

SYNOPSIS



Resplendent ran aground in the approaches to the northern entrance to Bluemull Sound, Shetland Islands, at about 0325 (UTC+1) on 13 June 2001, as she headed towards Cullivoe to land her catch. The skipper had attempted to alter course towards the safe water in the Sound using a joystick control but, because the procedure for changing from automatic to manual steering had not been completed correctly, the joystick had no effect. The skipper was not aware that the vessel was not turning as intended until immediately before the vessel grounded. This left insufficient time for any remedial action to be taken. *Resplendent* was refloated the following day. There was no pollution, and damage to the vessel was minor.

Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) Shetland informed the MAIB of the accident by telex at 0434 (UTC+1) on 13 June, and an investigation started later that day.

It is considered several factors contributed to manual steering not being selected as intended, and to the time taken to realise the joystick control was ineffective:

- The skipper had not slept in the 23 hours before the grounding.
- Manual steering was not tested after being selected.
- A rudder angle indicator was not used to check the position of the rudder following movement of the joystick control.
- The skipper was alone in the wheelhouse.
- A telephone call, and a bridge alarm sounding might have disrupted the skipper's concentration.
- Navigation by eye in the prevailing circumstances was inappropriate.

Recommendations to the owner are aimed at improving wheelhouse practices and watchkeeping standards, particularly in relation to steering and navigation procedures and reducing the risks posed by fatigue.