

Collision off Cape Point

By **STEPHEN WROTTESELEY**
and **DICK USHER**
Staff Reporters

A PANAMANIAN ship and the NSRI were involved in a dramatic rescue off Cape Point early today after a Swedish-owned yacht with two men on board was involved in a collision and started leaking dangerously.

The collision happened about 1.30am and, with his boat rapidly filling with water, skipper Steve Konya put out a mayday call which was responded to by National Sea Rescue Institute boats from Hout Bay and Simon's Town and the 50 000-ton container ship Regina D.

When the Regina D reached the foundering yacht it was just four miles off the Hoek van Bobbejaan on the western side of Cape Point nature reserve.

Captain Silvio Cappucio, master of the Regina D, which docked in Cape Town hours after the drama, said the operation took place in a 20-knot south-easter and three-metre swells.

Taken in tow

NSRI Rescue 8 took the 8,5m yacht Nicolena in tow at 4.30am and arrived at Hout Bay at 7.15am.

Mr Konya, who left Cape Town yesterday for Mauritius, said he went below about midnight, leaving Mr Ulla Engin on watch.

About an hour later he was called up and Mr Engin told him there were a lot of ships about and he was quite concerned.

"One was extremely close," said Mr Konya. "By this time we were on a collision course and it was too late to do anything and we collided with the vessel."

In response to his signal the Regina D stood by for about two hours and took Mr Konya on board while Mr Engin stayed to bail.

Mr Konya said the sea was moderately rough with a wind of about Force 5.

The Nicolena is a Swedish-built ocean-going yacht of about four tons.

Praise for NSRI

Both men said the NSRI had been "wonderful".

The boat will be lifted out of the water today for inspection and to assess damage.

Captain Cappucio said the Regina D picked up the mayday call from the Nicolena about 1.30am and about 2.15am he was instructed by Cape Town Radio to help the yacht.

The Regina D was on its way to Cape Town and the yacht was about five nautical miles away.

Dramatic yacht rescue



HELPING HAND: Ship's agent Mr John Wroth in front of the Regina D, the Panamanian-registered container vessel that stood by the Nicolena after the yacht was hit by a ship off Cape Point today.