

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: November 10, 1977

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Forwarded to:

Honorable Robert J. Blackwell  
Assistant Secretary  
for Maritime Affairs  
Department of Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20230

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

M-77-37

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On January 31, 1975, the SS EDGAR M. QUEENY departed the Monsanto Company dock at Bridgeport, New Jersey, and commenced a 180° turn to proceed up the Delaware River to Paulsboro, New Jersey. The turn across the Marcus Hook anchorage into the channel was not successful, and the QUEENY collided with the S/T CORINTHOS. The CORINTHOS was moored across the river on the Pennsylvania side at the British Petroleum dock discharging her cargo of crude oil. The collision initiated a series of explosions and fires that destroyed the CORINTHOS, caused minor damage to the QUEENY, and substantially damaged the British Petroleum facility. As a result of the accident, 26 persons either were killed or are missing and 11 persons were injured. 1/

After the explosions occurred on the CORINTHOS, debris, oil, and fire spread to the deck of the QUEENY. Upon the sounding of the general alarm, officers and crew of the QUEENY responded promptly and fought the fire very effectively and successfully. The foam system was energized and monitors manned. Each station was used properly to combat the fire even though the ship was underway, creating a relative wind across the deck. The firefighting effort was undoubtedly the key factor in averting a conflagration on the QUEENY, which was carrying flammable chemical products. The ability of the crew to use the equipment properly was a direct result of a training program that had been conducted on board the QUEENY and which involved the use of its equipment during the voyage immediately preceding the accident. We understand that the Maritime Administration is developing a nationwide curriculum and program for firefighting training for the crews of merchant vessels. We strongly support your efforts in that regard.

1/ For more complete information regarding this casualty, read "Marine Casualty Report, SS EDGAR M. QUEENY Collision with the Liberian S/T CORINTHOS, Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, January 31, 1975." (USCG/NTSB-MAR-77-2)

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Maritime Administration:

Expedite completion of its firefighting training curriculum and program, which should include basic firefighting training at shoreside facilities and follow-on training "on board" using shipboard systems and equipment, for merchant marine officers and seamen. (Class II, Priority Action) (M-77-37)

BAILEY, Acting Chairman, McADAMS, HOGUE, and KING, Members, concurred in this recommendation.

*Francis H. McAdams*

*for* By: Kay Bailey  
Acting Chairman