

14714

REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 17654 in R.B. Wreck Book, p. 47/57

Date of writing this report 10th October, 1957.

Ship's Name m.s. "LA PLATA" RMC

of Stockholm

Tons { Gross
Net

Built at Malmo When 1944 8 Casualty notice sent to Owner 19.9.57. Owner's reply 27.9.57.

Owners Rederi A/B Nordstjernan

Agents A.A. Johnson, C.B.E.

Address Stureplan 3, Stockholm 7, Sweden.

Classification details

*100A1	*LMC CS 10,55
with fbd Carrying	BS d 10,56
vegetable oil in MT	
6,57	ts p8,56 OG
ssKel 10,55	s9,55
*Lloyd's RMC	

Casualty 7th July, 1957.

of Casualty

Fire broke out in Engine Room off the Abrolhos Islands, Brazil, and spread throughout the length of the ship. She was towed to Salvador and beached, but the fire continued to burn for two weeks.

Although apparently beyond repair, the Owners prefer not to consider her a total loss until certain legal questions under Brazilian law have been clarified.

(see Owners' letter 27.9.57)

LA PLATA.—London, Nov. 4.—In reply to inquiry, Lloyd's Agents at Salvador write under date of Oct. 25: Motor vessel La Plata is considered to be a constructive total loss. The vessel, which was burning for over a month, is completely gutted and is now lying in shallow water on a beach inside the bay with her holds full of water. It has not been possible to make any extensive survey on board because of the flooding of the holds, but it is assumed that the cargo is completely destroyed. It is understood that her owners are considering the possibility of selling her as she lies and it would appear that the vessel would have to be broken up on the spot as her hull is cracked by No. 2 hold and she is in no state to go to sea. (See issue of Aug. 16.)

L.L. 5.11.57. —
Considered to be a
constructive total
loss.



SOURCE OF INFORMATION

LA PLATA.—Rio Janeiro, July 7.—The passengers and crew of the Swedish motor vessel La Plata, from (Gustafsvik and) Stockholm for Rio Janeiro and Buenos Aires, were taken on board the steamer Mormacmail to-day after abandoning ship. There were no casualties. The La Plata sent out distress signals from a position off the Salvador coast after fire had broken out in her engine-room. Brazilian motor tanker Bittencourt Sampaio was the first vessel to answer, but the Mormacmail reached the La Plata first. The survivors are due to arrive at Rio Janeiro on Tuesday (July 9). It is not known whether the La Plata has sunk.—British United Press.

Rio Janeiro, July 7.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata was reported to-night to be on fire and sinking off the Abrolhos Islands, Brazil.—Reuter.

Rio Janeiro, July 8.—Motor vessel La Plata: Local agents confirm Press reports vessel on fire but no details of situation or state of vessel. Understood, but not confirmed, crew abandoned vessel and picked up by American steamer Mormacmail, which due here to-morrow.

LA PLATA.—Salvador, July 8.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata reported on fire in engine-room and two hatches. Position at noon, July 7, lat. 14 37 S., long. 36 29 W. Motor vessel Margit endeavouring to tow to Salvador. Passengers and crew rescued by steamer Mormacmail. Naval corvette Mearim proceeding to locality. (See issue of July 9.)

Rio Janeiro, July 8.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata: Still no news of situation of vessel but informed Brazilian Navy corvette standing by.—Lloyd's Agents.

Rio Janeiro, July 8.—Brazilian Navy corvette Mearim has now joined the Danish motor vessel Margit alongside the Swedish motor vessel La Plata. The Mearim and the Margit are reported to be investigating the chances of boarding and towing the La Plata to Salvador. Swedish motor vessel Suecia is due to arrive on the scene early to-morrow, bringing with her the master of the La Plata, who transferred to her from the steamer Mormacmail. The La Plata is reported to be still on fire.—British United Press.

Rio Janeiro, July 9.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata: Agents advise vessel still on fire. Johnson Line motor vessel Suecia now standing by and Brazilian Navy tug Tritao has sailed from Recife to assist.

LA PLATA.—Salvador, July 9.—Motor vessel La Plata was reported at 1 a.m., July 9, in position lat. 14 S., long. 36 53 W., burning fore to aft. Naval corvette Mearim radioed at 1 a.m. that vessel had 15 degrees list. Motor vessel Margit discontinued towing after cable broke and crew returned to Margit in view of spreading of fire. Mearim and motor vessel Suecia in attendance. (See issue of July 10.)

Rio Janeiro, July 9.—Motor vessel La Plata: Steamer Mormacmail arrived here to-day.

LA PLATA.—Rio Janeiro, July 12.—Motor vessel La Plata, reported still smouldering and with her side plates glowing with heat, is nearing Salvador under tow of Brazilian naval frigate Mearim. Late last night salvage men working from the Mearim and the motor vessel Suecia managed to get a towline on board her and she is now making the 60-mile journey to Salvador. Company officials in Rio Janeiro say that she will probably be beached when she reaches Salvador to enable firemen to pump water into her to quench the flames. The Suecia is understood to have resumed her passage to Europe.—British United Press. (See issue of July 11.)

Suggested Record

"REPORTED DAMAGED BY FIRE 7.57"

(Explanatory Notation)

of Committee

FRIDAY 11 OCT 1957

Committee's Minute

Explanatory notation
Reported damaged
beached
by fire 7.57

FRIDAY 31 JAN 1958

Burnt 7.57

Write Est

LA PLATA.—Rio Janeiro, July 12.—A towline linking the Swedish motor vessel La Plata with the Brazilian naval frigate Mearim snapped to-day as the vessels prepared to enter Salvador harbour. A harbour tug has been sent to help the Mearim make contact again with the La Plata.—British United Press. (See issue of July 13.)

Salvador, July 13.—Motor vessel La Plata broke tow and grounded last night at Mar Grande, still burning.

LA PLATA.—Washington, D.C., July 8.—Motor vessel La Plata: Four lifeboats were abandoned in lat. 14 47 S., long. 39 19 W. at 9 p.m., G.M.T., July 7. (See issues of July 9 and 15.)

LA PLATA.—Buenos Aires, July 16.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata has a 20-deg. list to port, her deck is burned away and her masts destroyed. Brazilian frigate Mearim and tugs Salvador and Flamengo are standing by the La Plata, still fighting fires in several parts of her hull. The master and some of the officers are on board the vessels standing by.—British United Press. (See issues of July 15 and 16.)

LA PLATA.—Salvador, July 17.—Motor vessel La Plata refloated. (See issue of July 17.)

LA PLATA.—Rio Janeiro, July 18.—Swedish motor vessel La Plata was brought into Salvador to-day by units of the Brazilian Navy after a fire which had raged in the vessel for several days had been extinguished.—British United Press. (See issue of July 18.)

LA PLATA.—Rio Janeiro, July 20.—The master of the Swedish motor vessel La Plata protested to the Swedish Consul-General in the Brazilian State of Bahia to-day that the Brazilian flag had been hoisted over his vessel. The La Plata was swept by fire recently off the coast of Brazil and the master was forced to transfer to the motor vessel Suecia, another Swedish vessel standing by. A Brazilian naval corvette towed the La Plata to port and extinguished the fire. The master said in his protest that the Brazilians had hoisted their flag over the La Plata because they considered her abandoned. He denied that the La Plata had been abandoned, pointing out that he remained in the vicinity of the vessel, either on board the Suecia or later on board the Brazilian corvette that took the La Plata in tow.—British United Press. (See issue of July 20.)

LA PLATA.—Gothenburg, July 24.—The owners of motor vessel La Plata report that the fire, which has been burning uninterruptedly since July 7, is now almost extinguished. Representatives will attempt to go on board on Tuesday (July 23) or Wednesday in order to inspect damage. The vessel is lying in the bay just off Salvador and it is hoped to take her into port on Tuesday.—“Goteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning.” (See issue of July 22.)

LA PLATA.—Gothenburg, July 26.—A report from Stockholm states that damage to motor vessel La Plata is important. Owners' representatives have been on board the vessel but detailed inspection could not be made owing to heat. Salvage work continues and is directed in the first place to completely extinguishing the fire. The vessel is still lying on a sandbank off Salvador.—“Goteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning.” (See issue of July 27.)

LA PLATA.—Gothenburg, Aug. 1.—It is reported that the fire on board motor vessel La Plata has now been extinguished.—“Svensk Sjöfarts Tidning.” (See issue of July 30.)

LA PLATA.—Gothenburg, Aug. 13.—Reports of the maritime declaration concerning the fire on board motor vessel La Plata have been lodged at Gothenburg magistrates' court. It is stated that the extent of damage is so great that it still cannot be ascertained in detail. The probable cause of the fire is given as leakage of fuel oil filter to No. 4 auxiliary engine. The La Plata left Recife on July 6 for Rio Janeiro. Next morning, heavy smoke came from engine-room skylights. Fuel oil filter to No. 4 auxiliary engine is believed to have commenced leaking and oil from the leaking pipes to have splashed over the exhaust pipe or the commutator of No. 3 generator, whereby fire spread with explosive rapidity. Heat was so intense that the engine-room watch was compelled to leave the engine-room. Four fire-hoses were brought into use and passengers went into the lifeboats. At 11 40 a.m. pumps supplying water to the hoses stopped, but emergency fire pumps were immediately started. Attempts to enter the engine-room with oxygen apparatus were made but the heat was too intense. Distress signals were sent. At 1 50 p.m. there appeared to be risk of explosion in the engine-room and further lifeboats were launched, seven of the crew remaining on board. At 2 30 p.m. emergency fire pumps came to a stop and heavy smoke prevented going below to restart the pumps. At 2 45 p.m. the remainder of the crew left in a lifeboat, only the master, first mate and chief engineer remaining on board. Steamer Mormacmail arrived on the scene at 4 p.m. At 5 25 p.m. risk of explosion in the turpentine cargo of the La Plata arose and the vessel was abandoned. Passengers and crew of the La Plata went on board the Mormacmail. Motor vessel Suecia arrived at 8 a.m. (2 July 8 or 9). Brazilian corvette Mearim played water on the burning La Plata. Towage was commenced on July 10 and the towing cable broke again and again. Towage was taken over by a tug as the La Plata was drifting towards land. On July 13, the La Plata went on a reef. She came free on July 16 and was taken into Monte Serrat the day after.—“Goteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning.” (See issue of Aug. 8.)



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