



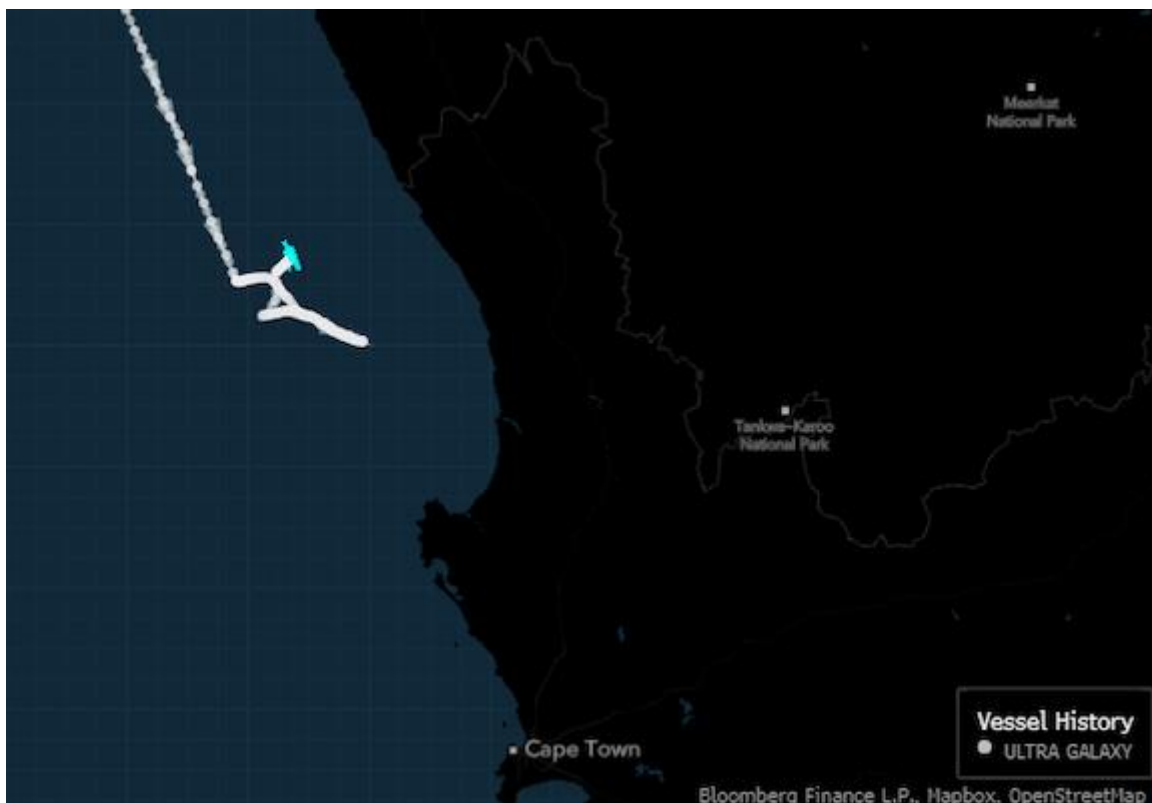
Cargo ship evacuated as 33-foot waves pound South African coast

By: Paul Burkhardt | Jul 10 2024 at 09:16 AM | [Maritime](#)

Storms pounded South Africa's coastline for a fourth day on Wednesday, disrupting shipping operations, with massive swells forcing the evacuation of a cargo ship.

State-owned port operator Transnet SOC Ltd. said it was monitoring harbor operations impacted by the extreme weather. Vessel traffic rounding the Cape of Good Hope, which has increased as shippers seek to avoid attacks in the Red Sea, has encountered offshore storm surges, with swells forecast as high as 10 meters (32.8 feet).

The 18-member crew of the MV Ultra Galaxy was rescued in waters northwest of Cape Town on Monday after an emergency beacon from the ship was detected, the South African Maritime Safety Authority said on its website. The ship was listing excessively in swells of up to six meters, and nearby vessels were sent to assist.



The vessel left the port of Walvis Bay in Namibia around July 4 and was headed to Dar es Salaam, according to ship tracking data compiled by Bloomberg. Its navigation status was designated as "not under command." Operations were underway to

salvage the 125-meter vessel, according to SAMSA, which didn't immediately respond to emails seeking comment.

Harbors along South Africa's coast have scaled back activity for safety reasons. Transnet is "continuously monitoring operations" as rough seas have suspended shipping movements at some ports, the company said late Tuesday. Earlier in the week, A.P. Moller-Maersk A/S warned of potential delays that could last for days.

The weather disruptions are a blow to Transnet, which is already struggling with improving turnaround times at its ports, seeking private investment and replacing equipment that's more capable of operating in extreme weather. The harbors rank among the worst globally, according to a World Bank study, although Transnet disputes the methodology it used.