



National Transportation Safety Board

Marine Accident Brief

Sinking of Fishing Vessel *Viking II*

Accident no.	DCA-13-NM-001
Vessel name	<i>Viking II</i>
Accident type	Sinking
Location	Atlantic Ocean, 75 nautical miles (nm) southeast off Cape May, New Jersey 38°24.07' N, 73°14.36' W
Date	October 7, 2012
Time	0900 eastern daylight time (coordinated universal time -4 hours)
Injuries	None
Damage	Total loss of vessel; estimated value of \$150,000
Environmental damage	Potential loss of 2,800 gallons of diesel fuel oil
Weather	Northwest winds 15 knots, clear skies, visibility 6 nm, air temperature 65°F

About 0900 on October 7, 2012, the 64-foot-long fishing vessel *Viking II* sank about 75 nautical miles off Cape May, New Jersey, following several hours of uncontrollable flooding in the engine room. The three crewmembers on board (a captain and his two sons) were rescued unharmed.



The *Viking II* at sea. Photo provided by the Coast Guard.

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Early in the morning the previous day, October 6, the *Viking II* had departed Point Pleasant, New Jersey, to assist in a cable-laying project. That evening, after having transited about 75 nautical miles offshore and after shutting down the main engine for the night, the three crewmembers went to bed. About 2225, they were awakened by a high bilge level alarm, which had activated due to flooding in the engine room. The crew used two onboard pumps in an attempt to stem the flooding, but the rate of water ingress exceeded the pumps' capacity. The captain was not able to determine the source of the flooding and got the vessel under way headed for shore. He radioed the crewmembers of a nearby fishing vessel, the *Miss Suzanne*, advised them of the situation, and requested that they stand by to assist if needed.

About 2330, as the water level in the engine room reached the deck plates, the captain radioed the Command Center at Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay that the vessel was taking on water and needed immediate assistance. The Command Center alerted its air and surface response assets, and at 0016 a rescue helicopter from Air Station Atlantic City was en route to the scene. On arrival at 0052, the helicopter crew lowered a dewatering pump to the *Viking II* crew. About 0142, the 87-foot-long Coast Guard cutter *Ibis* got under way from Cape May, New Jersey, with an estimated 4-hour transit time. A second helicopter was sent to relieve the first one as its low fuel level required it to return to base. Finally, a C-130 aircraft was also dispatched and its crew dropped a second dewatering pump into the water near the vessel; however, the *Viking II* crew was not able to locate and recover it from the sea.



Map of the area in which the *Viking II* sank. Background by Google.

When the onboard bilge pumps failed as the water level continued to rise in the engine room, the crew attempted to use the dewatering pump provided by the Coast Guard helicopter. After the crew resolved some technical difficulties with getting the dewatering pump started and

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functioning, the pump began pumping, but it could not keep up with the incoming seawater, and the water level in the engine room reached 7 feet. The vessel lost all electrical power, and the captain made the decision to abandon ship. About 0245, the crew donned survival suits and entered the vessel's liferaft. Shortly thereafter, the crew of the nearby *Miss Suzanne* rescued the uninjured men from the liferaft and brought them on board. The Coast Guard cutter *Ibis* arrived at 0350, and at first light about 0530, the rescued crew was transferred from the *Miss Suzanne* to the *Ibis*. About 0900, the *Viking II* capsized and sank. The *Ibis* returned the *Viking II* crew to Cape May, where they arrived later that afternoon. During the transit to Cape May, the Coast Guard tested the *Viking II* crew for alcohol; the results were negative. The crew also submitted samples for drug testing, and one of the crewmembers tested positive for tetrahydrocannabinol (the active ingredient in cannabis); the others had negative results.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the sinking of fishing vessel *Viking II* was uncontrolled flooding of the engine room from an undetermined source.

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Vessel Particulars

Vessel	<i>Viking II</i>
Owner/operator	DragonGirl, Inc.
Port of registry	Brick, NJ
Flag	United States
Type	Fishing vessel (uninspected)
Built	1980
Official number (US)	620772
Construction	Wood
Length	63.6 ft. (19.3 m)
Gross tonnage	101
Engine power	Diesel, 365 hp (272 kW)
Persons on board	3

For more details about this accident, visit www.nts.gov/investigations/dms.html and search for NTSB accident ID DCA13NM001.

Adopted: June 14, 2013, revised August 14, 2013

The NTSB has authority to investigate and establish the probable cause of any major marine casualty or any marine casualty involving both public and nonpublic vessels under 49 *United States Code* 1131. This report is based on factual information provided by the US Coast Guard from its informal investigation of the accident. The NTSB did not conduct its own on-scene investigation.
