



Directorate General of Shipping

SITREP – 34, 1800 Hrs on 21/07/2025

Explosion on WAN HAI 503 (IMO no – 9294862, Flag Singapore) West of Kerala

The contents of this SITREP are based on both written and verbal inputs received from the stakeholders

1. Incident Overview:

Refer to SITREP – 2, 2200 hrs on 09/06/2025

2. Response Actions Initiated:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

3. Present Status:

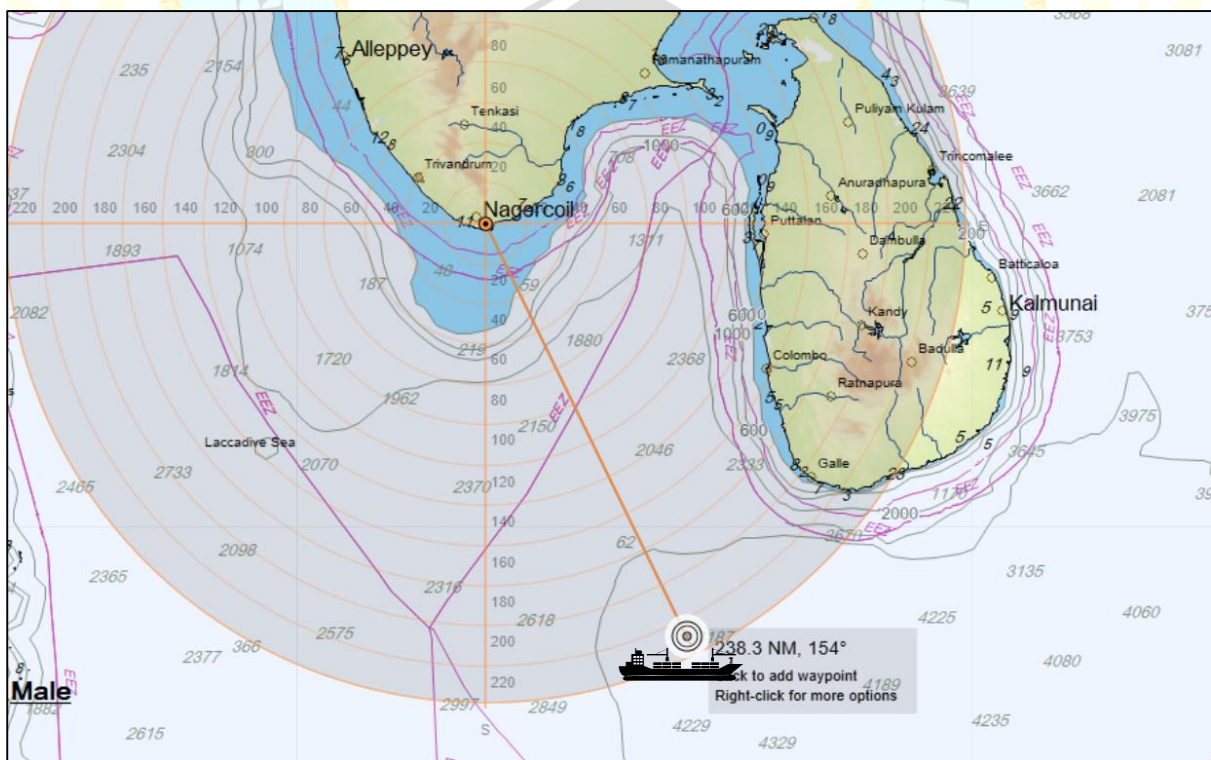


Figure 1: Position of the vessel

As of 21 July 2025, the casualty vessel *Wan Hai 503* remains in a stable condition. Grey smoke was last observed in the vicinity of cargo holds no. 3 and 4 on the afternoon of 20 July, consistent with previously reported patterns of residual

combustion due to unextinguished smouldering cargo. The vessel remains stable and continues to weather rough conditions with gusting winds over 30 knots and swells. She is currently located approximately 238 NM southeast of the Indian EEZ boundary and has been drifting along with prevailing ocean currents in the absence of active tow. Connection with the Offshore Warrior is scheduled to be re-established upon its return from Cochin, where it had proceeded for replenishment of bunkers, stores, and freshwater.

Salvage operations continue on board with a 16-member team having boarded the casualty. The salvage team now intends to remain on board continuously to maintain operation tempo and stability. Essential amenities such as cooling appliances and food supplies have already been provided to support extended stays. Dewatering of the engine room, cargo holds, and duct keel continues, with improved control achieved in most spaces. Notably, cargo holds no. 2 and 3 appear dry, while engine room water level is being maintained at approximately 50 cm. Pumping in hold no. 6 is ongoing.

4. Additional Support:

Offshore Warrior is en route back to the casualty site from Kochi and is expected to arrive on 22 July. Once reconnected, it will re-establish tow and return the vessel toward the Indian EEZ as previously committed to Sri Lankan authorities. The salvage team has also mobilized an additional tug, *Advantage Libra*, which departed from Khor Fakkan on 20 July and is expected on-site by 27 July. This will augment the operational fleet and provide greater redundancy for towage and salvage work, particularly in light of upcoming potential port entry.

Advantis Virgo, having suffered propeller issues during prior maneuvers, is planned to return to Colombo for underwater inspection and repair after Offshore Warrior takes over towing duties. Until then, it remains on standby. Meanwhile, *Saksham* is actively engaged in fire watch and boundary cooling as required. *Water Lily* continues to serve as the primary platform for safe personnel transfer to and from the casualty.

5. Situation Assessment

The overall salvage and stabilization picture is cautiously optimistic. The casualty vessel has shown structural resilience. The recurrence of grey smoke emissions is anticipated and attributed to residual combustion within affected cargo holds. Given the limitations of safe access to these areas, boundary cooling remains the feasible mitigation approach at present. The emergency towline that parted earlier is being recovered and stored aboard the casualty vessel as a precaution. A backup towline is also being prepared.

The salvage team's ability to remain on board continuously marks a positive shift in operations, reducing reliance on the single transfer boat (*Water Lily*) and allowing uninterrupted oversight. Planning is also progressing for final stages of casualty removal. Port of refuge coordination continues.

In terms of pollution response, *Wan Hai Lines* has communicated its decision, based on inputs from ITOPF and shoreline drift modelling, to discontinue contractual ties with SpillTech and MERC for shoreline clean-up, citing minimal ongoing risk. However, MERC remains on standby should future response be necessary. The Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has taken note and will revert formally upon review.

6. Navigational Hazards:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

7. Coordination Measures:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

8. Cargo Assessment:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

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