



SAFETY RECOMMENDATION No: 44/2015

Text of Safety Recommendation:

Amend the internal procedures in order to confirm that in cases of casualties or emergency situations of their managed vessels communication with local Authorities is established and all available means of assistance are taken into consideration for the assessment of the emergency handling.

No of Safety Investigation Report:

06/2015: Grounding and foundering of M/V KEREM S, St. Vincent & the Grenadines Flag, IMO 8223127, at Levitha Island, Greece.

(See the full Report [here.](#))

Safety Recommendation addressed to:

The Managing Company of "KEREM S"

Date of publication:

12/06/2017

Comments-Remarks:

INFORMATION OF ACCIDENT

Type of vessel: General Cargo

Year of built: 1983

Grounding and foundering of M/V KEREM S, St. Vincent & the Grenadines Flag, IMO 8223127, at Levitha Island, Greece.

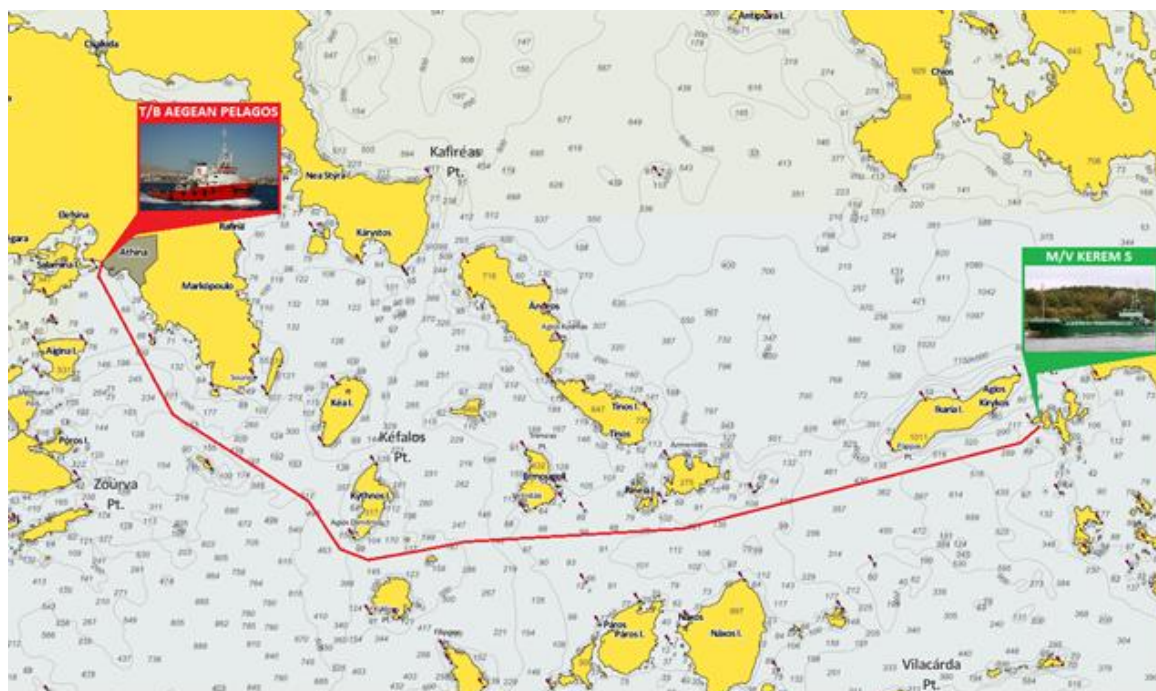
Course of events

M/V Kerem S under St. Vincent and the Grenadines flag, with 06 crew members, sailed from Crete, Greece on 16th February 2015, on light condition heading for Constantza, Romania. Due to heavy weather conditions the vessel anchored at the South Coast of Ikaria Island and waited for weather improvement. On 19th February 2015 the Master decided to heave up the anchor and attempted to continue the voyage; however when the vessel exited the passage between the islands of Ikaria and Thymaina, experienced strong winds and heavy swell coming from North directions. The Master decided to turn over and head towards a bay at the South Coast of Thymaina Island where he could drop the anchor and wait for weather improvement. At approximately 00:00 on 20th February 2015, Kerem S was anchored close to the South coast of Thymaina but due to the strong

winds, 7-8 Bft the vessel drifted and grounded with her starboard side aft part at the rocky coast. Due to the grounding the vessel's rudder detached from its mounting and the propeller got severely damaged.

The Master did not inform the local Authorities and decided to heave up the anchor and move the vessel from the grounding position to avoid further damages. Using the bow thruster he managed to refloat the vessel. Nevertheless Kerem S could not be maneuvered due to the propeller damages and the lost rudder and started drifting southerly due to the prevailing winds, at a speed (SOG) of 2 knots.

At approximately 01:00 the Master contacted the vessel's Managing Company to report the situation. The Company by turn contacted a salvage company and by 03:00 they had finally confirmed assistance arrangements from the Greek flagged T/B Aegeon Pelagos. The T/B would sail from Piraeus port, which was over 160 nautical miles away from the position of Kerem S. In the meantime the vessel was still drifting southerly.



The passage from Piraeus to Thymaina, approximately 160 nm.

At 06:52 Kerem S was West of Patmos Island and Olympia Radio called the vessel on the VHF. The Master reported that the vessel was drifting due to a mechanical failure and didn't request any kind of assistance. Olympia Radio reported the incident to Piraeus JRCC which issued a Pan Pan radio message.

The following hours Piraeus JRCC attempted several telephone communications with the ship's Managing Company and the Master for an update on the situation. During said communication it was reported that a tugboat was on the way and no further assistance was requested. The condition of the vessel with regard to the sustained damages to the propeller and the rudder was not reported. Nevertheless Piraeus JRCC continued to monitor the situation and repeatedly engaged available means.

At 17:35 the Master of Kerem S reported that he had dropped the anchor North of Levitha island. Due to the strong wind and waves Kerem S was dragging her anchor and continued to drift until she grounded at the rocky coast NE of Levitha island, Greece with her port side at 17:40. Her bottom hull was severely damaged and sea water started entering the Engine Room compartment causing the ship to list to her starboard side.

At 17:45 the Master of KEREM S called Piraeus JRCC to report the grounding and requested assistance to abandon the vessel.

By 19:14 all 06 crew members were rescued by the SAR helicopter. They were transferred to Kos

island and after a medical examination they were repatriated.

Kerem S remained at the grounding position and the progressive flooding of her Engine Compartment and her holds led to her foundering at approximately 09:05 on 23rd February 2015 at position lat: 37° 00.4800' N / Long: 26° 29.3898' E.

Consequences (to individuals, environment , property)

KEREM S foundered, whereas all 06 crew members were rescued by a SAR helicopter.

Probable cause

1. The Master decided to leave the anchorage south of Ikaria island and proceed for the ship's destination, despite the predicted bad weather conditions. He also had not prepared an "anchoring plan" for Thymaina according to Safety Management System Manual, whereas the SMS Manual did not incorporate specific instructions concerning the use of the commonly used and accepted guidelines to determine the proper length of the chain cable, according to the depth of the anchorage area and other parameters.
2. The length of the anchor chain cable paid out was not sufficient for the depth at anchorage area at Thymaina. Resultantly the vessel could not hold onto the anchor and drifted towards the shore.
3. After Kerem S grounded by her starboard aft part at the rocky shoal of Thymaina island and her propeller and rudder were severely damaged the Master decided to remove her from the grounding position without taking into consideration neither those damages nor the small islands south from the grounding position where the vessel could have grounded again after drifting.
4. The Master despite the ship's condition did not inform the local Authorities about the grounding at Thymaina and the actual condition of the ship due to the sustained damages neither he transmitted any distress signal via VHF.
5. The ship's Managing Company arranged for assistance by a tugboat located approximately 160 nm away from the casualty position and needed almost 14 hours to arrive at the vessel's area.

Conclusions

1. Actions should be taken by the ship's Managing Company to amend the "Anchoring and anchor watch check list" of the Safety Management System Manual with specific instructions concerning the length of the chain cable in accordance to the commonly accepted and used guidelines.
2. Actions should be taken by the ship's Managing Company to establish internal procedures in order to confirm that in cases of casualties or emergency situations of their managed vessels the Master has reported the actual condition of the vessel to the local Authorities.
3. Actions should be taken by the ship's Managing Company to amend the internal procedures in order to confirm that in cases of casualties or emergency situations of their managed vessels communication with local Authorities is established and all available means of assistance are taken into consideration for the assessment of the emergency handling.