

Abstract

In my bachelor thesis entitled “Inadequate voyage planning as a cause in maritime accidents: Analysis of possible causes since 1995” I discussed the problem of inadequate voyage planning and what the causes could be. It already became apparent that the transition from paper charts to ECDIS plays a certain role in this.

Consequently, we can state that inadequate and incomplete voyage planning may have an influence on the number of accidents, in this thesis groundings in particular. To tackle this, we need to know where the problem is situated and how we can tackle it. That is the aim of this thesis, to observe clear actions that can have a positive influence on the number of accidents by eliminating inadequate and incomplete voyage planning.

The research question for this master thesis therefore became: “How can we avoid maritime accidents as a result of inadequate or incomplete voyage planning?” In order to come to a clear conclusion, a lot of research was done and a survey was sent out into the world. An incredible amount of information had already been gathered from the research, which made it possible to draw up a targeted survey. Unfortunately, the number of respondents to this survey left much to be desired, which means that we cannot draw unambiguous conclusions from these results for the industry. Yet they gave us an idea of where the biggest problems are situated and how they can be tackled.

We can mainly conclude from the survey that the majority of the respondents know how a voyage plan should be drawn up and followed up. There is particularly confusion about what constitutes the voyage plan and which functions of ECDIS are important for voyage planning. One should realize that voyage planning is not just drawing out a route, but a complete risk analysis.

We can also conclude from research and the survey that digital navigation is a positive evolution, but only when it is used optimally and efficiently. If the settings are not in accordance with the prevailing circumstances, we note that these systems are more likely to pose a danger to navigation.

Another important point is the MPX, or Master-Pilot Exchange. It must be ensured that not only the ship's characteristics are discussed, but that a detailed plan is also agreed upon, which is supported by both captain and pilot. This way, the monitoring of the route can be done properly by the bridge team.