

12 upper

IN THE COURT OF MARINE INQUIRY.

HOLDEN AT SYDNEY.

)  
) No. 3 of 1951.  
)

BEFORE HIS HONOR JUDGE STACY

ASSESSORS: CAPT. F.N. WYATT  
CAPT. BLAXNEY.

Friday, 25th May, 1951.

IN THE MATTER OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE FOUNDERING OF S.S.  
"KIAMA" OFF THE COAST OF NEW SOUTH WALES ON 19th JANUARY 1951.

JUDGMENT.

HIS HONOR: The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances attending this shipping casualty, comes to the following decision:-

1. The British ship "Kiama" whilst on a voyage carrying coal from Newcastle to Sydney at about 8 a.m. on 19th January 1951, foundered about five miles off the entrance to Tuggerah Lakes.
2. The ship left Newcastle about 7 p.m. on 18th January 1951. The sea was then rough; a strong S.S.E. wind was blowing. The ship was then upright or had a slight list to port. The wind increased and later on reached gale force. The ship developed a list to port which gradually increased. An effort was made to reduce this by trimming the coal, but this action was without effect. At about 7.50 a.m., as it was impossible to launch the lifeboats, the crew took to the water. At about 8 a.m. the ship capsized and sank. The Captain and four members of the crew lost their lives.
3. The vessel was fully manned and equipped with all necessary gear and life-saving appliances.
4. The ship was classed 100A at Lloyd's and had undergone an examination in dry dock early in January 1951.
5. The wireless telegraphy regulations made under the Navigation Acts 1901 -1949 as to equipment had been complied with. The aerial had been lowered at Newcastle because of the loading and had not been raised prior to leaving Newcastle. It was raised



about 5 a.m. on the 19th January and an S.O.S. was then sent out.

6. The cargo consisted of cobble coal, partly dry and partly wet. It was loaded on the 18th January and was properly trimmed.

7. The cargo of coal was a normal load.

8. The weather was not such as to make it inadvisable on the part of the master of leave Newcastle.

9. In the Court's opinion there is no evidence on which to base a finding as to what was the cause of the list to port which resulted in the loss of the ship. The Court is of opinion that if the aerial had been in position and an S.O.S. had been sent out earlier, assistance would probably have arrived in time to be of use.



© 2021

Lloyd's Register  
Foundation

W1077-0003<sup>2</sup>/<sub>2</sub>