



Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping

Marine Casualty Safety Investigation Report

Safety investigation into the foundering of the British registered yacht
SY NISIDA OF HAMBLE (Call Sign MKSS8), off Antigua WI, on 21 April 2018.

Summary Course of Events

At 16.40 on 21 April 2018 whilst on passage from Guadelope to Antigua, the sailing yacht NISIDA OF HAMBLE foundered about four nautical miles off Cades Reef Antigua.

Antigua & Barbuda Search and Rescue (ABSAR) received the mayday call advising that single person onboard is abandoning his yacht and taking to dinghy.

SY CURIOSITY which was in the area received an AIS MOB beacon 2.5 nautical miles west of her position and started to search.

ABSAR Rescue 2 made radio contact with SY NISIDA and using DF equipment also established a bearing to her position.

At 17.38 ABSAR Rescue 2 arrived on scene to find person in dinghy and beside a swamped sailing vessel and inflated liferaft.

Yachtmaster Carl Wilcock (British citizen) was rescued and transferred to SY LA CONTENTA and taken safely ashore at Jolly Harbour.

SY LA CONTENTA was also sailing with SY NISIDA from Guadelope, but was a few miles ahead.

ABSAR Rescue 2 returned to base at Falmouth Harbour and incident closed at 19.00.

Purpose

The purpose of this marine safety investigation is to try and determine the circumstances and safety factors of the incident, as a basis for making recommendations, to prevent further marine casualties, or incidents occurring in the future.

1. Facts

1.1 Vessel & Crew Details

NISIDA OF HAMBLE

British Registry (Call Sign MKSS8)

Official Number 911156

Port of Registry LONDON

Gross Tonnage 20.10

15.85 metre GRP Sloop Yacht

SCV Safety Certificate issued by Certifying Authority YBDSA

Built 2001 by Gieffe Yachts Italy

Owner C W Marine Ltd. Southampton SO31 8FD UK



Side view photo – NISIDA OF HAMBLE

CREW:

RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Offshore Mr C H J Wilcock (expiry 10 October 2019)

1.1 Reconstruction of Events (based on signed statement from yachtmaster Carl Wilcock).

SY NISIDA departed Deshais Guadelope at 9.00 on 21 April 2018 bound for Jolly Harbour Antigua.

Single handed sailing by yachtmaster Carl Wilcock.

Wind easterly 20 to 28 knots with sea state 2 to 3 metres, making between 7 and 8.5 knots on headsail.

Yacht suffered some heavy slamming and heavy waves across the deck and companionway was closed.

About an hour into the passage the autopilot developed a fault so yachtmaster lashed the wheel and went below to reset instruments, this was apparently a common fault.

A small amount of water was found below deck, but was not of concern, as vessel had taken some water below, before companionway was closed.

Autopilot reset and pumped bilge with cockpit bilge pump, but little water removed due to heel.

Returned on deck and closed companionway.

Around 5 hours into the passage the autopilot failed again, so yachtmaster lashed the wheel and went below deck to find significant amount of water, about half a metre above floor level and rising quickly.

Reset autopilot and searched vessel, where possible to find source of leak. Seacocks that could be accessed were found in good order.

As the water level continued to rise there was a total electrical failure and it was no longer safe to stay below deck.

Made MAYDAY call from handheld VHF and this was picked up by ABSAR.

Yachtmaster advised he was abandoning SY NISIDA and taking to the dinghy.

Liferaft was subsequently washed from the deck, inflated and was then tied to dinghy.

ABSAR Rescue 2 arrived and yachtmaster transferred to nearby SY LA CONTENTA, with dinghy taken in tow.



SY NISIDA OF HAMBLE – awash and listing with liferaft nearby

1.2 Subsequent action

Antigua Department of Marine Services (ADOMS) were advised of the incident by Coast Guard on 23 April 2018.

SY NISIDA OF HAMBLE foundered four nautical miles south of Cades Reef (16 58.793N/061 54.591W) in depth of water 687 metres.

CG conducted a search of the area the following day but the vessel was not sighted, nor was there any debris in the water.

Upon request ABSAR provided details to ADOMS on the SAR operation.

ADOMS notified Port Authority, Department of Environment and Fisheries Division of the incident, but no concerns were raised.

ADOMS eventually managed, with assistance from Customs, to contact the owner/yachtmaster Carl Wilcock and a full signed incident statement was taken at Jolly Harbour, on 27 April 2018.

SY NISIDA had a Cruise Permit for Antigua & Barbuda that had expired 3 April 2018.

SCV Cert. annual inspection was due 3 October 2017.

The last mid term inspection by YDSA - Professional Yacht Designers and Surveyor (UK MCA authorized Certifying Authority) on 10 October 2017, found vessel clean and dry with no indication of leaks. The bilge pumps were not tested.

Upon further investigation by ADOMS it was found that SY NISIDA had been slipped for hull survey below the waterline (on behalf of marine insurance company) in January 2018.

The previously reported ingress of water at forward port hull section was examined on slip (January 2018) and no evidence of structural issues found.

Survey was carried out by Dutchman Marine Survey and Services of Antigua.

It was reported that the vessel had water ingress noted at the forward port hull section, but no clear evidence of major structural issues on the exterior hull sections.

Various sections were examined in detail and bottom paint taken back to gel coating.

No delamination, cracking or water seeping was noted.

No issues were noted with keel, keel bolts or rudder.

Due to these findings there was no full report filed with the insurance company (or requested) other than the findings and photographs sent to them.

Marine insurance company (Pantaenius Yacht Insurance) acknowledged notification of the total loss.

ADOMS advised UK MAIB of this marine casualty of British registered yacht.

ADOMS have forwarded details of the geographical position of this wreck to Hydrographic Authority (ABNHO).

CHART UK 605 non dangerous wreck – not safety critical to surface navigation due to depth of water in the vicinity of the incident.

2. Analysis

During the incident not all sea cocks could be checked.
The electric bilge pump and auto alarm did not function.
The source of leak could not be identified.

Financial considerations contradict any further examination of the wreck.

3. Conclusions

The **NISIDA OF HAMBLE** foundered and sank because of uncontrollable water ingress.

3.1 Direct cause: Uncontrollable water ingress

3.2 Root cause: Inconclusive, as source of water ingress remains unknown.

3.3 Contributing Factors: Inoperative bilge water level alarm / bilge pumps, resulting in decreased situational awareness and less time for adequate action.

4. Safety Recommendations:

4.1 Ensuring a vessel's seaworthiness before departure. *Specific aspect:* Checking the functioning of essential navigational, technical and safety equipment, before heading to sea.

4.2 Refrain from departure if vessel is not completely seaworthy.

Thomas S Robinson
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11 May 2018