



STATE MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION

INTERIM REPORT 07/15

Very serious marine casualty

M/V “TRANSFORZA”

TUG BOAT “KUGUAR”

Sinking of the tug boat “Kuguar” as a result of the collision
with the motor vessel “Transforza”
in the fairway in Świnoujście on 16 February 2015

February 2016

The investigation of the very serious marine casualty of motor vessels “Transforza” and “Kuguar” is conducted under the State Marine Accident Investigation Commission Act of 31 August 2012 (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 1068, and of 2015, item 1320), as well as norms, standards and recommended procedures agreed within the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which are binding for the Republic of Poland.

The above mentioned Act states that the examination of a marine casualty or incident is aimed at establishing its circumstances and causes in order to prevent marine casualties and incidents in future, as well as improve marine safety.

The State Marine Accident Investigation Commission does not decide on the liability or blame of any participants of the marine casualty or incident.

This report shall not be a proof in any criminal proceedings or any other proceedings aimed at establishing the liability or blame for causing the casualty the report refers to (Art. 40(2) of the State Marine Accident Investigation Commission Act).

Any and all information in this interim report was provided on the basis of the circumstances established during the investigation and the materials gathered by the Commission from the date of the casualty until the date of this report and may be amended in case there are new facts or evidences concerning the casualty.

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1. Facts

On 16 February 2015 at 21:40 the motor vessel “Transforza” admitted a pilot on board and headed towards the roadstead of the port of Świnoujście. There were a captain and a pilot on the bridge. The vessel was steered manually by the captain according to the pilot’s instruction.

On the same day, after completing towing services in the barge port of Police the tug boat “Kuguar” moved along the fairway Świnoujście - Szczecin towards the port of Świnoujście. The crew of the tug boat consisted of a skipper (master of the tug boat), a marine engineer and two AB seamen.

At the height of the Władysława IV Wharf, the motor vessel “Transforza” moved to the eastern part of the fairway and collided with the tug boat “Kuguar” abeam the northern tip of the Kosa peninsula at 22:18 p.m. or so. The bulbous bow of the motor vessel knocked into the underwater part of the hull of the tug boat on the port side beyond the midship.

As a result of the collision, the tug boat took on water, lost buoyancy and sank. The crew of the tug boat and its passenger found themselves in water, they were rescued by the pilot boat “Pilot-63” and rescue boat “R-2” of the Search and Rescue Service. Rescued persons were taken over by paramedics and admitted to the hospital in Świnoujście.

The motor vessel “Transforza” moored after the collision at the Portowców Wharf. As there were no visible damages and leaks of the hull, the motor vessel “Transforza” was allowed to continue its voyage to Szczecin. The basin area around the sunk wreck of “Kuguar” was surrounded by an oil spill containment boom which was maintained until 26 February 2015.

The wreck of the tug board was recovered on 11 March 2015.

2. General information

2.1. Particulars of vessels

2.1.1. M/v “Transforza”

Flag:	Gibraltar
Owner:	Industrial Shipping, Oslo (Norway)
Shipowner:	Transatlantic Ship Management AB, Gothenburg, Sweden
Classification society:	DNV-GL
Type of vessel:	bulk carrier

Call signal:	ZDNJ2
IMO identification number:	9199402
Gross tonnage (GT):	3244
Year of built:	2000
Power:	2880 kW (MAK 6 M 32)
Width:	16.30 m
Length overall:	99.95m
Hull material:	steel
Minimum crew:	8 persons
Type of VDR:	S-VDR NetWave NW4000

2.1.2. Tug boat “Kuguar”

Flag:	Poland
Shipowner:	Otto Wulf GmbH & Co KG, Cuxhaven, Germany
Operator:	Zakład Usług Żeglugowych Sp. z o.o. & Co.Sp. k., Szczecin, Poland
Classification society:	PRS S.A.
Type of vessel:	tug boat
Call signal:	SPS2088
Gross tonnage (GT):	115.19
Year of built:	1969
Power:	589 kW (S.K.L. 6NVD 48A-2U)
Width:	6.83 m
Length overall:	25.64 m
Hull material:	steel
Minimum crew:	4 persons

2.2. Voyage information

2.2.1. M/v “Transforza”

Ports en route:	Raahe (Finland)
Destination port:	Szczecin
Type of navigation:	international navigation
Manning:	1 Estonian, 7 Russians

Passengers: no passengers

2.2.2. Tug boat “Kuguar”

Ports en route: barge port of Police
Destination port: Świnoujście
Type of navigation: near-coastal without limitations
Manning: 4 Poles
Passengers: 1 Polish national

2.3. Casualty information

Type: very serious marine casualty
Date and time of the casualty: 16.02.2015 22:18 LT
Geographical position of the casualty: $\varphi = 53^{\circ}54,33' N$; $\lambda = 014^{\circ}15,70' E$
Geographical area of the casualty: the Bay of Pomerania – the Świna Straight
Type of the water basin: internal waters, fairway
Weather during the casualty: wind S 5–7°B, very good visibility, outgoing current 1.6 *kn*, air temperature - 1°C, water temperature +5°C
Operating state of “Transforza”: vessel loaded with steel products
Operating state of “Kuguar”: tug boat on the way in the fairway to the Portowców Wharf in the port of Świnoujście
Effects of the casualty for “Transforza” no damages, only scratches on the painting layer on the bulbous bow
Effects of the casualty for “Kuguar”: As a result of the collision with the bulbous bow of “Transforza”, the tug boat’s plating of the hull was damaged on the port side below the waterline at a level of the engine room, was flooded with water and sank.

3. Casualty circumstances

After completing the loading operation of steel products in Raahe, Finland, the motor vessel “Transforza” started its journey to Szczecin on 13 February 2015, at 20:00. On 16 February, at 21:40, the vessel took a pilot on board at the roadstead of Świnoujście. There was a captain on

the bridge who manually steered the vessel. The radar and ECDIS were working on the bridge. VHF's were turned on channels 12 and 68. The motor vessel exhibited lights, as required by law, and was sailing at a speed of approx. 8 knots. The adjustable bridge of the vessel was set in the middle position.

At 22:11 the pilot notified local ferries via VHF about the vessel's approaching the ferry terminal (the notification was heard by the skipper of "Kuguar"). At approx. 22:15 the pilot of "Transforza" noticed the echo of the tug boat in front of the bow on the radar screen. Just before the collision, the pilot and master of "Transforza" did not see the tug boat as it was in the dead sector below the bow of the vessel.

On 16 February 2015 at 16:10, a dispatcher of the shipowner of "Kuguar" received a telephone order to provide a service of taking the vessel "Omskiy-137" out of the barge port of Police at 19:00. The dispatcher assigned "Kuguar" to do the job. Once the crew was appointed and appeared and a passenger was taken board of the tug boat, it cast off at 17:20 from the Warsztatowe Wharf in Szczecin and entered the barge port of Police.

At 19:30, when "Omskiy-137" was turned and left the port, the tug boat followed the vessel towards Świnoujście. On the bridge, there were a skipper and a seafarer steering the boat. Navigation lights of the radar of the tug boat were exhibited, as required by law. The radar of the tug boat was not turned on. During the journey, seafarers changed by the wheel.

At 22:14 the skipper notified that the tug boat was moving to the ferries, while informing that the Portowców Wharf was its destination. While passing the sea ferry station, the skipper of "Kuguar" heard on VHF channel 12 approx. 20 s before the collision that the pilot of "Transforza" called him to turn to the starboard (to the east), which he did immediately. While turning, the vessel collided with "Transforza" which struck the bulbous bow of the underwater part of the port side beyond the midship.

The collision happened in the position of $\varphi = 54^{\circ}54,36'N$; $\lambda = 014^{\circ}15,75'E$. The engineer noticed water flooding the floor in the engine room, screamed to warn the crew that the vessel was taking on water and cut off the fuel shut off valve. The skipper of the tug boat ordered to abandon the boat.

The tug boat floated on water and drifted with the current for a few minutes. While the stern of the tug boat was sinking, members of the crew and the passenger moved with life vests in hands to the bow of the tug boat. After losing buoyancy, the tug boat sank in the position of $\varphi = 54^{\circ}54,4553'N$; $\lambda = 014^{\circ}15,7906'E$, on the bottom at a depth of approximately 13.6 m. Five overboard persons were taken out of water during the rescue operation.

4. Preliminary analysis and comments on factors causing the casualty by taking into accounts results of examinations and expertise opinions

The Commission established that one of the causes of the casualty was that “Transforza” turned to port after passing the harbour master’s office in Świnoujście and moved to the opposite, eastern part of the fairway.

5. Participation of substantially interested states

During the investigation of the casualty, the Commission cooperates with the Marine Accident Investigation Compliance Officer of Gibraltar.

6. Glossary and abbreviations

AIS - Automatic Identification System

LT - Local Time

S.K.L. - Engine manufacturer

S-VDR - Simplified Voyage Data Recorder

UTC - United Time Coordinated

VDR - Voyage Data Recorder

kn - knots (speed)

7. Information sources

Notification about the casualty

Documents of vessels

Interviews with the witnesses

Register of received AIS signals

8. Accident Investigation Team

The Accident Investigation Team consisted of:

Team Leader – Krzysztof Kuropieska, Member of the SMAIC

Team Member – Tadeusz Gontarek, Member of the SMAIC

9. Anticipated date of the publication of the final report

The Commission expects that the final report will be drawn up in March 2016 and published immediately after its consultation with interested parties.