

# Pier owner seeks to arrest MSC boxship after near-miss

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MSC Michigan VII Photographer :Gary Radford Source: VesselFinder

An arrest warrant has been issued against one of Mediterranean Shipping Company's ships, MSC Michigan VII, after Charleston port officials accused the vessel of causing damage to one of its piers.

The 2000-built 6,648 TEU MSC Michigan VII had lost power near Arthur Ravenel Jr Bridge on 5 June while sailing along Cooper River. The pilot alerted the US Coast Guard, saying the ship had lost control while at full throttle, causing officials to close the bridge in fear of a repeat of the Francis Scott Key Bridge disaster in Baltimore port. Crew on MSC Michigan VII managed to restart the engines and the ship left the harbour.

Carver Maritime, which operates a breakbulk and project cargo terminal in Charleston, sought to have MSC Michigan VII arrested.

Carver has charged that after MSC Michigan VII, which is assigned to an Americas service, malfunctioned on 5 June, the ship sped past its pier on the Cooper River at over 15 knots. It is believed that MSC Michigan VII was on its way to the neighbouring port of Savannah.

At the time, the 45,500 dwt open hatch bulker Norway Pearl, which is controlled by SMT Shipping was at the pier.

MSC Michigan VII allegedly created a “very large wake” which caused a rapid drop in water levels at the pier.

US law firm Cooper & Bilbrey, which is acting for Carver, wrote in the suit, “The vessel’s excessive speed adjacent to Pier J caused the water level to drop considerably in a very short amount of time, [which] sucked the Norway Pearl away from the pier until all of its mooring lines became extremely taut and then forced it back violently back into Pier J.”

MSC’s in-house management company, MSC Shipmanagement and the ship’s registered owner, Kyveli Oceanway, are also named as defendants.

It is not clear whether the arrest order has been served on the MSC Michigan VII which remains anchored in Charleston. S&P Global’s vessel-tracking data shows that the ship, which is covered by UK P&I Club, is being assessed for repairs. MSC did not respond to Container News’ request for comment.

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Martina Li  
Asia Correspondent