

## 《7 US crew missing after US Navy ship, Philippine vessel coll》

Seven crew members are missing after a US Navy destroyer collided with a merchant vessel off the coast of Japan early Saturday morning, the US Navy has said.

At least three sailors, including the ship's commander, were injured and were medically evacuated from the ship to the hospital by a Japanese coast guard helicopter, the Japan Times reported. The ship's commander is now in stable condition, according to the US Navy.

"Right now we are focused on two things: the safety of the ship and the well-being of the sailors," said Admiral Scott Swift, commander of the US Pacific Fleet, in a statement.



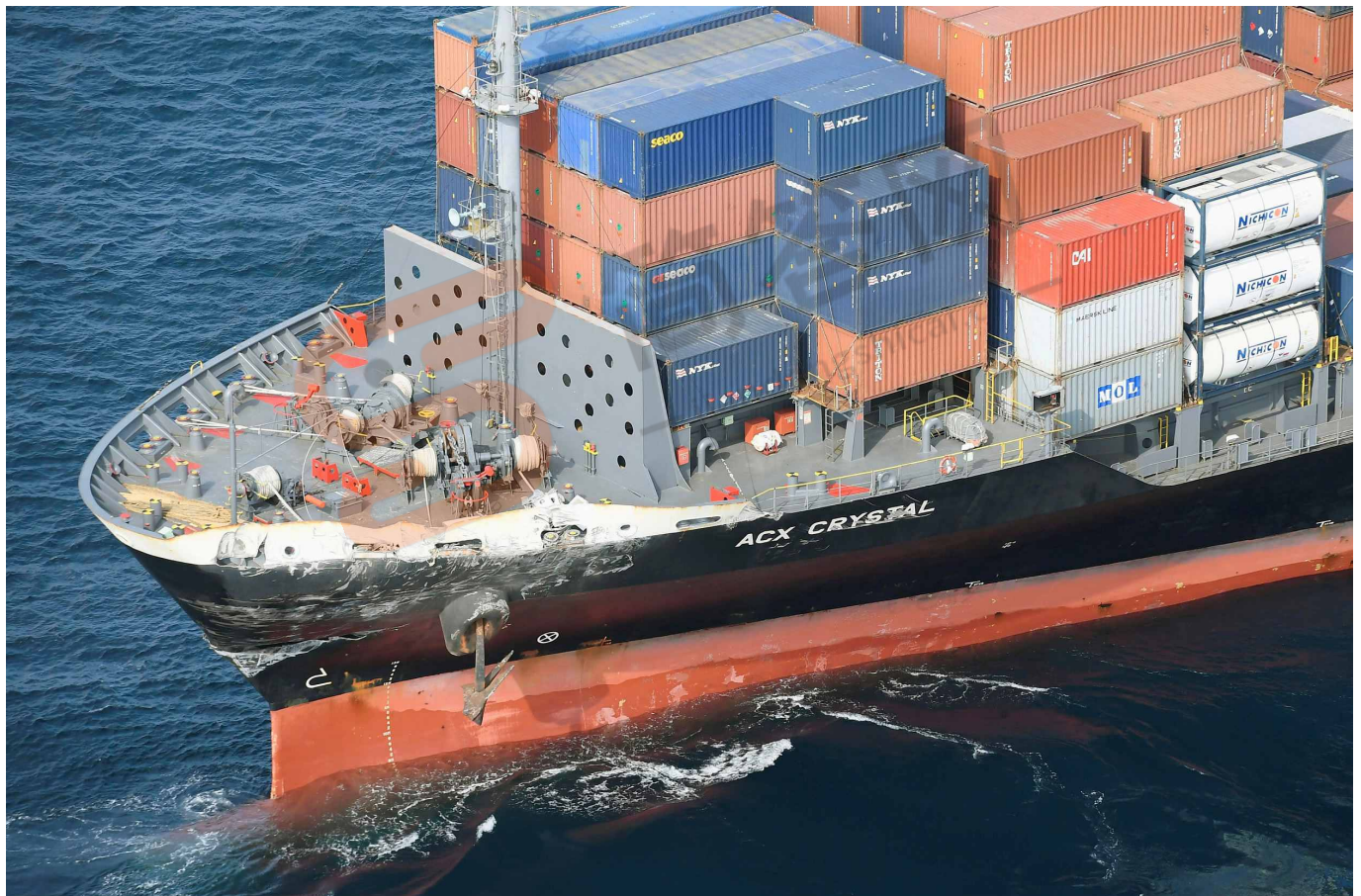
US destroyer USS Fitzgerald, damaged in a collision with a Philippine-flagged merchant vessel, is seen off Shimoda, Japan on June 17, 2017. /VCG Photo

The collision happened at 2:30 a.m. local time on Saturday, according to the statement, when the USS Fitzgerald was operating about 56 nautical miles southwest of Yokosuka, Japan.

The destroyer experienced some flooding after the collision, and "the extent of damage is being determined," the statement added. "The USS Fitzgerald suffered damage on her starboard side above and below the waterline."

Reuters reported earlier that the US 7th Fleet said the ship was heading back to Yokosuka under its own power at three knots, according to a US spokesman.

Japan's NHK reported the 8,315-ton USS Fitzgerald has suffered considerable damage to its right side, while the Philippine ship had scrape marks from the collision on the left side of its bow section.



A Philippine-flagged merchant vessel, damaged in a collision with the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald, is seen off Izu Oshima island, Japan on June 17, 2017. /VCG Photo?

Japanese coast guard and US navy officials believe that the Philippine ship is the ACX Crystal. The 222.6-meter-long, 29,060-ton vessel is three times the size of the US warship.

None of the 20 crew members aboard the merchant vessel were injured, Reuters reported quoting Japan's coast guard.

The Japanese coast guard has sent five patrol vessels and two aircraft to help, according to NHK.

