1. SUMMARY

During the morning of 29 October 1995 the Norwegian motor tanker BORGA ran aground in Milford Haven whilst under pilotage. The weather was good with a south-easterly force 3 wind and clear visibility.

At the time of the accident the vessel was loaded with 112,180 tonnes of crude oil, but although the vessel's hull was damaged the cargo tanks remained intact and there was no oil pollution. She is not a "double hull" tanker but is constructed with segregated ballast and double bottom tanks.

Two attempts were made to pull the vessel off using tugs, but both were unsuccessful. A third attempt after the vessel had been lightened by 8,500 tonnes of cargo was successful and she refloated. BORGA eventually discharged her remaining cargo at Milford Haven before proceeding to Hamburg for repairs.

The bottom hull plating and framing suffered varying degrees of torn plating and scraping damage on both sides of the bow. Additional damage, including minor plate tears, was found on the port side in way of the bulkhead separating Nos 2 and 3 double bottom ballast tanks.

The cause of the grounding was due to a failure to compensate quickly enough for the vessel's rate of turn to port by applying sufficient starboard helm following an alteration of course. The helm was put hard-to-starboard as soon as it was realised that the vessel's head was continuing to turn to port. Also astern propeller pitch was applied, bow and stern thrusters were activated, and both anchors were let go. Despite all these actions the vessel ran aground at 0755 hrs.

BORGA had the manoeuvring characteristic that, although her head turned to port when her propeller pitch was at full speed astern, her head turned to starboard at slow speed astern.

Recommendations have been made with a view to ensuring that the provisions of the International Chamber of Shipping's Bridge Procedures Guide are more closely followed, and for consideration to be given to extending the existing steering gear electrical power failure alarm required by SOLAS to include a low hydraulic pressure alarm.