

SYNOPSIS

At 0829 local time (UTC-4) on 2 August 2000, *Global Mariner*, a 12,778gt United Kingdom-registered dry cargo vessel, was in collision with *Atlantic Crusader*, a 7,366gt Cyprus-registered container vessel, and then foundered at Matanzas, Orinoco River, Venezuela.

Northern Marine Management Ltd reported the accident to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), and an investigation started that day.

Atlantic Crusader, a Cyprus-registered general cargo vessel of 7,366gt, had anchored originally downstream of the Matanzas quay. However, after dragging her anchor a number of times, her master had sought better holding ground and had reanchored his vessel further upstream. She had then dragged her anchor on three further occasions, most recently at 0506 that day.

Global Mariner had berthed heading upstream alongside the Matanzas quay. She sailed from Berth No 3 at 0818 with an even keel draught of 9.9 metres and, with the assistance of two tugs, turned around to head downstream. In addition to the manoeuvring pilot and the master, the bridge was manned by the chief officer, a cadet and a helmsman. Two other vessels, *Illapel* and *Atlantic Crusader*, were anchored in the river, both heading upstream, with the latter lying astern of the former. Almost immediately, there appeared to be a risk of collision with *Atlantic Crusader*, which was showing a starboard aspect at approximately 4 cables on the port bow from *Global Mariner*. She was perceived to be underway and proceeding on a course across the track of *Global Mariner*.

Subsequently, with the master's agreement, the pilot ordered hard to starboard and the forward tug was then released. At approximately 0829, *Atlantic Crusader's* bow impacted with the port side of *Global Mariner* in way of No 2 hold. The resultant damage to *Global Mariner* caused her to flood and founder, finally grounding on the south side of the river. There were no injuries and all on board were safely evacuated.

Neither vessel was fitted, nor required to be fitted, with a voyage data recorder and there is conflicting evidence with respect to the collision position and the circumstances leading up to the accident; it is uncertain whether or not *Atlantic Crusader* had started to drag her anchor before the collision. In view of the uncertainty, no definitive causes have been identified and no attempt has been made in this report to suggest a most probable scenario.

The analysis focuses primarily on the actions of those on board, and factors immediately affecting *Global Mariner*. It is expected that the Venezuelan and Cypriot authorities will, as a result of their separate investigations, focus on any additional and underlying matters affecting respectively the port authority and *Atlantic Crusader*.