

Leveraging Influence : Driving Industry - Wide Change for Maritime Safety

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Explosion on Wan Hai 503 on 9th Jun 2026

Agenda

1. Container Vessel Wan Hai 503 Incident : Case Study

- Challenges For Salvage Operation

2. Container Shipping Industry Challenges

3. Industry-Wide Changes for Maritime Safety : Recommendation

WAN HAI 503 Information

General

Vessel Name	WAN HAI 503
Service	CHINA-INDIA EXPRESS SERVICE (CIX)
IMO Number	9294862
Flag	Singapore
Built (year)	2005

Dimensions

Length Overall	268.8 m
Breadth Extreme	32.3 m
Draught	12.5 m
Depth	19.2 m
Capacity	4252 TEU



WAN HAI 503 Incident

22
Crew onboard

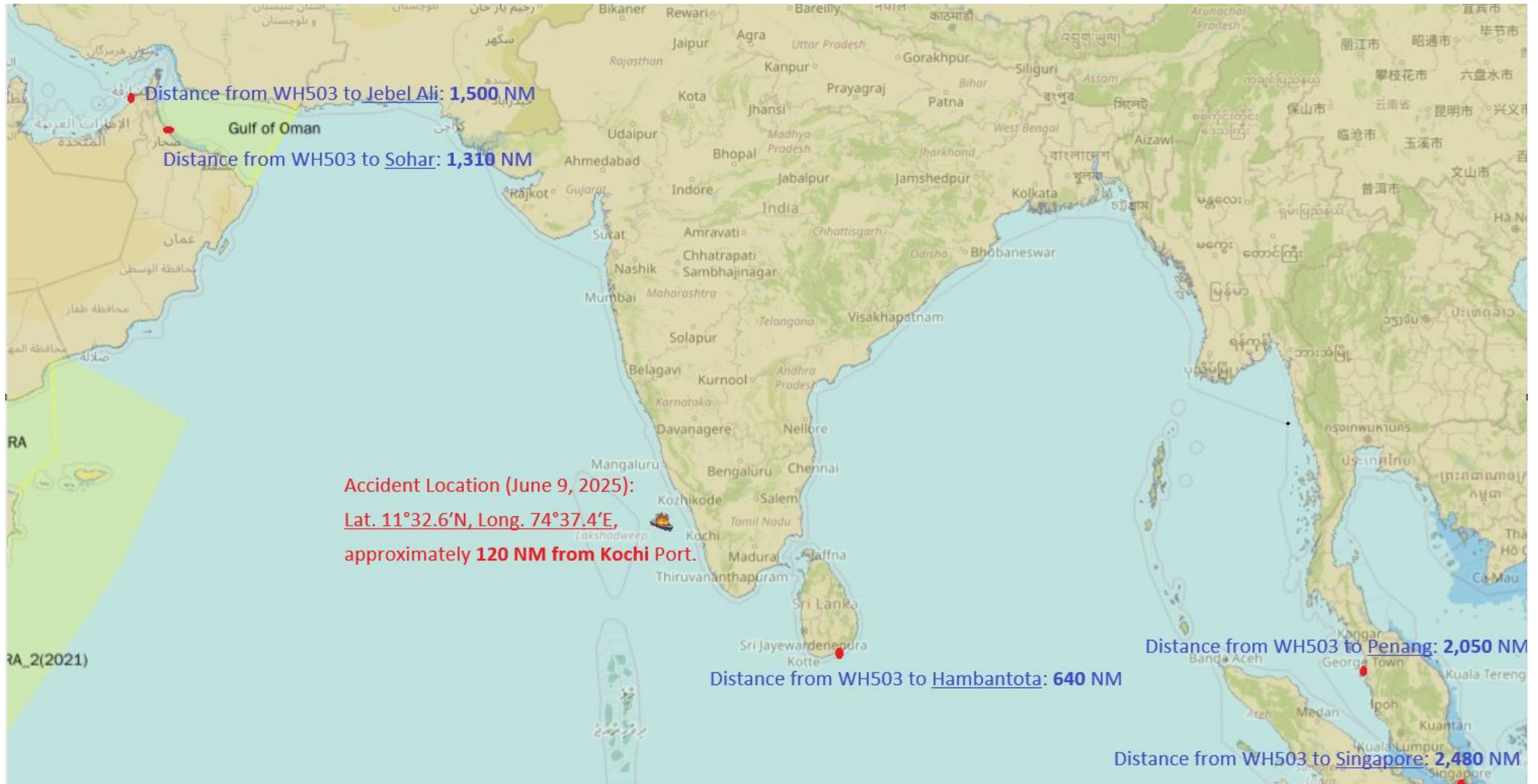
18
Rescued

6
Injured

4
Missing



WAN HAI 503 Location



WAN HAI 503 Emergency Response to Final Resolution

INCIDENT TIMELINE

2025/06/09

Incident Outbreak

Explosion occurred in Cargo Hold No. 3,
Emergency response and SAR were activated.

2025/06/10

Salvage Operation

T&T Salvage appointed to conduct firefighting, boundary cooling and vessel stability monitoring.

2025/06/18

Initiate Port of Refuge (PoR)

Multi-country PoR discussions began with Sri Lanka, Oman, UAE, Bahrain, Malaysia & Singapore.

-Salvage Operation Continues

2025/09/12

Berth at Refuge Port Jebel Ali

WH503 was safely towed and berthed at Jebel Ali, entering the shore-side handling and discharge phase.

2026/01/12

Vessel Total Loss

Wreckage removal, safe cargo discharge and vessel disposal were completed.

WAN HAI 503 Incident- Fire Fighting 2025/6/10..... 2025/7/28



2025.6.11



2025.6.15

WAN HAI 503 Incident- Fire Fighting 2025/6/10..... 2025/7/28



2025.6.17



2025.6.20

WAN HAI 503 Incident-Salvage Operation 2025/6/10..... 2025/7/28



2025.7.7 Smoldering continued inside cargo holds; boundary cooling in progress

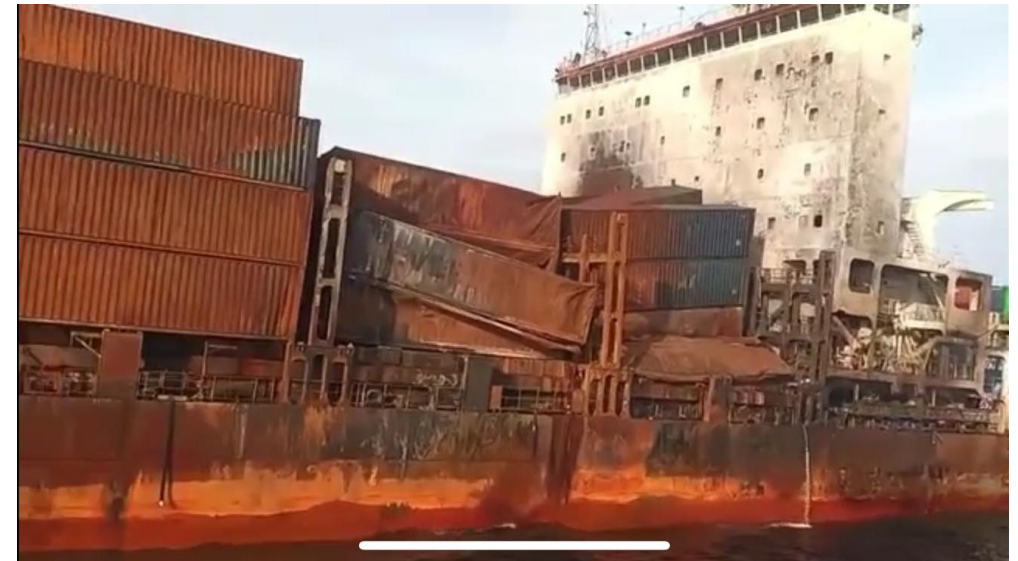


2025.7.8 Salvage tug continued towing to stabilize the vessel's position

WAN HAI 503 Incident-Salvage Operation 2025/6/10..... 2025/7/28



2025.7.21 Only sporadic smoldering and smoking remained



2025.7.28 Vessel's condition before being towed to the port of refuge

Dubai Port Authority Agrees To Provide Refuge Port for WH503 2025/8/20-9/12



WAN HAI 503 Incident-Berth at Refuge Port Jebel Ali



2025.9.12 The vessel safely entered the port of refuge

IMO Framework Governing Places of Refuge (PoR)

CORE IMO INSTRUMENTS



IMO Resolution A.1184(33)

Places of Refuge Guidelines

- PoR decision framework
- Risk assessment methodology
- International cooperation and communication



IMO Resolution A.950(23)

Maritime Assistance Service (MAS)

- Coordination mechanism
- Single point of contact
- Incident reporting and management

APPLICATION IN PRACTICE



Legal Principles

- No automatic right of refuge
- Intervention rights
- Duty of cooperation



Risk Assessment

- Ship condition
- Cargo hazards
- Environmental / socio-economic impact



Decision Outcome

- Grant access
- Grant with conditions
- Refuse / order offshore

Container Shipping Industry Challenges

Invisible Hazard in Containerised Transport

DG Misdeclaration, Lithium Risk and Fire Frequency

218

fire/explosion incidents globally in 2025

17 days

average interval between container ship fires

7.9%

DG inspections with non-compliance

25%

cargo-related incidents attributed to misdeclaration

6x

2025 lithium deployments vs. 2020

57

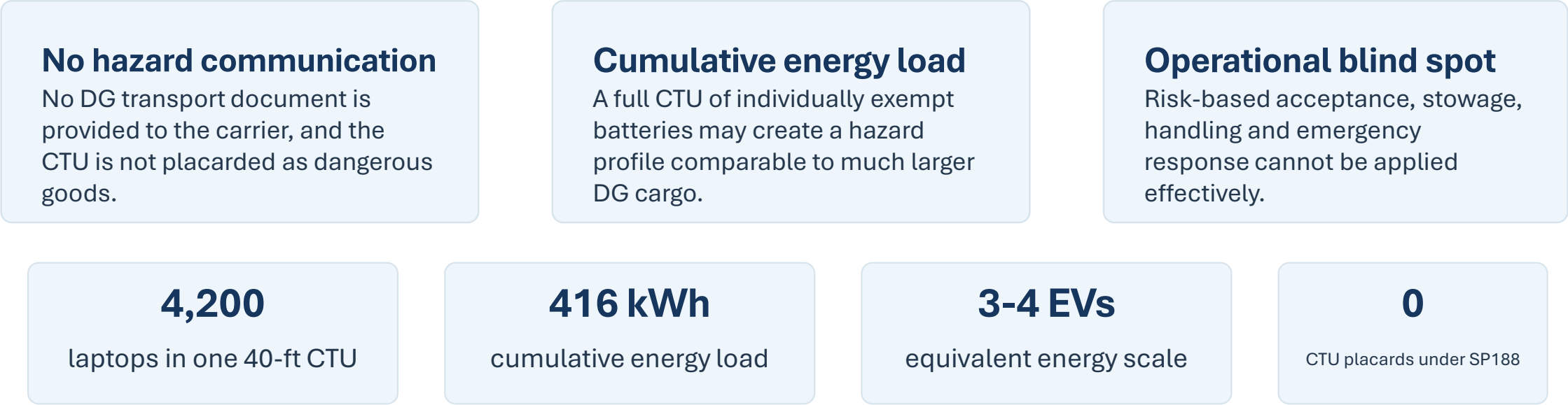
major lithium battery incidents recorded by CINS

Sources: Allianz Safety & Shipping Review 2026; WSC; NCB; CINS

Invisible Hazard in Containerised Battery Transport

Core issue

SP188 can exempt individual battery packages, but does not set a CTU-level limit. When many exempt packages are loaded into one container, the cumulative hazard becomes invisible to carriers, ports and coastal States.



How IMO and CINS Propose to Close the Gap

Recommended Direction

IMO approach

Introduce a CTU-level threshold.
Trigger DG declaration above threshold.
Consider CTU placarding requirements.
Refer the issue for IMDG Code 44-28 development.

CINS position

Keep SP188 only as conditional relief.
Require visibility, traceability and control.
Consider mandatory declaration for lithium batteries.
Apply a 20 kg gross battery mass cap per CTU.

Expected outcome

Better cargo transparency.
Better stowage and segregation control.
Faster emergency response.
Stronger accountability across the logistics chain.

Key Message: Visibility is the foundation of prevention.

Industry - Wide Changes for Maritime Safety

From Incidents to System-Level Reform

Industry-Wide Change Recommendation

1

Flag State Support

- Support for PoR Engagement
- G2G Coordination
- Emergency Response Support
- Crew Protection Framework

2

Port of Refuge Governance

- Pre-approved PoR by region
- Establish a workable PoR framework
- Standardize Security templates & SOP; including container disposal

3

Cargo Safety Program

- SP188 lithium battery regulation reform
- AI driven booking anomaly screening
- Enforcement and accountability

Thank you