

## Durban Man Involved in Rescue of Crew of Sunken Ship

A Durban man, a senior deck officer on board the M.V. Maersk Kendal, sent the following messages to his family, which have been kindly passed on by them and are approved for publication by the Master of the vessel, to whom thanks are extended.

### First Message

#### QUOTE

I'm bushed but elated at the same time. It is now just after 2100 and I've been going since 0400. As you know from my previous mail, we were responding to a distress message from a vessel sinking. Anyway we got there first and did an initial search, finding only an empty lifejacket and some debris. We were appointed the "on scene commander" by the rescue coordination centre and started a search pattern. Anyway about 3 hrs later a 2nd vessel arrived on the scene and we coordinated the search grid with them.

Around 1500 the Captain and I were discussing the fact that it would be dark soon and I made a calculation based on the strength of wind and current and the estimated drift rate of a liferaft, from their abandon ship position and we decided to leave the other vessel to carry on with an expanding search while we steamed to this position in order to check this before the light failed. About three quarters of the way to the estimated position, we started spotting a lot of logs in the water then the worst thing happened - we spotted what we thought was a lifejacket. It was, but there was a body in it head down in the water. That got me quite upset and despondent but that was soon dispelled when we saw another two people in the water who were alive. We had by this time called the other vessel to head our way and continue a search parallel to us while we lowered the rescue boat and rescued the men from the water. They had been in the sea for 19 hrs by this stage.

This was quite a palaver on it's own as the rescue boats outboard kept tripping so we had to drift down on it, throw them a rope and pull them back to the hoisting wire. By this time the 2nd ship had spotted a liferaft and they managed to get alongside it and recovered 13 people from the raft. We learned from the survivors in the water that there was another liferaft so we continued to search and as the sun went down we spotted the second liferaft which we managed to come alongside in very difficult conditions with a force 6 wind, 3.5 m swell and heavy rain squalls. We did however manage and rescued another 4 men. In all we managed to rescue 19 people from a crew of 24, which, counting the body we saw it leaves 4 unaccounted for. However we had to stop the search as it became too dark to see anything further.

A specialised search and rescue craft will continue the search tomorrow morning while we head for Tanjung Pelapas (Malaysia) to drop off the survivors. It is both a happy and a sad moment knowing that because of our calculations we managed to effect a rescue but also that there are still persons unaccounted for.

Anyway I must go and get a shower now so I'll end this but keep you updated of any further news  
UNQUOTE

### Second Message

#### QUOTE

Well finally a little time to reflect on the last day or so. I am happy about the fact that my calculations and instincts turned out right when working out the max possible distance the survivors could have drifted, but I think fate had a huge role to play in it as well. If we had headed for the same position 10 mins either side of the time we did we would have been too far off them to see them in the water. It was like somebody was watching over them. I'm also very impressed with our deck crew who maintained a high level of vigilance for many hours as we had been going back and forth in a search grid for over 6 hours before we finally spotted them.

Anyway, the sunken vessel was the "**MV Pailin Maritime 1**", a 3700 t Freighter carrying a cargo of logs from the Solomon Islands to Ho Chi Min City, Vietnam. They had been pounding heavily for a few days in the rough seas and swell and eventually the cargo hold had started taking water from a crack, which eventually caused the side plating to fail and the hold flooded causing the ship to list badly and finally capsize. When they tried to launch the lifeboat they were hit by a freak wave which smashed the lifeboat against the side of the vessel and sank it, leaving them only the liferafts as the vessel was listing too much by this time to launch the other lifeboat.

The two persons we recovered from the water were the Chief Officer and an AB. Apparently the C/O was in a liferaft with 13 men when 3 men were spotted in the water in difficulty.

He, being able to swim left the liferaft and managed to get one man back to it, after which he swam to the AB but, when they tried to get back to the liferaft there were already too many logs in

the water battering them from all sides and the raft was drifting too fast with the wind, so he made a decision to conserve his energy and remain together with the AB until daylight when they would hopefully be able to see better.

During the night they were both battered around quite a bit by the heavy logs which were surfing on the swells in the rough seas. This, I suspect, is what accounted for the body we came across as he had a lifejacket on. I can only imagine that he was knocked unconscious or killed by a heavy blow to the head.

The next day they were lucky enough to find 3 lifebuoys and some lifeboat rations which came floating past, but they did not see or hear from anybody again until we came across them in the early evening after spending most of the night and the whole day in the water they were not in a good way.

It is quite sad as the Chief Officer had a younger brother on the vessel who was the steward and he is one of the 4 unaccounted for, so he is happy to have survived but also very sad and I think resigned to the fact that it is now unlikely that his brother has survived.

Tomorrow we will land them in Tanjung Pelapas, where they will be examined by a doctor and once pronounced fit they will all be repatriated to their families.

**UNQUOTE**

### **MAERSK KENDAL**

The following News Release was issued on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007

The latest vessel to join the Maersk Company fleet was named **Maersk Kendal** at an official ceremony in Korea on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

The God-Mother, Mrs In-sook Roussel, is the wife of Mr. Christophe Roussel, who is International



Sourcing and Logistics Director of TESCO, Tesco International Sourcing Ltd, Hong Kong.  
Mrs In-sook Roussel named the newbuilding at a traditional ceremony at Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd., in Busan, Korea.

At 6200 TEUs, the Maersk Kendal is the fifth in her class, but the first of this series to fly the British flag, her four sisters flying the Singapore flag. She is one of four vessels that the Maersk Company will receive from Hanjin by January 2008.

**Maersk Kendal's** Captain will be Glenn W. Wostenholme with Mr. Derek K. Bunney as Chief Engineer.