal time coordinated (UTC).

Shortly before midnight, *Stena Immaculate's* 2/O took over the anchor watch at the start of a 12-hour duty period.

At approximately 0130 on 10 March 2025, *Solong* passed the Longstone Lighthouse off the north-east coast of England and altered course onto a heading of approximately 150°. *Solong* maintained this course except for a slight deviation at 0345.

At 0700, *Solong's* master returned to the bridge and took over the watch as the lone watchkeeper.

The visibility in the area north of the Humber light float was reported to be patchy and varying between 0.25 nautical miles (nm) and 2.0nm. Neither *Solong* nor *Stena Immaculate* had a dedicated lookout on the bridge.

At 0947, *Solong* collided with the anchored *Stena Immaculate's* port side on a heading (HDG) of 150° and speed over the ground (SOG) of about 16 knots (kts) (**Figure 3**). Able seaman Mark Pernia, one of *Solong's* crew, was reported to be in the forecastle area at the time of the collision.

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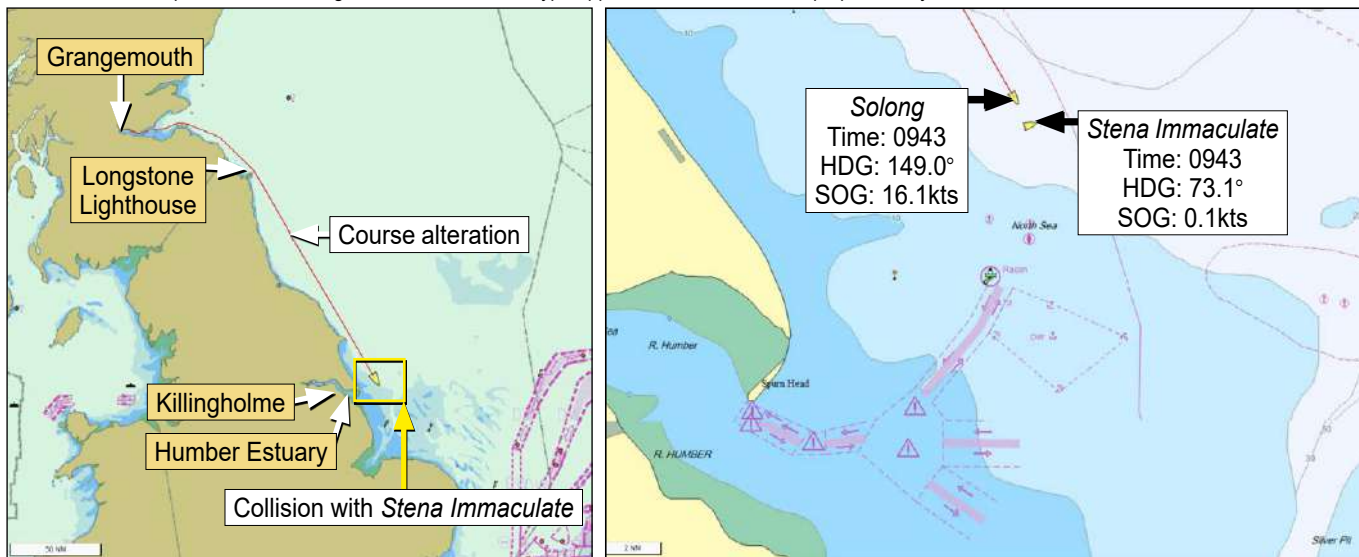


Figure 3: Passage of *Solong* and collision area

CONSEQUENCES

The collision breached *Stena Immaculate's* No.7 port cargo tank, releasing aviation fuel into the sea and onto the bow of *Solong*. The aviation fuel was ignited by the heat generated by the force of the collision (**Figure 4**) and the resulting fire ignited the contents of containers carried on board *Solong*.

The crews of both *Solong* and *Stena Immaculate* took immediate action to address the evolving situation. Attempts by *Stena Immaculate's* crew to fight the fire, and for *Solong's* crew to locate the missing able seaman were hampered by the severity of the fire. Both *Stena Immaculate* and *Solong's* crew abandoned to lifeboats and were subsequently recovered by the efforts of local boats and emergency responders, coordinated by His Majesty's Coastguard.

Able seaman Mark Pernia has not been found and is believed to have died in the accident.

ONGOING ACTION

Both *Solong* and *Stena Immaculate* are currently undergoing salvage operations and an evaluation of the nature and extent of pollution from both vessels is in progress.

The MAIB's investigation into the accident is ongoing. The investigation will encompass the navigation and watchkeeping practices on board both vessels; manning and fatigue management; the condition and maintenance of the vessels involved; the use of the offshore area as an anchorage for vessels waiting to enter the Humber Estuary; and the environmental conditions at the time.

A report of the investigation will be drafted and will be distributed to key stakeholders for a 30-day consultation period in due course.



Figure 4: Initial collision

VESSEL PARTICULARS		
Vessel's name	<i>Solong</i>	<i>Stena Immaculate</i>
Flag	Portugal	USA
Classification society	Det Norske Veritas	Det Norske Veritas
IMO number/fishing numbers	9322554	9693018
Type	Container ship	Oil/chemical tanker
Registered owner	Solong Schiffahrtsgesellschaft	Stena Bulk Marine Services LLC
Manager(s)	Reederei Köpping Reederei GmbH & Co. KG	Crowley Government Services
Year of build	2005	2017
Construction	Steel	Steel
Length overall	140.64m	183.169m
Registered length	130.68m	178.6m
Gross tonnage	7,852	29,854
Minimum safe manning	9	17
Authorised cargo	Containers	Oil/chemical

VOYAGE PARTICULARS		
Port of departure	Grangemouth, Scotland	Agioi Theodoroi, Greece
Port of arrival (intended)	Rotterdam, the Netherlands	Killingholme, England
Type of voyage	International	International
Cargo information	Mixed containerised	Aviation fuel
Manning	14	23

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION		
Date and time	10 March 2025 at 0947	
Type of marine casualty or incident	Very Serious Marine Casualty	
Location of incident	14nm north-east of Spurn Head, Humber Estuary, England	
Place on board	Bow	Port hull
Injuries/fatalities	1 fatality	None
Damage/environmental impact	Significant fire and structural damage to vessel	Significant fire and structural damage to vessel
Ship operation	On passage	At anchor
Voyage segment	Mid-water	At anchor
External & internal environment	Fog; 1m swell	
Persons on board	14	23