

MSID RTI Case Report

Case - MSC2379 - Case Finalised - Closed AM - Collision between vessels Safety 3 and Riff Raff in Pioneer Bay Airlie Beach.

Not Relevant

Summary of Facts:

A sailing vessel and start boat make minor contact prior to a racing event in waters adjacent to Airlie Beach. The event is managed by Whitsunday Sailing Club and their motor vessel Safety Three was the official start boat. The sailing vessel was a participant in the race and in getting ready for the race official start has manoeuvred into close quarters with the start boat which was on anchor but with motor on/operating. The sailing vessel master claims the start boat moved backwards whilst on anchor as the motor was in gear and not attended. As the sailing vessel passed in close quarters there was a collision with the start boat. Damage was minor and no person was injured. WSC as event organiser ensured incident was reported. master of sailing vessel reported incident claiming start boat was a fault

Not Relevant

Conclusion:

The ships involved in the collision did not adhere to the condition of the aquatic event authority. And on this occasion were more focused on the rules of racing than the requirements of The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

The close quarters interaction of vessels involved in sailing events is part and parcel of racing.

It is a timely reminder that even when involved in a racing event all ships must still adhere The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

There was failure by both vessels on this occasion with failure to adhere to all rules for started within the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

Safety 3 failed to display an anchor ball when anchored. (Rule 30 (e) (required as vessel greater than 7 metres)

Riff Raff failed to ensure that there was sufficient sea room in the close quarter's situation. Rule 8.

It would be recommended that the organiser of these sailing events discuss with the sailing committee the benefits vs. the disadvantages of the use of "barging buoys" placed on the start line rather than the use a vessel. This is a decision for the race committee and those with significant sailing and racing experience. It would also be beneficial to ensure that all participants are familiar with the authority and Schedule of Conditions that this and similar events are operated within. It must be noted that there are disadvantages with barging buoys being laid in close proximity, there is a high risk of entanglement of keel's and running gear for both the competitors and rescue / official vessels involved in racing activities.

Recommend: -

1. The Master of the Ship Riff Raff is provided and educational caution to ensure that he operates in accordance with the Aquatic event authority ensure that the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 are adhered to.
2. The Master of the ship Safety 3 is reminded of his requirements to ensure that all conditions of Aquatic event authority inclusive of all requirements stated in the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.
3. The Whitsunday Sailing Club consider if the use of " Barging buoy / Barging Mark " would be an appropriate method to reduce risk of similar incidents occurring in the future.

Not Relevant

<p>Findings:</p>	<p>The Vessel Safety 3 was the start boat for the Whitsunday Sailing Club (WSC) was anchored with Motors running preparing to start a Race on 10/02/2021. The Vessel Riff Raff that was a competitor in the race and made contact with the start Safety 3 prior to the start of the race. The investigation of this incident is only looking at if there has been a collision caused by failure to adhere to the "International Regulations for preventing Collisions At Sea" commonly referred to as "COLREGs" these apply to all vessels and in all waters connected therewith navigable by seagoing vessels. Rule 1(a). The nature of racing events does mean that vessel involved in sailing events operate in close quarters situations often within meters of each other. The vessel Safety 3 was anchored at the time of the collisions. The vessel Riff Raff was underway and making way at the time of the collision. Photos provided show that the Anchor line on the vessel Safety 3 was taught and there does appear to be calm water directly in front of the bow which may be an indicator that Safety 3 was in gear. The calm water could also indicate a change in wind conditions and be that the Safety 3 was swinging on its anchor. This cannot be confirmed, and the Master of Safety 3 was confident that the vessel was in neutral at the time of the collision. Safety 3 was not displaying a day shapes at the time of the incident. Rule 30 (a)(i). Safety 3 was displaying race flags; these race flags are used by racing organisation and are not referred to in the International Regulations for preventing Collisions at Sea. Therefore, the display of race flags is inconsequential to the findings of this investigation. The Vessel Riff Raff was aware of Safety One and believed that it was anchor in position as start boat. The vessel Riff Raff failed to take action to avoid a collision as required by COLREGs Rule 8 (a), (c), (d). Given the version of the master of both vessels vary, it is not possible to confirm that the anchored vessel was or was not in gear at the time of the collision. The Master of the vessel Riff Raff was aware that a close quarters situation would be encountered (within meters of each other) , when approaching the vessel Safety 3 that he assumed would be stationary and anchored in position. The Whitsunday Sailing club that organises the racing activity for this and similar events is provided an Aquatic event authority to conduct the events. This event was held under the Authority Consent to hold an Aquatic event AE09-21 - Part of those conditions are Condition 8. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (the Collision Regulations apply to all ships at all times. Condition 9. The Racing Rules of Sailing shall apply only to those ships that are participating in the aquatic event for the duration of the event. Should there be interaction of a participant ship with a non-participant ship, the Collision Regulations shall prevail. The collision occurred as a result of the close proximity that the ships were operating within. Regardless if there anchored vessel was dragging its anchor due to being in gear or weather conditions causing it to swing unpredictable on its ground tackle; the approaching vessel did not make alterations of course and speed in ample time with due regard to good seamanship to prevent the collision from occurring.</p>
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Not Relevant

Released under RTI - DTMR

Pages 4 through 17 redacted for the following reasons:

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