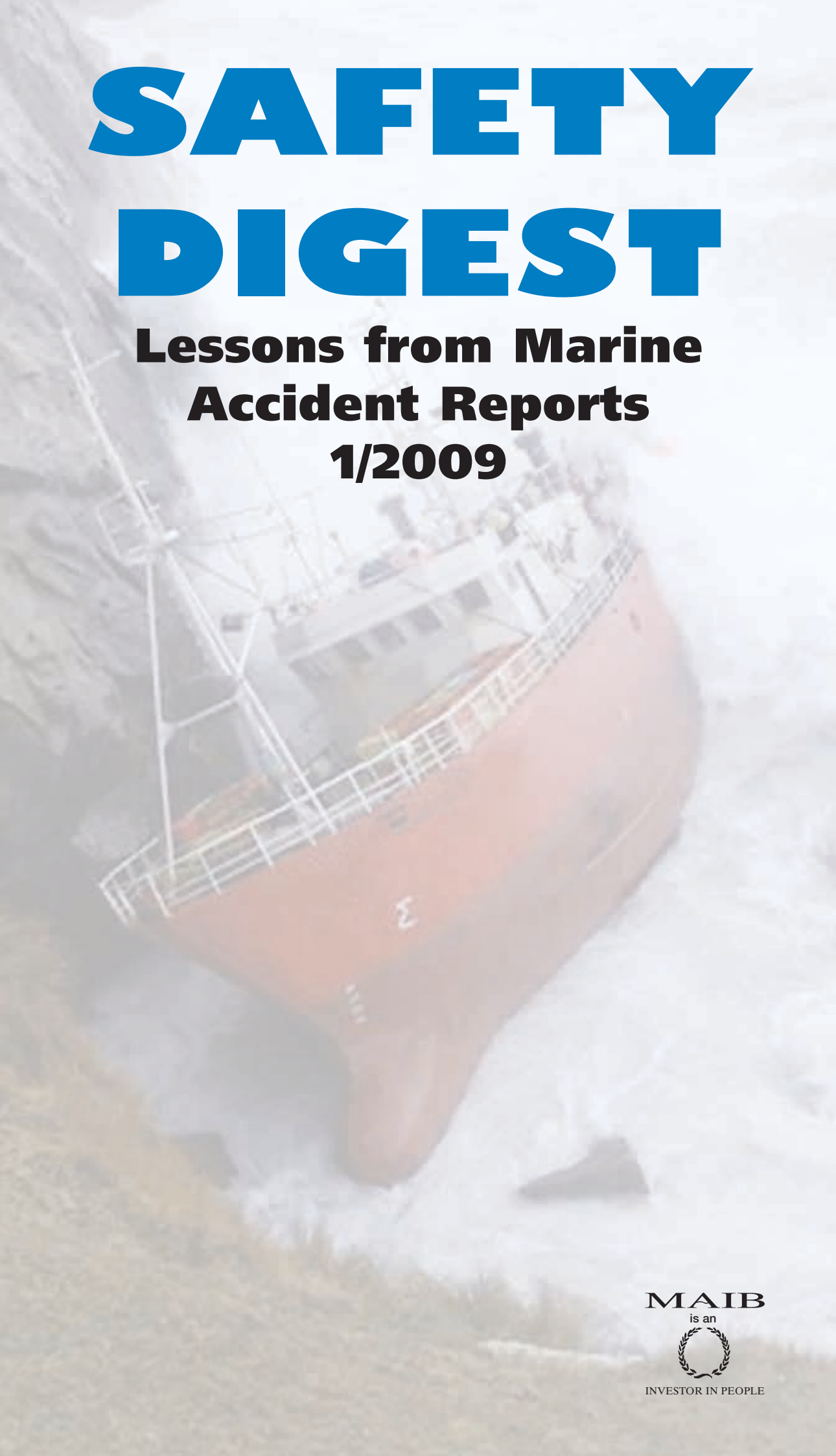


**MAIB**

MARINE ACCIDENT  
INVESTIGATION BRANCH

# **SAFETY DIGEST**

**Lessons from Marine  
Accident Reports  
1/2009**



# SAFETY DIGEST

Lessons from Marine Accident Reports

No 1/2009

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April 2009

# MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) is an independent part of the Department for Transport, the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents being responsible directly to the Secretary of State for Transport. The offices of the Branch are located at Carlton House, Carlton Place, Southampton, SO15 2DZ.

This Safety Digest draws the attention of the marine community to some of the lessons arising from investigations into recent accidents and incidents. It contains facts which have been determined up to the time of issue.

This information is published to inform the shipping and fishing industries, the pleasure craft community and the public of the general circumstances of marine accidents and to draw out the lessons to be learned. The sole purpose of the *Safety Digest* is to prevent similar accidents happening again. The content must necessarily be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available. The articles do not assign fault or blame nor do they determine liability. The lessons often extend beyond the events of the incidents themselves to ensure the maximum value can be achieved.

Extracts can be published without specific permission providing the source is duly acknowledged.

The Editor, Jan Hawes, welcomes any comments or suggestions regarding this issue.

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The role of the MAIB is to contribute to safety at sea by determining the causes and circumstances of marine accidents, and working with others to reduce the likelihood of such causes and circumstances recurring in the future.

**Extract from  
The Merchant Shipping  
(Accident Reporting and Investigation)  
Regulations 2005 – Regulation 5:**

*“The sole objective of the investigation of an accident under the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2005 shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”*

# INDEX

<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>6</b>
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<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
---------------------	----------

## **PART 1 – MERCHANT VESSELS** **8**

1. Iron in the Fire	10
2. Chute for Safety	12
3. A Close Quarters Situation	14
4. Not Too Much Astern	16
5. Poor Planning = Poor Performance	18
6. CO Poisoning – It’s a Gas!	20
7. Non-Routine Manoeuvre Leads to Contact	22
8. Dangerous Cargo – it Did What it Said on the Tin	25
9. Stopped in Time – Just	29
10. New Beginning, Old Problem	31
11. Early Preparation Can Save a Lot of Trouble Later On	34
12. Oh Dear – It’s Happened Again	37
13. Close to the Edge	40

## **PART 2 – FISHING VESSELS** **44**

14. Watch Where You’re Going	46
15. Lucky to Survive	48
16. Foundering – Always Check Why Bilge Alarms Sound	50
17. The Blind Leading the Blind	53
18. No Safety Training, Faulty Fire Detectors and Emergency Equipment – A Sorry Tale of Woe	56

## **PART 3 – SMALL CRAFT** **62**

19. A Not So Lucky Escape	64
20. Hold On Tight, If You Can	66
21. Can’t See Him? Then Alter Course	70
22. “It Can Happen to the Best of Us”	72
23. Excess of Alcohol Contributes to Four Accidents	74
24. The Importance of Electrical Isolations	76
25. Two Wrongs Don’t Make a Right of Way	79

Appendix A – Preliminary examinations and investigations started in the period 01/11/08 to 28/02/09	81
Appendix B – Reports issued in 2008	82
Appendix C – Reports issued in 2009	84

## Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

AB	– Able seaman
AIS	– Automatic Identification System
ARPA	– Automatic Radar Plotting Aid
C	– Celsius
Cable	– 0.1 nautical mile
EmS	– Emergency Schedule
EPIRB	– Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
GPS	– Global Positioning System
GRP	– Glass Reinforced Plastic
HP	– Horsepower
HSE	– Health and Safety Executive
ICS	– International Chamber of Shipping
IMDG	– International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code
IMO	– International Maritime Organization
ISM	– International Safety Management Code
kg	– kilogram
m	– metre
mm	– millimetre
“Mayday”	– The international distress signal (spoken)
MCA	– Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MES	– Marine Evacuation System
MGN	– Marine Guidance Note
MSN	– Merchant Shipping Notice
OOW	– Officer of the Watch
“Pan Pan”	– The International Urgency Signal (spoken)
PEC	– Pilotage Exemption Certificate
PLC	– Programmable Logic Controller
RIB	– Rigid Inflatable Boat
RNLI	– Royal National Lifeboat Institution
Ro-Ro	– Roll on, Roll off
rpm	– Revolutions per minute
RYA	– Royal Yachting Association
SMS	– Safety Management System
SOPEP	– Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Program
TSS	– Traffic Separation Scheme
VHF	– Very High Frequency

# Introduction

I was disappointed recently to learn that some of our readers still misunderstand what our Safety Digest tries to achieve, and how it fits in with the rest of our work. An experienced seafarer, who professed to be an avid reader of the Safety Digest, complained to me that the lessons identified were normally “pointing the finger” at the mariner rather than looking at the broader aspects of the incident.

When the MAIB investigates an accident or incident, our primary “output” is recommendations to try to prevent such accidents recurring. We work hard with the industry to try to identify the most appropriate recommendations, and we make them to the appropriate body. It is very rare that such recommendations are made to individual seafarers; nearly all are focused at systems, companies, trade bodies and regulators. Nevertheless, there are always lessons for the seafarer to learn, and indeed we believe that just reading about accidents – and so thinking about accidents – helps to make us all more safety conscious. Thus, the Safety Digest is primarily aimed at getting the lessons from accidents and incidents out to the seafarer, and we have other ways of promulgating the important safety messages to the rest of the industry. I hope this helps clarify the focus of the lessons that appear in these pages.

One small change we have introduced in this edition, is to re-categorize one of the three sections of the Safety Digest. The replacement of the “Leisure Craft” section by “Small Craft” allows all appropriate incidents and accidents to be brigaded together without the pedants pointing out that, if commercially operated, they cannot be classed as leisure! However, I would still urge readers to look at every case – the more we understand about the problems that other seafarers face, the more we can operate safely together in our common environment.



Stephen Meyer  
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents  
April 2009