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Contact person  
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Project Containers overboard

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Attachment(s)

**REGISTERED POST**

To the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management  
Ms C. van Nieuwenhuizen  
Rijnstraat 8  
2515 XP THE HAGUE

**Subject** Safety alert in response to the investigation into the 'Containers overboard MSC Zoe'

TRANSLATION – Original letter in Dutch

Dear Ms Van Nieuwenhuizen,

At the start of 2019, the Panamanian flagged container vessel MSC Zoe lost containers overboard in the North Sea in the Terschelling-German Bight traffic separation scheme North of the Dutch Wadden Islands. Panama, the vessel's flag state, is investigating the cause of the event and the situation on board the vessel at the time of the event, in accordance with international standards. The Dutch Safety Board also launched its own investigation.

As part of its investigation, in collaboration with the scientific institutes MARIN and Deltares, the Dutch Safety Board investigates the ship motions of very large container vessels in shallow waters in wind and wave conditions similar to those occurring at the time of the event with the MSC Zoe. This technical investigation, undertaken during the period July through November, involved not only calculations but also basin tests with a ship model.

The investigation revealed the contours of a risk which the Safety Board considers sufficiently serious to bring to the attention of users of the Terschelling-German Bight traffic separation scheme North of the Dutch Wadden Islands.

Along this route, specific wind and wave conditions and tidal situations can lead to considerable heave and roll motions that threaten the vessel's under keel clearance. For vessels with dimensions comparable to those of the MSC Zoe, this may lead to a risk of contact or near-contact with the seabed.

The Dutch Safety Board therefore recommends you make this risk known within your organization, and you communicate this risk to users of the Terschelling-German Bight traffic separation scheme.

We expect to publish the final report on the loss of containers in the spring of 2020.

Yours sincerely,

J.R.V.A. Dijsselbloem  
chairman

CC: Mr J. van Zanten, Director Netherlands Coastguard  
Mr S. Hassing, Chairman of the Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners  
Mr D. Aponte, President and CEO Mediterranean Shipping Company S.A.