Update: 32 crew rescued after tanker and box ship collision off UK

Stena Immaculate was allegedly hit by a 800 teu container ship off the northeast coast of the UK at around 1000 hrs, local time.

Nick Savvides, Europe correspondent

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Credit: Vessel Finder screenshot

Port of Grimsby chief executive, Martyn Boyers, has reportedly said that 32 seafarers have been rescued from the two vessels that collided in the North Sea this morning, tanker *Stena Immaculate* and container ship *Solong*.

Boyers told Sky News the port had been put on standby at around 1100 hrs to receive casualties, and the first arrived aboard a Crew Transfer Vessel (CTV) that was in the vicinity of the incident. "That one picked up 13 casualties and brought them into the port of Grimsby here, followed by a pilot vessel that brought in... another ten casualties, and then shortly after that, there was another nine casualties brought by another pilot boat."

Boyers said the casualties were being transferred by ambulance to Grimsby's Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital as he spoke at around 1400 hrs.

Stena Immaculate is understood to be on charter to the US military and was said to be at anchor off the coast. Unconfirmed reports suggest the tanker was carrying a cargo of jet fuel, which has exploded and is now burning on the surface of the water.

Further unconfirmed reports suggest that the container ship *Solong* was heading north at the rate of 16kts when it collided with the tanker.

Stena Bulk chief executive, Erik Hanell, confirmed to the BBC that all the crew of *Stena Immaculate*, more than 20 people, are accounted for and safe.

Hanell added that it was too early to speculate on the cause of the collision in the North Sea.

The <u>UK</u> coastguard confirmed earlier this morning that it was co-ordinating an emergency response to reports of a collision between a tanker and cargo vessel off the coast of East Yorkshire after the alarm was raised at 0948 hrs.

"A Coastguard Rescue Helicopter from Humberside was called, alongside lifeboats from Skegness, Bridlington, Maplethorpe and Cleethorpes, an HM Coastguard fixed wing aircraft, and nearby vessels with fire-fighting capability. The incident remains ongoing and an assessment of the likely counter pollution response required is being enacted."

Stena Immaculate is managed by Crowley in the US, while *Solong's* manager Ernst-Russ is located in Germany, *Seatrade Maritime News* has contacted the companies.