

Strong seas ripped containers off YM Efficiency within two minutes



By Insurance Marine News, 26th July 2018

Just two minutes of surging seas off the central coast of New South Wales on June 1st were sufficient to detach 81 containers from the deck of container ship YM Efficiency (IMO 9353280), according to a preliminary report into the incident from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).

The seas caused 90 seconds of heavy rolling as she drifted in the severe weather, with rolls of up to 30 degrees port and starboard.



The 268-metre YM Efficiency was on its way to Port Botany from Taiwan on June 1st when weather conditions worsened to gale force. An initial report by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) revealed that the ship was delayed by eight hours and told it could not dock in Sydney until 20:00 that evening.

The main engine was stopped but restarted for brief periods over several hours to maintain control of the drift, but disaster struck when the ship was 16nm off the coast of Newcastle. During the period of severe rolling, engineering alarms sounded and the second officer reported hearing “loud noises on deck”. When the deck lights were turned on it was clear that cargo had been lost overboard. The following morning they discovered that 81 containers had been lost and 62 more were damaged.

ATSB Executive Director Nat Nagy said that “the next steps of the ATSB investigation will include analysis of the ship’s container stow and lashing arrangements, the actions of the crew immediately following the incident, as well as analysis of the weather conditions at the time”.

The incident necessitated an expensive clean-up. Only two of the containers washed up on shore, with debris being found across a broad area.

For weeks after the incident, locals and Roads and Maritime Services removed tonnes of debris as plastic began washing up on beaches as the cargo burst from damaged containers. A hydrographic survey vessel was also brought in by AMSA, as arranged by the shipping company’s insurer, to search the ocean floor. That survey vessel has so far identified 50 containers, either broken or intact, on the sea floor.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) found a number of deficiencies relating to the

ship's safety management system, safety of navigation and cargo storage. After inspecting the ship when she berthed in Port Botany on June 6th, AMSA found that a total of 324 containers exceeded their tier weight limits set in the ship's cargo securing manual. The ship left Port Botany for Brisbane with a new master and chief commander in control.

The ATSB's preliminary report has found that the crew had checked the container lashings multiple times before the storm and had logged the fact that the weather was deteriorating.

A final report is expected in mid-2019.

2009-built, Liberia-flagged, 42,741 gt YM Efficiency is owned by All Oceans Transportation Inc care of manager Yang Ming Transport Corp of Keelung City, Taiwan. It is entered with Britannia P&I Club on behalf of All Oceans Transportation Inc.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-07-24/ym-efficiency-suffered-90-seconds-of-chaos/10029558>

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