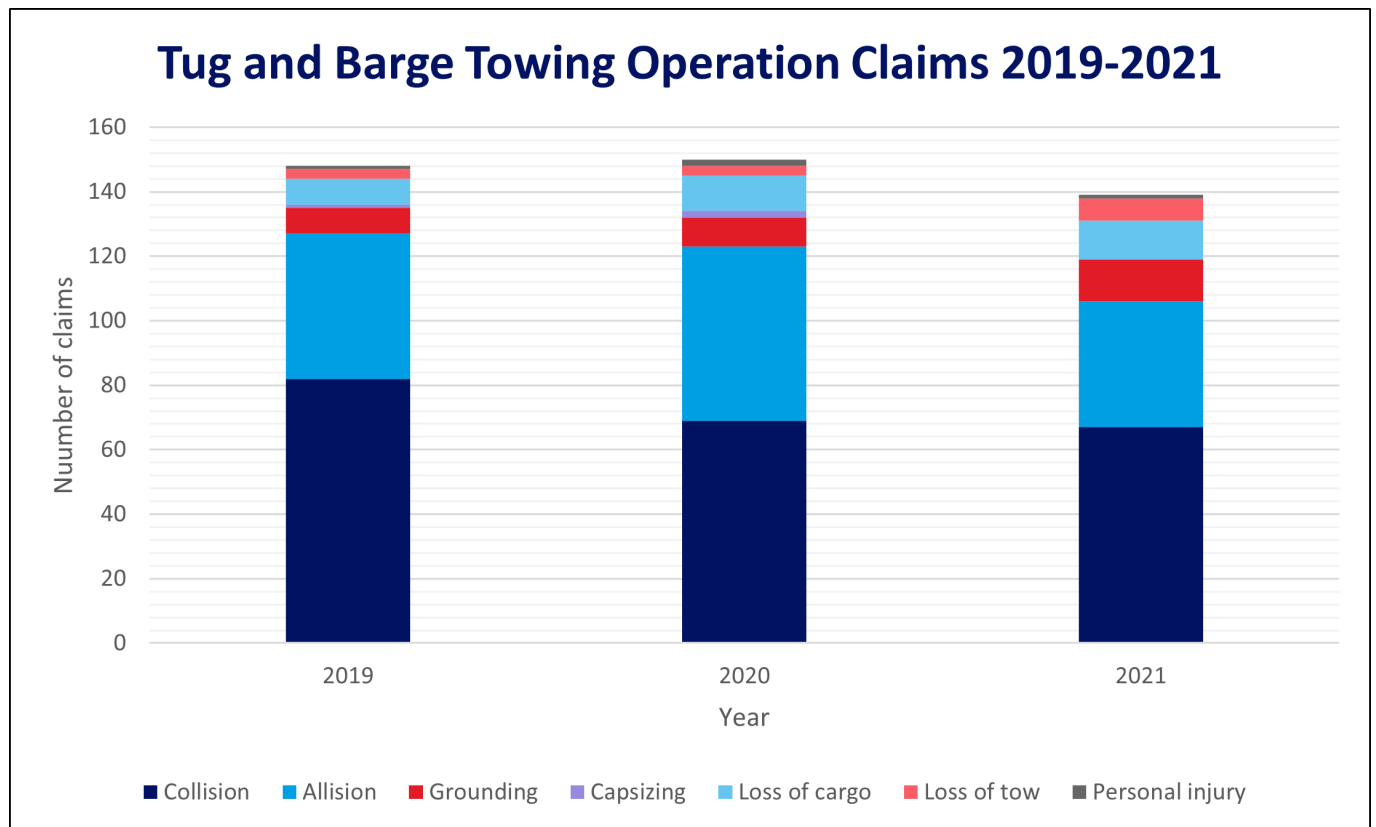


## Tug and Barge Towing Operations Risk Assessment

**Non-Propelled barges are widely used to carry commodities and equipment on inland waterways, in coastal waters and open seas. The towing of these barges by purpose-built tugs is a standard operation, however this activity presents complex challenges.**

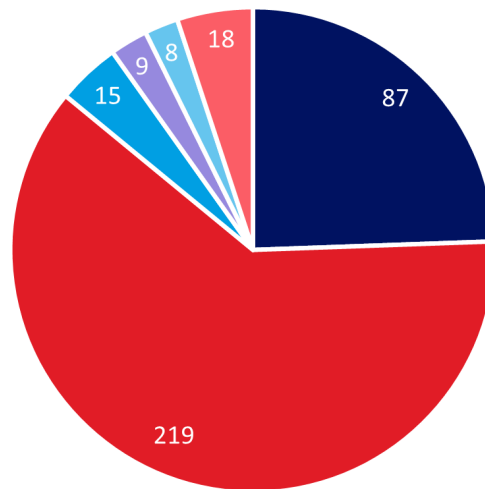
While the principles of navigation, stability, and cargo securing on tug and barge units remain the same as for ocean-going cargo vessels, the towing operation of barges comes with its own sets of related hazards.



The above graphs highlight the claims that have been notified to the Club between 2019 and 2021. It is noted that the Club continues to experience consistency in the number and types of claims related to this type of operation. It is worth noting that collision and allision claims collectively caused the most significant number of these claims in this reporting period, with 85% of those being attributed to navigational and handling errors.

---

## Collision and Allision claims causative factors (Period 2019-2021)



■ Navigational failure ■ Handling error ■ Towing gear failure  
■ Machinery Failure ■ Weather ■ 3rd party negligence

To assist Members engaged in tug and barge operations to mitigate the risks associated with towing operations, the Club has developed a [sample risk assessment](#) as part of its Risk Assessment campaign.

This sample risk assessment is not a comprehensive guide to towing operations. It has been tailored to address the findings of the claims analysis; however, every endeavour has been made to expand the guidance as far as practicable to encompass most of the salient points that go hand in hand with safe towing operations.

The Club would like to emphasise that this risk assessment is for guidance purposes only, and operators must conduct their own risk assessments based on their operating environment and procedures.

Members may also refer to our [Tugs and Tows – A Practical Safety and Operational Guide](#), which has been produced to raise awareness of the practical aspects of a towage operation and assist mariners who may not be thoroughly familiar with these processes.

We trust Members will find this advice useful. Please contact the [Loss Prevention Team](#) if you have any further queries on this matter.