

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The management of shipping safety risks in relation to the positioning of fixed objects in the North Sea needs to be improved. A different approach to risk management is necessary, taking account of developments in shipping and other activities in the North Sea. The Dutch Safety Board therefore issues the following recommendations:

To the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management:

1. Improve management of the risks to shipping safety that result from the positioning of fixed objects. Ensure at least:
 - a. a proper understanding of the risks to shipping safety, making use of modelling and scenario thinking, and incorporating the manoeuvring behaviour of heavy and wind-sensitive vessels and developments in shipping;
 - b. a proper understanding of the effects of (possible) management measures;
 - c. a safety goal that is realistic and can be tested to;
 - d. application to new and existing wind farms and those that are under construction;
 - e. comprehensive assessment of the use that is made of the North Sea, taking into account the safety level (i.e. the residual risk) to shipping; and
 - f. periodic evaluation of the approach adopted.

An internationally shared view on how shipping can navigate safely around fixed objects is crucial in this regard.

To the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management:

2. In consultations with other North Sea countries, press for the international frameworks to be modified based on the understanding gained of shipping safety risks. In doing so, make use of the option for submitting specific proposals to the International Maritime Organization.