Damage stability of passenger ships: smart methods to identify critical scenarios

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ABSTRACT

The damaged stability assessment for a passenger ship is a process requiring the simulation of multiple damage scenarios. Nevertheless, due to the stochastic nature of both the damage stability framework and the irregular waves environment, a considerable number of cases must be analysed. However, the probability density functions used to estimate the possible damage dimensions and locations along the ship necessitate a large amount of scenarios that are not critical for the ship survivability, especially for large passenger ship. To restrict the amount of damage scenarios, it is common practice to apply empirical rules, such as critical damages are only above two compartments, considering that damage stability regulations currently in force, ensure survivability levels beyond this extend of damages. However, a rigorous approach is lacking. To this end, in the present work, it is proposed to use more scientific-based methods to filter critical damages. The first method is based on preliminary static calculations, the second on the energy absorbed by the ship during an impact, the third on a purely dynamic approach. The methods are here critically compared on two sample passenger ships, showing their respective advantages and disadvantages.

Keywords: *Damage stability, damage breach definition, critical cases, energy method, survivability*

1. INTRODUCTION

The behaviour of a passenger ship in damaged condition is one of the primary issues for marine safety (Vassalos, 2020). As a consequence, survivability of passenger ship is a relevant attribute for the design of new vessels (Atzampos, 2019, Papanikolaou et al, 2013, Vanem et al. 2007). However, the nature of damage stability study has been mainly applied by designers with a compliant-based approach. Nowadays, one of the goals of FLARE project is to overtake this culture, giving more importance to first principle-based tools for vessel survivability during the design process of a passenger ship (Vassalos, 2016).

The assessment of damage stability with direct calculations requires the modelling of complicated phenomena, related to the coupling between ship motions and the dynamic process of floodwater and its interaction with the ship and the wave environment. The modelling can be performed with different simplification levels, leading to different confidence for the obtained results. Use can be made of extremely simplified static approaches, up to high fidelity and computational expensive computational fluid dynamics calculations. However, a good compromise between accuracy and calculation effort is reached by the adoption of time-domain simulations based on rigid body dynamics. Even applying this simulation-based approach, the computational effort to perform an exhaustive assessment of damage stability remains high. In fact, the probabilistic framework used to quantify the final survivability requires a large number of damage cases to be analysed (about 10,000 cases). This becomes even more considerable when survivability in waves should be analysed, as the stochastic nature of irregular waves has to be taken into account (Spanos & Papanikolaou, 2012). Considering damages resulting from ship-to-ship collisions and analysing the marginal distributions for the damage breach extent available in probabilistic frameworks (IMO 2019, Bulian et al. 2019), it is evident that a large number of generated cases is not critical for vessel survivability, especially for large passenger ships. Therefore, it is reasonable to reduce the number of cases to be analysed with dynamic simulations. A common but purely empirical approach to reduce this number is to consider only critical damage cases involving, for example, more than two adjacent zones. Even though this approach could be considered valid from a design point of view, is not founded on scientific considerations.

In the present work, three alternative explorative approaches are proposed, aiming at critical damages identification, leading to reducing the number of dynamic calculations to be performed in the survivability assessment of a passenger ship. The first method is based on the analysis of static survivability calculations, the second evaluates the critical scenarios based on the energy absorbed in the collision and the latter is considering dynamic simulations only. The three methods are applied to two sample reference passenger ships, showing advantages and disadvantages of the proposed solutions for critical damages identification.

2. SCENARIOS DEFINITION FOR DAMAGE STABILITY ASSESSMENT

The damage stability assessment for a passenger ship requires the creation of appropriate damage scenarios, that, according to the actual probabilistic framework, are divided in collisions, side and bottom groundings. These damages are often referred to as *C00*, *B00* and *S00* damages instead of collisions, bottom and side groundings. The probabilistic framework used by SOLAS and its extensions proposing the application of a non-zonal approach are considering the damages as potential box-shaped damages. A description of the geometrical characteristics of these damages and its adoption in a common non-zonal framework is given by Bulian et al. (2019).

2.1 'Non-zonal' collision damages

In this study, only collisions (*C00* damages) will be considered in critical scenarios detection and filtering, considering a 'non-zonal' approach. To define such damage cases during a static or a dynamic analysis, five geometric characteristics have to be generated, feeding into probabilistic marginal distributions, in which involve five random variables:

- Potential damage location X_D (m);
- Potential damage length L_D (m);
- Potential damage penetration B_D (m);
- Lower vertical limit z_{DW} (m);
- Upper vertical limit z_{UP} (m).

In addition, the damage side (port or starboard) need to be added as additional random variable, otherwise, two individual samplings have to be performed: one for portside and one for starboard side.

Damage dimensions are considered independent, with the exception of damage length L_D and damage penetration B_D. For such variables, an empirical rule has been introduced to avoid the generation of damages having too high penetration with respect to length according to the following criteria:

$$\begin{cases} B_{D\max} = 15b\dfrac{L_D}{L_s} & if\ \dfrac{L_D}{L_s} < 30 \\ B_{D\max} = \dfrac{b}{2} & if\ \dfrac{L_D}{L_s} \geq 30 \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

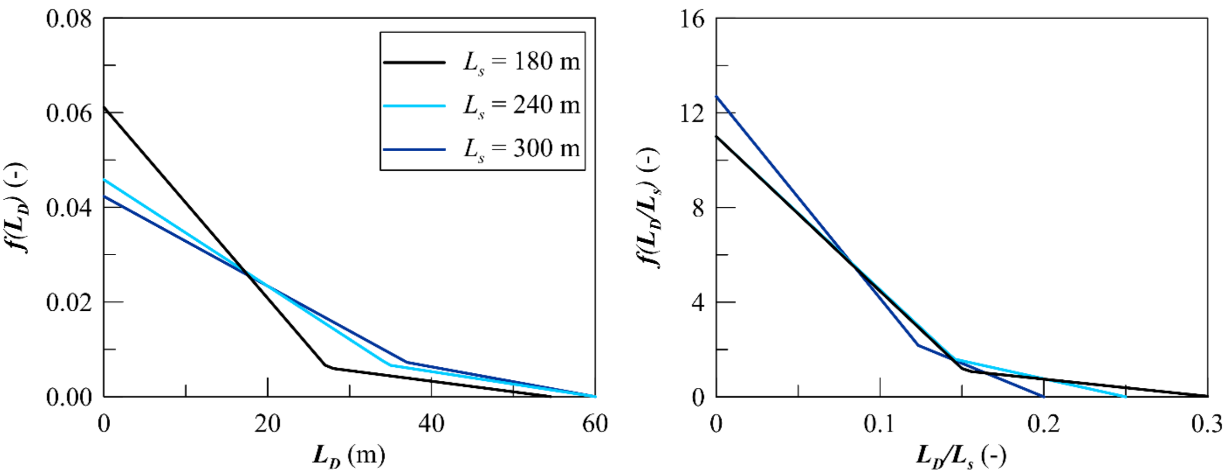


Figure 1 Probability density functions of dimensional (*left*) and non-dimensional (*right*) length of potential damage for a *C00* collision.

where b is the local breadth of the ship at the considered waterline and L_s is the subdivision length. The application of such a constraint implies a preferential order in the sampling of damage dimensions but it is not influencing the sampling process itself. While generating *C00* damages, attention should be paid to the L_D generation, where the distribution depends on the vessel subdivision length L_s. Figure 1 presents an example of the different L_D distributions that can be obtained by incrementally changing L_s. The maximum L_D limit of 60 m for vessels above L_s=198 m, leading to having a different density function for the higher L_D, which results in a fatter tail compared to shorter ships. However, the higher damage length for long ships has a significant lower $L_{D\max}/L_s$ ratio compared to the shorter ones.

2.2 Scenario creation for static and dynamic calculations

The probability density functions of the damage characteristics are used to generate individual breaches for both static and dynamic analyses considering a non-zonal approach. For a static analysis, the geometric characteristics are sufficient to determine a damage case. For a dynamic calculation, also an additional variable has to be taken into account for the weather condition. In fact, besides the damage itself, it is necessary to define also the significant wave height H_{sD} representing the sea state at which the simulation should be carried out. This quantity is evaluated with an additional probability density function derived from statistics of recorded accidents (eSAFE,2019). Then, for dynamic analysis, each single damage with the associated H_{sD} is a separate damage scenario, as damage breaches with different sizes could lead to different floodwater progression inside/ outside the ship. Thus, sampling 10,000 damages imply at least 10,000 separate calculations, as to obtain a reliable result more repetition of irregular wave cases is needed. For static calculations, it is not possible to observe different results from damages having different size but involving the same compartments. Therefore, it is useful to group all the damages assigning relative weights to damages with different occurrence: the so-called p factors. Then, static calculations are performed for a limited number of cases, usually referred to as damage scenarios, representative of the unique combinations of damage compartments detected with the sampling procedure. Therefore, the total number of damage scenarios depends on the internal geometry complexity, sampling size and sampling process. In any case, the total amount of cases to assess is lower than the total number of generated breaches. The random nature of the sampling process suggests performing more than one sampling repetition (Bulian et al., 2016), resulting in multiple samples that could potentially detect different damage scenarios and different p factors.

Table 1. *Ship#1* and *Ship#2* main particulars.

Parameter	***Ship#1***	***Ship#2***	***unit***
Length overall	300.00	162.00	m
Length between perpendiculars	270.00	146.72	m
Beam	35.20	28.00	m
Subdivision draft	8.20	6.30	m
Height at main deck	11.00	9.20	m
GM	3.500	3.400	m
Deadweight	8,500	3,800	t
Gross tonnage	95,900	28,500	
Number of passengers	2,750	1,900	-
Number of crew	1,000	100	-

3. REFERENCE SHIPS

In the present explorative study on critical damage detection and filtering use is made of two reference passenger ships. For convenience, the two vessels are here described before using them as worked example for the developed filtering procedures. As mentioned in the introduction, use is made of a large cruise ship and of a Ro-Pax vessel, being the selected test ships for most of the developments within the FLARE project. In this work, the cruise ship will be named *Ship#1* and, the Ro-Pax, *Ship#2*. The main parameters of the two ships are given in Table 1, and an overview of the general arrangement, in Figures 2 and 3. *Ship#1* is representative of a large cruise vessel, whilst *Ship#2* is a small passenger ferry. The ship sizes are covering the two extremes in the range of breach length definition typical of *C00* damages described in Section 2, with *Ship#1* above 260 m and, *Ship#2*, 198 m.

3.1 Damage breaches generations for the reference ships with a non-zonal approach

As the identification procedure for critical damages for two of the three proposed methods is based on *C00* damages sampling, a brief overview of the breaches sampling and damage cases obtained is given in this Section.

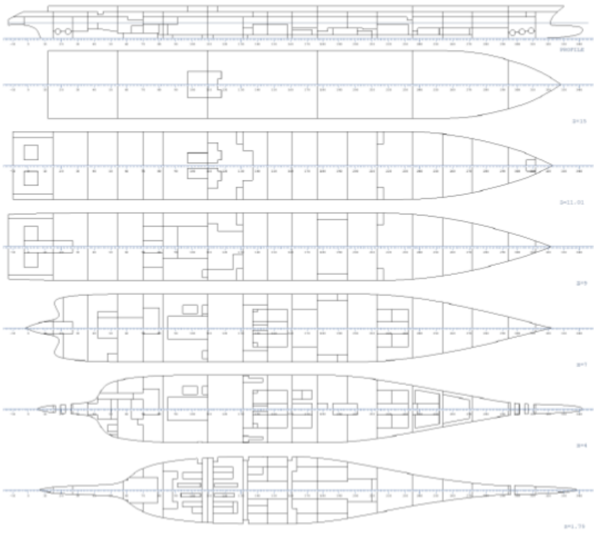


Figure 2 *Ship#1* General Arrangement.

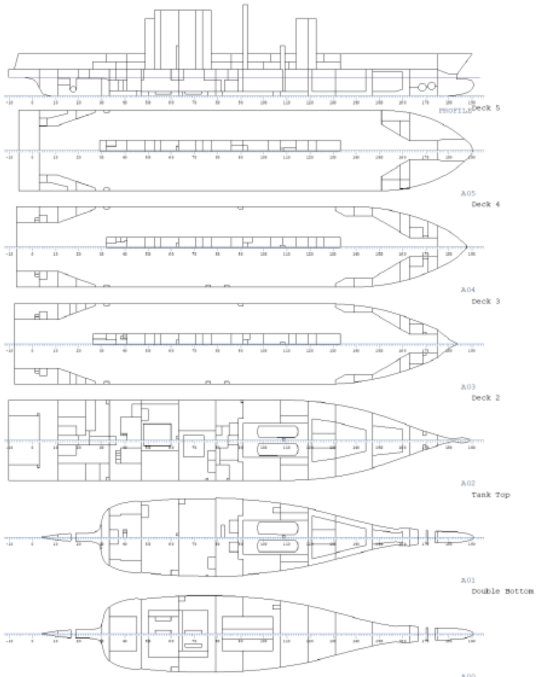


Figure 3 *Ship#2* General Arrangement.

The sampling process used to determine the damage cases is based on randomised quasi-random number sequences, ensuring a more uniform coverage of the potential damage space compared to conventional pseudo-random methods. For this study, 3 samples repetitions of 10,000 breaches each have been used.

In Figure 4 and Figure 5 the outcome of the damage sample is shown for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2* respectively. The representation is limited to the distribution of damage length L_D at the respective X_D position in non-dimensional form.

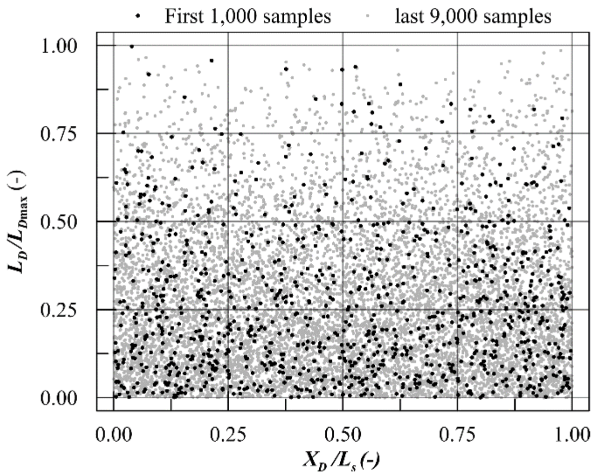


Figure 4 Damage length sampling for *Ship#1*.

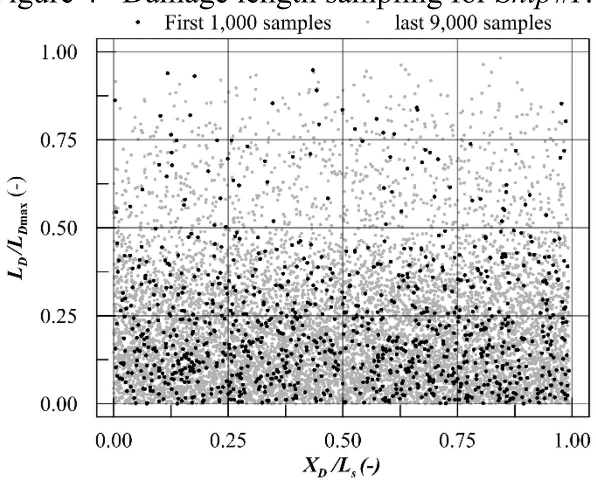


Figure 5 Damage length sampling for *Ship#2*

In the two figures, one of the three samples is represented, highlighting the distribution of the first 1,000 samples compared to the total 10,000 breaches. It can be observed that the different nature of the marginal distributions for damage length between the two ships (see Figure 1), implies that for *Ship#1* there is a smoother transition between relatively short and long damages, whilst for *Ship#2* the density of relatively short damages is higher than for long ones. This aspect will certainly affect not only the survivability of the two ships, but also the detection and distribution of critical cases.

4. STATIC ANALYSIS FILTERING

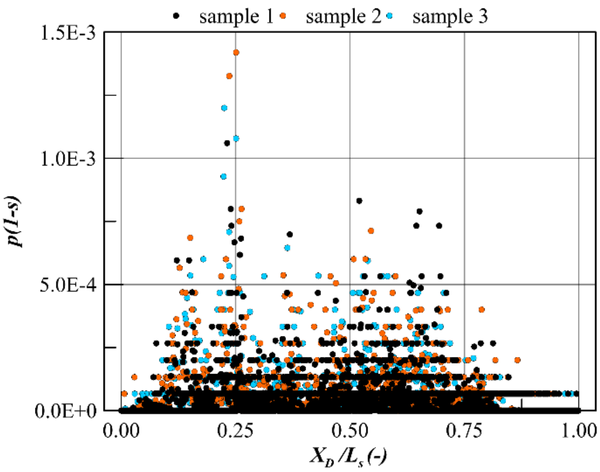
A straight forward way to identify critical scenarios to be further analysed by means of dynamic simulations could be derived from the analysis of static calculations.

The static survivability assessment is performed on the damage cases derived from the sampling of marginal distributions, grouped in unique damage scenarios with associated *p* factors. Calculations performed on these unique cases allow to determine the survivability of the ship for the associated damage scenario, evaluating the *s* factor. From this analysis, three categories can be figured out, according to the *s* factor value:

- $s=0$: cases where the vessel can be considered statically capsized or with insufficient residual stability margin;
- $0<s<1$: cases where there could be a reduced reserve of stability that may lead to capsize in case a wave environment is faced.
- $s=1$: cases where the vessel can be considered safe and potentially having a sufficient reserve of stability to face waves.

Even though, as a first approximation, it can be considered that cases with s=0 lead to a dynamic capsize (Karolius at al., 2018), it is wiser to consider the first two categories as those potentially leading to a capsize for dynamic simulations. In fact, the geometrical model used for static calculations differs from that used in dynamics, where more openings and internal rooms are modelled, therefore a direct comparison cannot be performed between the two approaches. It has been observed that the results from static predictions are usually more conservative than a full dynamic-based vulnerability assessment in calm water (Atzampos, 2019); however, especially when irregular waves should be considered it is advisable not to discard a-priori all uncertain cases.

As mentioned in the previous sections, the execution of static calculations is not performed on all the damage cases generated from the sampling procedures. Single damages are regrouped in damage cases involving the same adjoining compartments. This process reduces the number of cases where the *s* factor needs to be evaluated, taking into account the weight of each single damage case through the *p* factor. These two factors can be representative of risk.



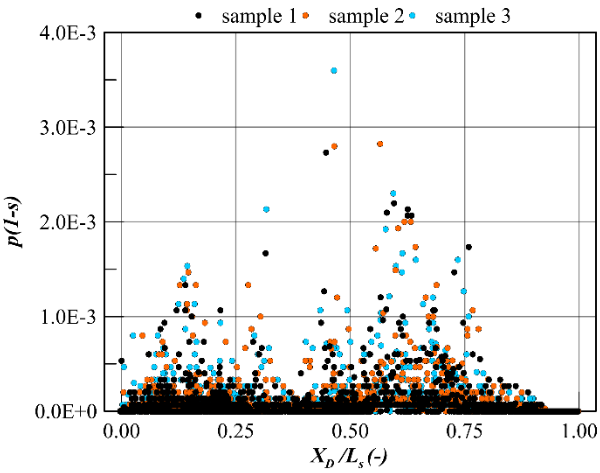
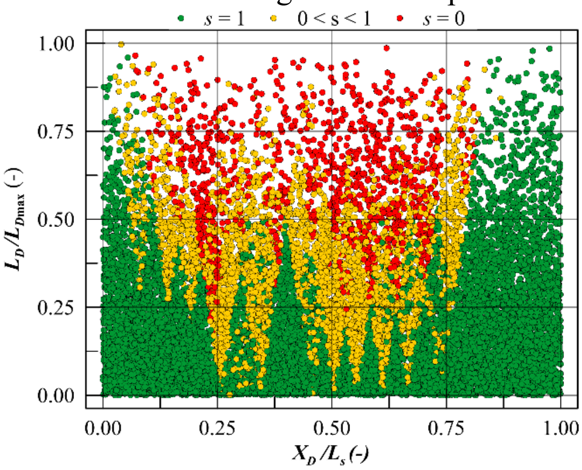


Figure 6 Risk profile for *Ship#1* (*left*) and *Ship#2* (*right*).



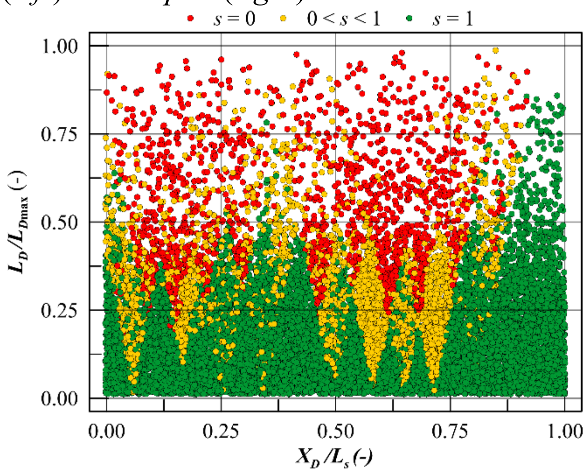


Figure 7 Survivability factor for *Ship#1* (*left*) and *Ship#2* (*right*) considering all breaches.

In fact, the factor *p(1-s)* can be used to give a rough estimate of the risk associated with a particular damage case. In Figure 6, an example is given for the two ships, highlighting the most dangerous areas of the two ships, considering all three damage samples generated. The static calculations refer to the conditions reported in Table 1. Comparing the results in Figure 6 for the two ships, it is noteworthy that *Ship#2* has an overall risk level higher than *Ship#1*. This can be further visualised in Figure 7, where the *s* factor of each single damage of one sample is highlighted with reference to non-dimensional damage position and length, thus neglecting the grouping present in the risk profile. Thus, each point in the diagrams is representative of a potential case to be further analysed with more advanced dynamic simulations. It is then straightforward to filter out all the cases with *s*=1 (the green dots) and keep only the other cases for further analysis. By following this approach, for *Ship#1* 65.0% of cases can be filtered out, whilst 66.5% cases can be discarded for *Ship#2*. Instead, considering only the cases with s=0, 91.7% and 88.9% of the damages can be filtered out for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2* respectively.

It is also possible to mitigate the pure filtering based on the *s* factor, using the risk profile reported in Figure 6. The damage cases reported in that figure are representative of the unique damage cases for static calculation, thus the cases with higher risk are those having $s \neq 0$ and a high *p* value, thus cases which are more probable to face according to the reference probabilistic framework. Therefore, it can be also possible to consider as filtering option the combined effect of both *p* and *s*, thus the risk. In this case, all the damages under a certain risk threshold can be filtered out.

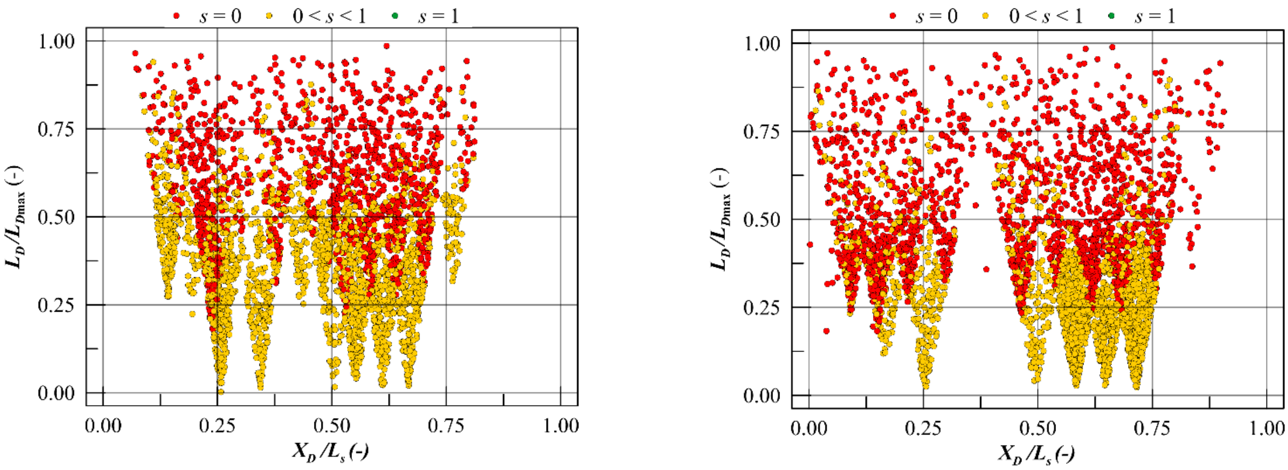


Figure 8 Damages above 1E-4 risk threshold for *Ship#1* (*left*) and *Ship#2* (*right*).

In Figure 8, an example is given for the two ships, considering as risk threshold the value of 1E-4, which means considering only cases with s=0 and intermediate cases having a global risk comparable or higher than an immediate capsize. Therefore, this filtering reduces the cases where 0<s<1, resulting in an intermediate number of cases compared to the previous two simpler options.

The adoption of such a filtering allows for evaluating vessel survivability also with dynamic simulations, evaluating an index A_{dyn} directly from the set of filtered data, assuming that the vessel survives for the other cases. Therefore, supposing that N_D is the total number of samples and N_F is the number of cases remaining after the filter application, the survivability index becomes:

$$A_{dyn} = 1 - \frac{1}{N_D}\left(N_F - \sum_{i=1}^{N_F} s_i^* \right) \tag{2}$$

Where $s*$ is the survivability factor of the dynamic simulation that is equal to 1 if the vessel survives after 30 min simulation or equal to 0 if the vessel capsizes. The process described here is valid for calm water cases; however, it can be extended to irregular waves adopting alternative definition of the s factor in the preliminary calculations (Cichowicz et al., 2016).

5. DAMAGE ENERGY-BASED FILTERING

Another approach could be pursued to filter out minor damages resulting from the non-zonal sampling process of the probabilistic damage stability framework; this time, without the need to perform preliminary static analysis. This approach is based on the energy absorbed by the vessel after an accident. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a method to evaluate the energy absorbed by the ship after a damage with specific geometric characteristics occurring. To this end, several methods could be applied having different level of approximations and, consequently, different calculation and pre-processing time. These methods include simple empirical formulae, analytical methods based on the so-called super-element solutions and finite element modelling techniques.

Simple empirical formulations require the knowledge of the damage extents and an estimate of the structural volume of the ship related to the damage area. Super-element method and finite element modelling require knowledge of the vessel structural components. Finite element methods are certainly more accurate than all the other methods, however this requires a higher calculation time which is not reasonable to apply once thousands of damage scenarios have to be created.

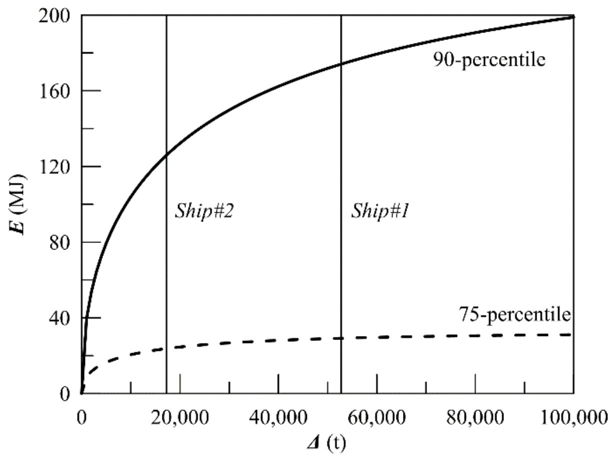
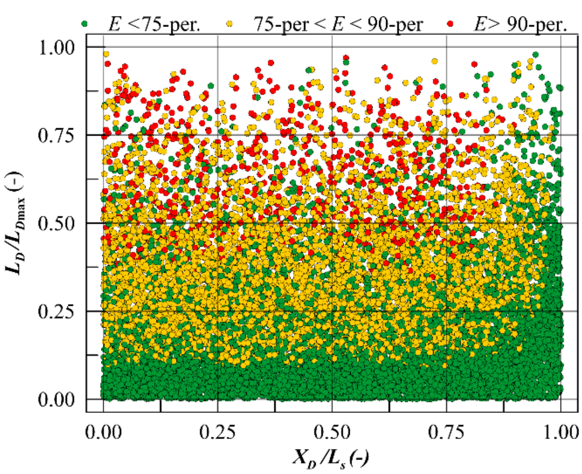


Figure 9 75 and 90-percentile energy limits for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2*.

Regardless of the method used to evaluate impact energy, the application of this energy-based approach requires the definition of a threshold level, identifying the limit of what can be considered a critical damage for the ship. To this end, use can be made of statistical analyses of collisions available in literature (Lützen, 2001). Here, damages deriving from ship to ship collisions have been analysed and an analysis of the associated energy for each impact has been performed, deriving representative curves that show an exponential behaviour of the energy absorbed by the struck ship as a function of displacement. Regression curves are given to identify the 25, 50, 75 and 90-percentile of the energy absorbed by vessel collisions worldwide. These values refer to damages located in the middle of the struck vessel, but they are used here for the whole ship purely as a demonstrative example. In Figure 9, the 75 and 90-percentile curves are shown, identifying the respective limits for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2*.

For this explorative application on *Ship#1* and *Ship#2*, the energy associated to each single damage has been calculated by means of the approximate empirical formulation given by Minorsky (1959). The authors are fully conscious of the extremely simplified nature of the formulation, but it represents an estimate level of energy that could be calculated in an early-design stage, without knowing the effective structural layout of the ship under analysis, which will more complicated and accurate methods. However, this approach may provide an effective filter for early design stage calculations of damage stability at a sufficient level of granularity.

In Figure 10, an overview is presented of the obtained results derived from this simplified energy methods for the two reference ships. According to the threshold levels of 75 and 90-percentile of energy collision distribution, the 46.7% of the damages for *Ship#1* is above the 75-percentile, whilst 4.9% exceeds the 90-percentile limit. For *Ship#2*, the 32.9% of the damages is above the 75-percentile and only 2.0% exceeds the 90-percentile of absorbed energy. The different distribution of damages between the two ships is influencing the obtained results, as *Ship#2* has a higher damage density in the region where low energy is detected, resulting in a higher filtering ratio compared to *Ship#1*.



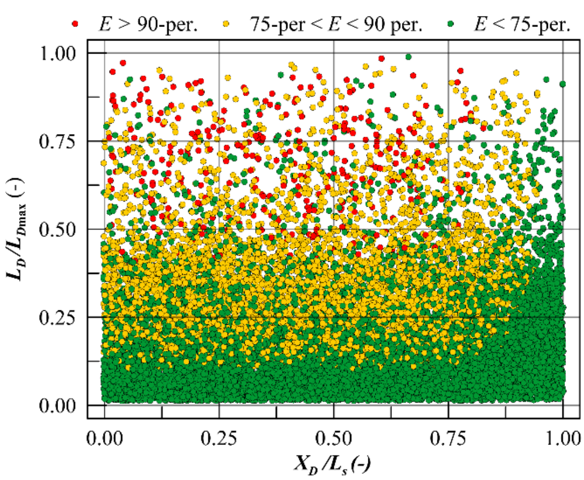


Figure 10 Application of energy-based damage filter to *Ship#1* (*left*) and *Ship#2* (*right*)

On the other hand, the obtained results reflect the approximated nature of the Minorsky formulation, giving intrinsically more weight to damages with higher penetration. In fact, applying this formula, damages with high longitudinal and vertical extents, but with low penetration are filtered out as they have low absorbed energy. However, these damages are identified as capsizes in static analysis (s=0) and most likely may be detected as transient capsizes with dynamic simulations.

The application of this filtering process can be applied to damage samples for dynamic simulations as the final determination of dynamic survivability can be applied according to equation (2). Moreover, the energy filter is applicable also in case wave distribution is sampled for irregular sea calculations.

6. ALTERNATIVE SEARCH FOR CRITICAL SCENARIOS

The above-described methodologies for damage filtering presuppose that damage cases are sampled from conventionally adopted probabilistic frameworks, thus aiming to determine survivability with either a zonal or non-zonal approach. These approaches are intrinsically derived from static analysis or intrinsically suppose that a preliminary static assessment has been carried out. However, another possibility could be given by substituting the preliminary static analysis by means of a reduced set of dynamic simulations.

As already mentioned in Section 2, the definition of a damage scenario for a dynamic analysis is considering each single breach sampled from marginal distributions for location and dimension and for the weather condition. Therefore, the adoption of probability distributions recommended by the in force probabilistic framework for damaged ships, can be used also to perform a survivability assessment with a dynamic approach. However, sampling according to above-mentioned marginal distribution will lead to the same samples shown in Figures 4 and 5 for the two reference ships; thus, distributions with a high density of small damages that most probably will not lead to capsize in dynamic simulations. However, inside a Monte Carlo process for survivability determination, all these ‘safe’ cases must be analysed to obtain the final value. Instead of calculating directly all the damage cases derived from samples of 10,000 scenarios, it could be interesting to perform a preliminary set of simulations on a reduced set of scenarios in order to identify critical areas directly with a dynamic approach. To this end, the marginal distribution provided by SOLAS should be abandoned, as intrinsically leading to highly populate relatively small damages. Here it is proposed to adopt an initial sample assuming that damage location and dimensions follow uniform distributions.

The preliminary analysis can be than performed according to the following steps:

- *Initial uniform sampling*: sampling of a reduced number of damages (e.g., 250) according to uniform distributions.
- *Preliminary dynamic calculations*: execution of preliminary 30 min dynamic calculations for the initial sample.
- *Preliminary results analysis*: analysis of the preliminary dynamic calculations to identify true capsizes or damage cases failing imposed criteria.

The above described process can be applied for calm water, thus performing the initial study discarding the presence of waves, or can be performed for a given wave height, showing the influence of irregular waves on the initial sample.

The process has been here applied to *Ship#1* only, considering an initial uniform sampling of 250 damage cases for calm water. Dynamic calculations have been performed with PROTEUS 3 software (Jasionowski, 2001), considering a maximum simulation time of 30 minutes, considering the vessel characteristics described in Table 1.

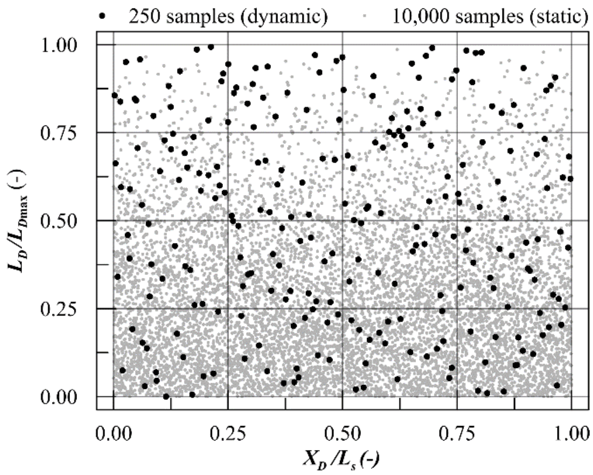


Figure 11 Uniform damage length sampling for *Ship#1* for preliminary dynamic analysis.

The initial sample of 250 damages has been performed with the same sampling technique used for the previous methods. In Figure 11 an overview is given of the new sample, together with the sample adopted in previous sections. The figure is showing the distribution of non-dimensional damage length L_D against the non-dimensional damage location X_D. It is noteworthy that the uniform sampling is populating the region of longer damages with more cases than the standard sampling, thus giving a global coverage of the whole damage space. The same properties are valid also for the other dimensions not reported here for brevity.

Performing dynamic simulations on this set of damages it is then possible to identify the critical case of this reduced group of scenarios. Besides true capsizes, cases where the roll angle exceeds 40 degrees, and other criteria can be used to detect critical scenarios. In this study, the following criteria have been applied:

- *SOLAS heeling failure*: maximum heel above 15 degrees.
- *ITTC maximum heeling*: maximum heeling above 30 degrees.
- *ITTC average roll*: cases where 3 minutes' average roll exceeds 20 degrees.
- *Large average floodwater mass rate*: cases where the flooding process is still significantly progressing after 30 minutes.

These criteria are those normally applied to dynamic simulations in the traditional approach.

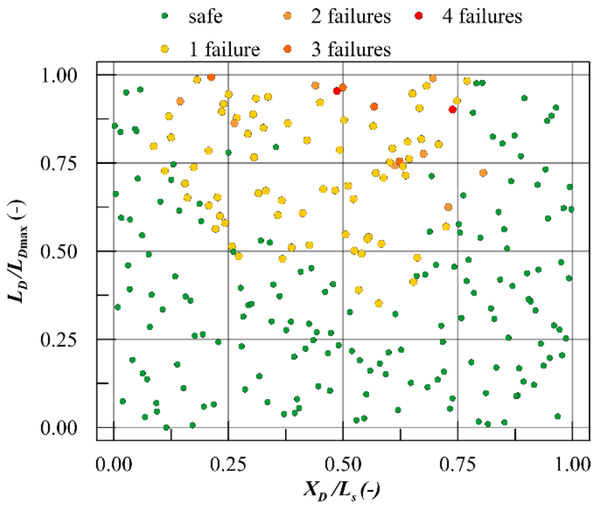


Figure 12 Critical cases resulting from dynamic calculations for *Ship#1*.

From the simulations performed for *Ship#1*, 2 true capsizes have been found; however, the following criticalities have been highlighted: 84 SOLAS heeling failures, 7 ITTC maximum heeling exceedances, 12 ITTC average roll exceedances and 2 simulations still in progressive flooding. It is notable that with such a few samples, 2 true capsizes have been detected, as, applying the same GM, no true capsize cases have been detected with the conventional sampling process on 1,000 damages. These results are summarised in Figure 12 where the critical cases are highlighted. From the graphical representation, the area where possible critical damages are located is clearly identified. It is then evident that L_D and X_D have a strong influence on the distribution of critical cases. No direct correlation has been found with other damage dimensions, where the critical cases are almost spread through the whole domain.

From this preliminary analysis, a possible filtering of damages above a certain L_D can be identified. In such a case, a full set of samples can be identified using conventional marginal distributions for damage dimension and locations. This would allow for survivability assessment with a conventional Monte Carlo process, taking into account that the marginal distribution of L_D is sampled only above a certain threshold. This second sampling process can also consider the presence of waves, thus the total number of simulations to be performed depends on the repetitions of the single cases to take wave randomness into account.

The execution of 250 preliminary dynamic simulations does not require a lot of computational effort, as the time domain simulations in calm water are running almost three time faster than real time on a regular computer. Moreover, compared to adoption of static calculation, this method used the same internal layout and the same openings definition for both preliminary and final calculations.

7. METHODS COMPARISON

The three methods described above are representative of different approaches that could be followed to assess damage survivability of a passenger ship. This means considering the dynamic analysis as a consequential and complementary process to static analysis, or considering the dynamic analysis as totally independent from static calculations. All the methods showed the capability of reducing the amount of damage scenarios compared to a traditional definition of damage cases. In any case, all methods present some positive and negative aspects, both concerning the number of cases that can be reduced, the modelling simplification and the calculation time.

The filtering based on preliminary static calculation is probably the most straight-forward method, directly reflecting the consequentiality of static and dynamic calculations in a damage stability framework. In the present work, different options have been presented to filter out damages cases with this approach: considering only s=0 cases, considering only cases with s≠0, or mitigate the results through the risk of impact in certain areas. Considering this last option as the most suitable to identify cases to be analysed with dynamic calculations, a total amount of 2,150 and 2,350 potentially critical cases are identified starting from a 10,000 damages sample for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2*, respectively. This is a good performance as about 80% of initial cases is discarded. However, the static calculations refer to a different internal layout compared to a dynamic calculation. For static analysis, the ship is modelled only up to the bulkhead deck with a simplified internal layout and fewer number of relevant openings. This difference could reflect in the identification of more critical cases than what can be observed from dynamic simulations.

The energy-based filtering is a totally different strategy that did not require the execution of preliminary static analysis. The method has been here applied with a really simplified formulation for the absorbed energy determination, and the results reflect the nature of the simplified formulations used. Nevertheless, the method identifies 4,670 and 3,288 critical cases for *Ship#1* and *Ship#2* respectively, considering as threshold the 75-percentile of potentially absorbed energy. Thus, the performances are lower than the previous method, but it could significantly improve if the 90-percentile of absorbed energy is used. In conclusion, regardless of the model simplifications here adopted, this method is strictly dependent on the threshold level adopted to filter the damages. This can be better identified only by means of dedicated studies with high fidelity simulation tools. Moreover, the adoption of a damage distribution according to the SOLAS framework can be intended already as a potential energy distribution along the ship, therefore this method could be inappropriate to use in the actual probabilistic framework but may be further studied as an alternative way to generate damages.

The approach based on dynamic simulations only is a totally different way to face the damage filtering process. No static calculations are used; thus, no uncertainties are introduced by comparing results coming from two different internal layouts and opening definitions. The adoption of a preliminary set of calculations using a uniform distribution for all the damage characteristics allows for investigation of the whole damage space with a reduced number of sampling. In this explorative study 250 samples have been used; however, further investigation is needed to identify an optimal number of cases to be used. The method is capable of identifying the criticality adopting the same criteria used for traditional dynamic calculations, thus having a direct correspondence with the critical cases of the final runs for survivability assessment. This method is not directly filtering out cases but is capable of identifying a suitable threshold for the damage length in order to sample with conventional distribution only part of the domain, with a number of samples that can be decided in each case.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In the present explorative work, three different methods to identify critical damage conditions for passenger ships have been presented and applied on two reference ships. The methods present positive and negative aspects, proposing solutions that can be applied to a conventional damage stability framework workflow and other methods following totally different paths.

The most conventional and simple methods based on static analysis are the direct sum between static and dynamic analysis, even though the two analyses are based on different geometries and assumptions. In any case, these methods grant a significant reduction of damage cases to analyse with dynamics.

Methods from energy-base filtering are still in an embryonic form and should be further developed and analysed with the aid of more accurate models and tools. However, they could be attractive to possibly figure out possible innovative ways to generate damages, totally based on direct approaches.

A fully dynamic-simulation based approach is for sure really attractive, as it represents an application of first-principles tools throughout the damage stability process. The method is capable to be applied also to investigate irregular waves in the preliminary phase. However, the calculation time can be higher than the static analysis filtering.

In conclusion, there is a need to further investigate damage filtering methods to allow an even more extensive and appropriate use of dynamic simulations in a damage stability assessment process for passenger ships.

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