



Report on the investigation of the collision in Gibraltar Western Anchorage between

MV Cosco Jingtangshan IMO 9418315

&

MT Aeolos IMO 8820951

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Maritime Administration  
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## **Synopsis**

On May 25<sup>th</sup> 2011 at approximately 13:40 hours, MV Jिंगgangshan whilst departing from Gibraltar Western anchorage came into contact with MT Aeolos at anchor in close proximity within the Western anchorage.

The conclusions of the accident investigation conducted by the Gibraltar Maritime Administration indicate that navigational error by the Master of MV Jिंगgangshan appears to have been the cause of the collision.

No injuries were sustained as a result of the collision, and only slight damage was suffered by both vessels. The damage incurred by the vessels did not impair their seaworthiness.

Additional measures in the way of compulsory Pilotage for vessels departing Gibraltar Western anchorage may have served towards preventing the accident.

## Section 1 – Factual Information

### 1.1 Ship's Particulars

Name of ship	Cosco Jingtangshan
IMO	9418315
Ship type	Bulk carrier
Call Sign	VRHB8
MMSI	477815400
Gross tonnage	19993
Dead Weight	31898
Year of build	2010
Flag	Hong Kong, China

Name of ship	Aeolos
IMO	8820951
Ship type	Oil tanker
Call Sign	A8VA7
MMSI	636014582
Gross tonnage	43398
Dead Weight	84040
Year of build	1990
Flag	Liberia

## **Section 2 – Narrative**

### **2.1 Background Information**

MV Cosco Jingtangshan was a 2010 built bulk carrier under Chinese Flag managed by Cosco Far Reaching Shipping Company Ltd, and trading between ports in Europe, South America and United States. The ship called at Gibraltar for the purpose of taking on bunkers prior to proceeding to her next port of Santos, Brazil, for orders.

MT Aeolos was a 1990 built oil tanker under Liberian Flag and managed by Aegean Bunkering Services Inc. The ship was stationed at Gibraltar Western anchorage serving as a marine fuel oil storage vessel.

Following a verbal report from Gibraltar Port Authorities of a collision between the two vessels in the Western anchorage, Gibraltar Maritime Administration attended MV Jingtangshan on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2011, and MT Aeolos on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011, in order to conduct an investigation into the incident, and possible causes.

The investigation was initially conducted to the scope of the Thetis Port State Control inspection regime as an overriding factor, and later to the requirements of Gibraltar Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting & Investigation) Regulations 2006.

Mt Aeolos remained at the same anchorage position during the investigation, whilst MV Jingtangshan had been re-anchored by Gibraltar Pilots shortly after the incident in a very similar position to the one at which the ship had been anchored whilst taking bunkers.

### **2.3 Accident Investigation**

#### **2.3.1 MV Jingtangshan**

During attendance on MV Jingtangshan on May 25<sup>th</sup>, the following areas / activities were inspected:

- Ship's Certificates
- Crew Certificates
- Navigation Bridge
  - Passage plans
  - Charts
  - Watchkeeping schedule
- Decks / Hull
  - Damage sustained

Ship and crew certificates were inspected and found in good order.

The inspection of the deck and hull was limited to the area where the damage had been sustained as a result of the collision. The damaged area observed was between frames 141 to 163. The bulwark in the area in question was found to be deformed in an inward direction consistent with the type of collision. Bulwark stays were found to be buckled with some having sustained fractures at stress points at mid height and welding points to bulwark and deck. The vessel was also equipped with timber stanchions which also sustained deformation and / or were rendered out of use due to the damage to the bulwark and stays. No visual damage to the deck or side plating was observed. Port State Control deficiency included attendance by the ship's Classification Society, China Classification Society to further inspect the damage, and to confirm seaworthiness prior to departure from Gibraltar.

Navigational equipment and aids were inspected and found in good order.

The Master was interviewed during the investigation and provided an account of the incident and a statement, which is included as an appendix in this report. It was the Master's first appointment on the vessel, but the Master stated he had called at Gibraltar previously with other vessels.

MV Jिंगgangshan completed bunkering operations at 12:20 on 25<sup>th</sup> May. The bunker barge departed the vessel at 13:00. At 13:06, the ship's main engine was on standby. At 13:36 the anchor was clear of the bottom. The Master stated that his intention had been to heave up anchor and perform a turn to starboard clearing MT Aeolos on her starboard side to and follow a south westerly heading out of the Bay of Gibraltar to join the shipping lanes through the Straits of Gibraltar. After clearing the anchor from the bottom, the Master states that he calculated his rate of turn and concluded he could pass clear of the stern of MT Aeolos. The Master informed Gibraltar Port Authorities and Algeciras Port control of his intention and proceeded. The Master stated, that during the aforementioned reporting on corresponding VHF channels, he realised that his ship was coming too close to MT Aeolos, and gave the order to stop engine, keeping the ship hard to starboard. At 13:40 MV Jिंगgangshan's port side and MT Aeolos port quarter came into contact. The Master gave an immediate instruction to go hard to port as part of evasive manoeuvres.

### 2.3.2 MT Aeolos

During attendance on MT Aeolos on May 26<sup>th</sup>, the following areas / activities were inspected:

- Ship's Certificates
- Crew Certificates
- Navigation Bridge
  - Passage plans
  - Charts
  - Watchkeeping schedule
- Decks / Hull
  - Damage sustained

Ship and crew certificates were inspected and found in good order.

The inspection of the deck and hull was limited to the area where the damage had been sustained as a result of the collision. The damaged area observed was on the ship's port quarter with damage to the side shell and stern plating including the welded seam of the plates at the engine store level located inside. The vessel's Classification Society, Germanischer Lloyd had attended the vessel on May 25<sup>th</sup> and a Class survey report together with a divers report of underwater inspection of propeller and rudder were made available during the investigation and are appended to this report.

Navigational equipment and aids were inspected and found in good order.

The Master was interviewed during the investigation and provided an account of the incident. Copies of the Master's statement to the Gibraltar Port Authorities and the company's internal incident report are appended to this report. The Master has served on various Aegean vessels serving as bunker barges in Gibraltar and on MT Leader, Aegean's previous storage vessel which was anchored in approximately the same anchorage position as now occupied by MT Aeolos.

MT Aeolos was at the time of the incident, at her normal anchor position of approximately 36° 07' 28" N, 005° 22' 20" W on an Easterly heading. Master stated at 14:10 MV Jिंगgangshan was observed on a southerly course at a distance of approximately 2 cables North of MT Aeolos. At 14:14, MV Jिंगgangshan was observed to alter course to starboard, changing to a Westerly heading and moving parallel to MT Aeolos with a very small clearance between the two vessels. At 14:15 MV Jिंगgangshan came into contact, with her port side onto MT Aeolos port quarter. When asked as to what evasive measures, if any, had been taken, the Master stated that the change of course by MV Jिंगgangshan had been unexpected and there was no time for any evasive manoeuvres / actions.

In view of the action already taken by the company in respect of Class attendance and subsequent survey reports, no deficiency was raised under the Port State Control regime.

## **2.4 Post incident actions**

Class survey report and agreed repair schedule for MV Jिंगgangshan were submitted to Gibraltar Maritime Administration, inclusive of confirmation of seaworthiness, and is appended to this report. As a result, the vessel was allowed to sail from Gibraltar.

## **2.5 Environmental conditions**

The weather conditions were Easterly force 3 - 4, cloudy, good visibility and a temperature of 23 degrees Celsius. During the time of attendance on MT Jिंगgangshan, a moderate current from South to North was observed.

## **Section 3 – Conclusion**

From the information gathered during the investigation, it appears as there could have been an error in judgement in calculating the rate of turn by the Master of the MV Jिंगgangshan. The tidal flow observed whilst on board MV Jिंगgangshan, when compared to the headings within the statement provided by the Master of MT Aeolos, indicate that a change to a flood tide may have occurred during the time of the incident, which may have caused one of the following scenarios:

- Mt Aeolos could have been swinging on her anchor thus reducing the clearance between vessels
  
- Mt Jिंगgangshan could have been forced by the tide towards MT Aeolos

With no prejudice to the Master of MV Jिंगgangshan, an absence of local knowledge such as tidal flows, and possible swing of anchored vessels about their anchor positions, may have also contributed to the incident.

## **Section 4 – Recommendations**

At present Pilotage is only compulsory for vessels entering Gibraltar waters both to anchorage and alongside. There is no requirement for Pilotage for those vessels leaving the anchorage. Whilst vessel traffic services (VTS) monitoring is operated by Gibraltar Port Authorities and the possibility of alerting ships to possible navigational hazards is available, there is undoubtedly a reliance on the navigational skills of individual Masters to ensure safe passage out of Gibraltar waters. The risk of collisions could be reduced considerably by compulsory Pilotage for vessels departing from Gibraltar. It is understood Gibraltar port Authority is currently reviewing Pilotage requirements for outbound traffic. It is recommended this review is brought to a speedy conclusion.

## **Appendices**

Appendix I	Statement of facts, Master MT Aeolos
Appendix II	Germanischer Lloyd survey statement & divers report, MT Aeolos
Appendix III	Report to Gibraltar Port Authorities & incident report, MT Aeolos
Appendix IV	China Classification Society survey report, MV Jingtangshan