

SHIPPING TELEGRAPH

DAILY SHIPPING NEWS



- The Malta-flagged CMA CGM Belem cargo vessel at shelter in Algoa Bay, near Gqeberha, Eastern Cape province, South Africa on Sunday 18 August 2024; after losing numerous containers at sea in the Indian Ocean on Thursday evening. (Photo. SAMSA)

CMA CGM ship loses 99 containers in bad weather off South Africa

- 20/08/2024
- by Shipping Telegraph

A second CMA CGM ship in a month, the *CMA CGM Belem*, suffered a container stack collapse off the coast of Richards Bay on Thursday in severe weather conditions.

The Maltese-flagged containership lost as many as 99 containers off the east coast of South Africa on Thursday August 15, according to the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA).

The authority has issued a navigational safety warning to vessels and issued a public call to report any containers sighted possibly still floating at sea.

“The vessel had initially sought refuge at Maputo Bay. However, after further assessment, the decision was made to redirect the ship to Qheberha. The CMA CGM Belem is currently slow steaming towards port of Ngqura, with an expected time of arrival on 18 August 2024,” said SAMSA.

According to SAMSA, the vessel, built in 2024, measures 336 meters in length, 51 meters in height, and has a draft of 14.8 meters.

Speaking to local media on Saturday, SAMSA said the *CMA CGM Belem* was also a sizeable vessel best likely to be temporarily, safely berthed at the Eastern Cape’s newest deep water port in Algoa Bay.

“Given her draft,” said SAMSA, “port of Ngqura has been identified as the only suitable port of refuge. Stowage collapses have been confirmed, and the affected containers will need to be discharged at a container port facility upon arrival.”

Meanwhile, said SAMSA, the owners of the vessel were “cooperating with the Authorities and that a navigational warning has been promulgated for the safety of navigation of other vessels in the vicinity.”

As it is reported by the authority, the containership *CMA CGM Belem* is the second vessel of its kind and from the same France-based company to be battered by adverse weather conditions while sailing around South Africa's Indian Ocean area, and resulting in substantial loss of containers overboard at sea.

A month ago, the ultra large container vessel *CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin*, also Maltese-flagged, reportedly lost up to 40 containers in about the same region of the South African Indian Ocean area, while also sailing past the country from Asia to Europe.

The claims specialist WK Webster said it has received reports that the containership *CMA CGM Belem* (IMO:9938286) has sustained a collapse of some containers on deck, together with the loss overboard of approximately 99 containers off the coast of Richards Bay, South Africa on August 15.

"The incident is reported to have occurred whilst the vessel was navigating in challenging weather conditions. Consequently, the vessel was redirected and is currently at anchor off Port Elizabeth, South Africa for inspection.

"We are currently making enquiries as to the severity of the incident and the shipowners' intentions for the vessel and the remaining cargo stowed on board. It is very likely that cargo damage will have occurred in the affected stacks, and containers may need to be removed or be restowed and secured.

"We have cargo surveyors on hand to investigate any damage to cargo that may arise and also the cause of the incident. Further surveys may need to be undertaken to affected units at final ports of destination in due course," reads the statement of WK Webster.