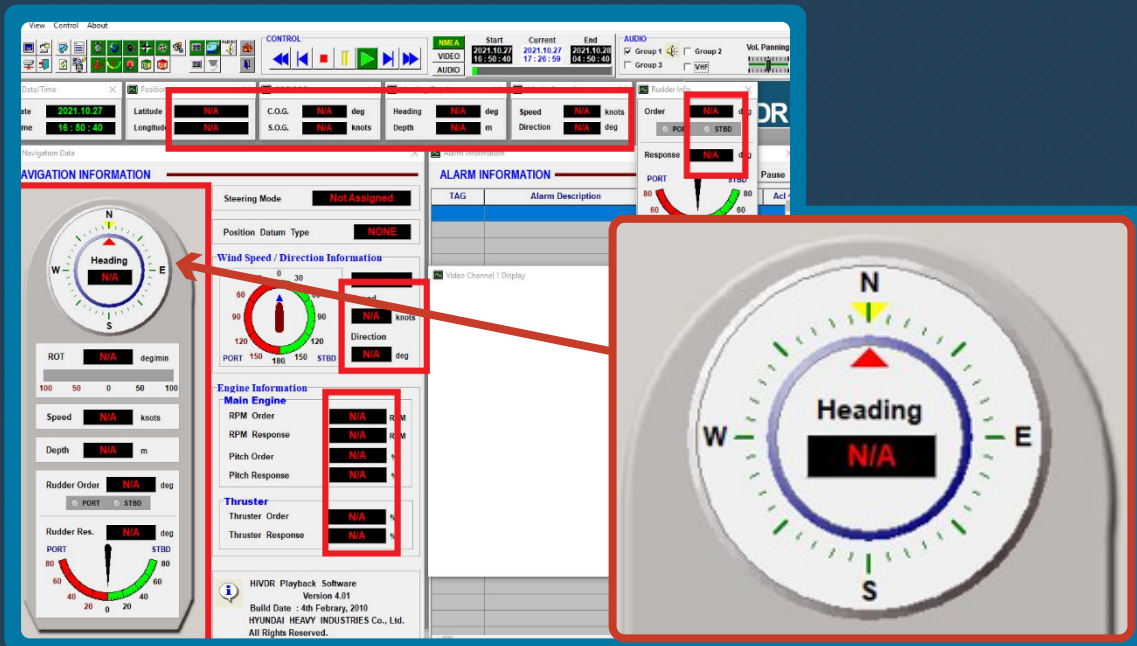


TIP OF THE MONTH – VDR DATA INPUT ISSUES



- HELMET ELEMENT 6 ‘Navigation’ – Item 1 ‘Safe Navigation Procedures’.
- OCIMF – Recommendations on the Proactive Use of Voyage Data Recorder Information
- SIRE 2.0 Questionnaire – 4. Navigation and Communications Q. 4.1.11
- IMO: Resolution MSC.494(104) – ‘Amendments to the Performance Standards for Shipborne Voyage Data Recorders (VDRs) (RESOLUTION MSC.333(90))’

INCIDENT

During a remote VDR audit, our Auditor noticed that the records provided by the VDR system were not the preselected data set from ship’s equipment, as per IMO instructions. According to the annual performance and maintenance test, the VDR input sources were checked and found all were properly connected. Following an internal investigation that was carried out onboard, it was evidenced that there was an issue with the VDR wiring connection.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The main purpose of a voyage data recorder (VDR) is to maintain and store information, in a secure and retrievable form, concerning the position, movement, physical status, command and control of a ship, over the period leading up to and following an incident. The subject information can also be used during an investigation to identify the cause(s) of an incident, as well as in the training and monitoring of the Bridge Team’s performance and cooperation.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

No alarm is triggered when there is an error in the connection of VDR inputs. Although annual performance testing is a requirement, which should detect above mentioned issues, there are many cases where the source of data is missing or recording incorrect values and this is evidenced when the data is analyzed. With a view to avoid similar cases and ensure that the VDR stores the correct data sets, the following is suggested;

- Perform a periodical extraction of the VDR data to ensure system’s integrity.
- Train the responsible Officer for VDR data extraction, so that valuable information will not get lost during the handling/transfer of VDR files.
- Familiarize the Officers with the procedure of the annual performance test, so that they are aware of proper VDR function, and if the system needs repair.