



## INTERIM REPORT

Art. 16.2 Law 4033/2011 (art. 14.2 Directive 2009/18/EC)

### MARINE ACCIDENT SAFETY INVESTIGATION

#### GROUNDING of RO-RO PASSENGER "EUROPALINK" ITALIAN FLAG, IMO 9319454

on rocky shoal reef South of Peristerai Islet - Greece

#### Marine casualty Safety Investigation

##### Law 4033/2011 as amended and applies

(summary extract of art. 1.b, 4.1.a  
& 4.1.b)

The conduct of Safety Investigations into marine casualties or incidents is independent from criminal, discipline, administrative or civil proceedings whose purpose is to apportion blame or determine liability. The sole objective of the conduct of a safety investigation is to ascertain the circumstances that caused the marine accident or incident through analysis, to draw useful conclusions and lessons learned that may lead, if necessary, to safety recommendations or proposals addressed to parties or stakeholders involved in order to take remedial actions, aiming to prevent or avoid future marine accidents.

#### Points of Interest

- This Interim Report has been prepared by virtue of art. 16.2 Law 4033/2011, as applies (art. 14.2 Directive 2009/18/EC) as the full investigation report will not be published within 12 months of the marine accident date.
- The Interim Report has been published for the sole purposes of the safety investigation process with no litigation in mind and should be inadmissible to any judicial or other proceedings (administrative, disciplinary, criminal or civil) whose purpose is to attribute or apportion blame or liability.
- The Interim Report only aims to present a concise summary of the events occurred on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2014 that led to a serious marine accident.
- The Interim Report does not constitute legal advice in any way and should not be construed as such.

#### Serious marine accident

September 2015

HBMCI conducts the safety investigation of issued marine casualty as the Lead Investigating State. The content of this Interim Report is based on current available information and data collected and analyzed during the safety investigation process into captioned marine accident.

The completion of the procedure as defined in relevant legislation may reveal or identify new information, data or evidence and consequently cause changes or amendments in data provided by this Interim Report. All times quoted are local times (UTC +3h) unless otherwise stated.

#### Marine accident synopsis

On 21 September 2014 Ro-Ro Passenger EUROPALINK was en route to Ancona, Italy having departed from the port of Igoumenitsa, Greece with 693 passengers, 70 crew members and loaded with 366 vehicles. At about 0220 she was running at approximately 24 knots keeping a course of 360° while helm was in autopilot mode. Actual weather conditions were reported to be good with moderate sea and variable winds 2-3 bfts and good visibility. At 0233, while under turn to port by continuously setting the autopilot, she grounded on the rocky shoal reef South of Peristerai Islet, located 0.6 nm off the Northeast coast of Corfu island - Greece. The Master seconds before the grounding, counteracted by ordering the setting of rudder in manual mode however the impact could not be avoided. The heavy impact generated a noisy, shuddering vibration that alerted the Master and the crew. No injuries to crew or passengers were reported and no pollution occurred. Although her voyage plan provided passage through the narrow channel between Corfu and Peristerai islet however it was not exactly followed as planned, due to a sailing yacht navigating on EUROPALINK's port bow which caused her late turn to port, post to the preplanned waypoint. During the marine accident the 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer was on Duty, however the Master being also on the bridge had the con. Following the heavy impact she continued on the same course with her speed having significantly decreased. As reported she had sustained breaches to several void and engine compartments, however neither her rudders nor her propellers were affected by the impact. A slight trim by the head was also reported by crew members. The Master contacted the Coast Guard Authority of Corfu and reported that he intended to proceed to Corfu's passenger port. Following he ordered the competent crew to muster the passengers precautionary at the Muster Stations with their life jackets. At approximately 0340 Europalink managed to enter the port by her own means running at 20 knots. Due to the water ingress at critical engine compartments, her Main Engines were stopped as she was approaching the berthing dock, meters away from the mooring position whereas a failure of the electrical generating system occurred almost simultaneously, causing a black-out. The emergency Diesel generator was automatically started. Consequently, the berthing and mooring procedures were considerably affected and the Master used vessel's anchors to control and stop her before contacting with the dock. She finally berthed with her starboard bow and her stern post facing the dock while her stern was pointing towards the port entrance. A list to starboard close to 1° was reported by EUROPALINK's crew.

#### Emergency response actions

By the time EUROPALINK was moored two port tugs, called by the Coast Guard Authority, were deployed and assigned to push her port side towards the dock. The engine department crew was ordered to open the bow visor, in order to disembark the passengers and discharge the vehicles, nevertheless that was not feasible. Consequently, at approximately 0450, almost 01 hour after vessel's berthing, the evacuation of the passengers started following the crew's instructions, via the Bunker Station watertight door located at the main garage deck and lasted for almost 50 minutes. The evacuation procedure was carried out using a ramp, provided by the Port Authorities, which had been secured at said door leading the passengers directly to the dock. At about 0700 a diving team, called by the Coast Guard Authority, came on scene and two divers inspected EUROPALINK's hull with a camera so as to estimate the extent of the damages. At 07:31 one of the port tugs was released by the Master, as he assessed that one port tug was efficient to assist EUROPALINK remain secured at the mooring position. At 0745 the vessel's list to starboard started increasing. The Master, evaluating the stability condition of the vessel which seemed to deteriorate due to the continuous water ingress into the Engine compartments, ordered the abandonment of the vessel for safety purposes. At 08:46 all crew had evacuated EUROPALINK, nevertheless, shortly afterwards her condition appeared to be stabilized.

Taking under consideration the situation's development the Master and the Crisis Management Team of EUROPALINK's Managing Company together with the Coast Guard and Port Authority representatives as well as the representative of her Class, decided to shift her on the same dock position with the assistance of the two port tugs and the port pilot, in order to moor with her port side so as to enable the unloading of the vehicles from the stern ramp aiming at reducing her displacement and draught. At approximately 1000 the Master, the port pilot and the required crew members boarded on EUROPALINK and the shifting operation was completed at approximately 1230. Following, the stern ramp was opened and the discharging operation of the garage spaces commenced while a team of divers kept chocking the hull cracks with wedges and other material, in order to constrain the water inflow. The discharging operation of vehicles on decks 3,5,7,8 was gradually completed by afternoon hours. Two port tugs and one tugboat were used during the discharging operation by pushing on the starboard side of the vessel towards the pier, in order to control her list and maintain her berthing position. The discharge of the lower garage on deck 2 was carried out on the following day due to the fact that the control unit for operating its cover was located in the engine room compartment which had been flooded. A diver made an underwater connection of the actuators and the cover was finally opened.

EUROPALINK was inspected by the local Port State Control Office of the Hellenic Coast Guard and was detained. She underwent temporary repairs and following an inspection by her Class, she sailed under towage on 31 October 2014 to Yalova shipyard in Turkey for drydocking.

#### Investigation

The ongoing safety Investigation and analysis has primarily highlighted the following contributing factors:

- Poor bridge performance
- Failure to follow COLREGS
- Failure to follow instructions of Safety Management System concerning safety of navigation, and others as will be listed in the final safety investigation report.

#### Final safety Investigation Report

A draft safety investigation report is under preparation and is expected to be finalized shortly and circulated to involved and interested parties for consultation.



**Marine casualty  
Safety Investigation  
Law 4033/2011 as amended and  
applies**

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Grigoriou Lambraki Street 150  
P.c 185 18  
Piraeus

Tel: 213 1371970  
213 1371969  
210 1371968  
Fax: 213 1371269

Email: hbmci@yna.gov.gr  
Website: www.hbmci.gov.gr

## FACTUAL INFORMATION

### SHIP PARTICULARS

<b>Name</b>	EUROPALINK
<b>Flag</b>	ITALY
<b>Registry</b>	PALERMO
<b>Ship's type</b>	RO-RO PASSENGER
<b>IMO</b>	9319454
<b>Call sign</b>	ICUO
<b>LOA</b>	218.8 m
<b>Breath</b>	30.50 m
<b>Year of built</b>	2007
<b>Shipyard</b>	FINCANTIERI CANTIERI NAVALI ITALIANI S.P.A.— TRIESTE / ITALY
<b>Construction</b>	Steel
<b>Gross Tonnage</b>	46119
<b>Net Tonnage</b>	16031
<b>Engine / Power</b>	4 x WARTSILA 9L 46 D / 41580 kW
<b>Classification Society</b>	REGISTO ITALIANO NAVALE (RINA)
<b>Minimum Safe Manning</b>	44

### Voyage Particulars

<b>Date of departure</b>	21 September 2014 IGOUMENITSA/GREECE
<b>Trading Area</b>	Short International Voyages
<b>Cargo on board</b>	693 Passengers — 366 Vehicles
<b>Crew on board</b>	70

### Marine Casualty Information

<b>Date &amp; time</b>	21 September 2014 at 02:33
<b>Type of marine casualty</b>	Serious marine casualty
<b>Weather &amp; environmental conditions</b>	Wind force 2-3 Bft — sea state moderate — visibility good
<b>Location of casualty</b>	Northeast of Corfu island Greece — Lat.: 39° 47.47 N — Long.: 19° 57.61 E
<b>Damages to ship</b>	The vessel suffered hull damages (deformations and cracks) at the port and stbd side of the bottom, at port side fr.115 to fr.204 (62,3 m) and stbd side fr. 82 to fr. 154 (50,4 m).  Machinery equipment inside several Engine spaces was damaged due to their flooding.
<b>Fatalities/injuries</b>	None
<b>Marine pollution</b>	None

### RO-RO PASSENGER EUROPALINK

