

CASE STUDY



VESSEL TYPE: Harbour Craft
TRADING AREA: Europe and Middle East

HEADING : Size does matter

THE INCIDENT:

This incident occurred when two tugs were employed in shifting a floating dry dock of approximately 3,400 tonnes into deep water so that she could be ballasted down to sail out a vessel within.

The operation required the dock to be manoeuvred across the port approach channel, down which a supply vessel was navigating. In order to give this vessel more sea room, the tugs towing the dock eased off. The dock then started to drift towards vessels moored at a nearby berth and despite the best efforts of the tugs, the dock continued towards the moored vessels, eventually making contact with one.

OBSERVATIONS:

Two factors played a part in the cause of this incident. The bollard pull of the tugs was considered insufficient for the size of the dock. A strong current was flowing at the time of the operation and the tugs were not of sufficient power to regain control. Secondly, neither the dry dock operations department nor the tug masters took it upon themselves to inform the port control of the operation. Had this been done, the manoeuvre would have probably been delayed until the channel was clear or the inbound vessel prevented from entering the channel.



All in all the operation was very poorly planned.

THE FINANCIAL COST:

Whilst damage claimed was extensive we eventually concluded settlement in the modest sum of US\$14,737.

Issue Date: 3.2.10

Case No. 44485