

Intercargo submits bulk casualty report to IMO

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The International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (Intercargo) has submitted its report on dry bulk casualties to the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Intercargo's database recorded 337 bulk carrier incidents in 2017, including the two casualties of M/V Stellar Daisy and M/V Emerald Star. The association said that serious concerns arose on the safe carriage of ammonium nitrate based fertilizer, following the incident of the high temperatures in the cargo holds and the release of gases from the cargo on the 57,000 dwt supramax MV Cheshire in August 2017.

Intercargo said that bulk carrier owners were confused with the existing individual schedule for Ammonium Nitrate-based fertilizer (non-hazardous) in the IMSBC Code, "which covers a wide range of different fertilizers with the safety requirements varying depending on their specific properties, types and compositions."

The IMO GISIS database showed that, as of the end of January 2018, 29 investigation reports of 53 losses had not been submitted to IMO by their flag States. Some details further highlighted the issue of slow reporting:

- The highest loss of life was attributed to cargo failure (liquefaction), totalling 101 lives lost from the nine casualties during 2012 and 2015. Three investigation reports of those nine cases have not been submitted to IMO.
- The most common reported cause of ship losses was grounding, totalling 22 losses among the 53 cases. Ten investigation reports of those 22 cases have not been submitted to IMO.
- Six ships lost with unknown causes claimed 61 lives. Five investigation reports of those six cases have not been submitted to IMO.
- Reported flooding led to losses of eight ships and 14 lives. Five investigation reports of those eight cases have not been submitted to IMO.

Intercargo stressed the importance of timely submission of the casualty investigation reports to IMO from relevant flag States, as a means of identifying the causes of the incidents and enabling corrective actions.

Significant findings:

- 22 Handysize bulk carriers were lost, representing 41.5% of the total 53 casualties reported. Most cases happened before 2011, with a “remarkable” improvement since then.
- 11 Handymax were lost, representing 20.8% of the total, without any clear pattern of improvement through the years.
- Supramax suffered eight ship losses, making up 15.1% of the total, with five losses related to suspected cargo failure (liquefaction) and a consequential loss of 85 lives.
- Capesize suffered seven ship losses, comprising 13.2% of the total.
- Panamax suffered the lowest number of total losses – 9.4% of the total.
- In terms of annual ship losses, after peaking in 2011, a reduction of ship losses had been observed since.

<https://www.intercargo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/bulk-carrier-casualty-report-2017.pdf>