

MARINE ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION BRANCH

MAIB

SAFETY DIGEST

**Lessons from Marine
Accident Reports
1/2008**

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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.

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

If you do not currently subscribe to the Safety Digest, but would like to be added to the distribution list for hard copies, and/or email alerts about it or other MAIB publications, please get in touch with us:

- By email at maibpublications@dft.gsi.gov.uk;
- By telephone on 023 8039 5500; or
- By post at: Publications, MAIB, Carlton House, Carlton Place, Southampton SO15 2DZ.

**If you wish to report an accident or incident
please call our 24 hour reporting line
023 8023 2527**

The telephone number for general use is 023 8039 5500.

The Branch fax number is 023 8023 2459.

The e-mail address is maib@dft.gov.uk

**Summaries (pre 1997), and Safety Digests are available on the Internet:
www.maib.gov.uk**



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.”

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

AB	-	Able seaman
ARPA	-	Automatic Radar Plotting Aid
Cable	-	0.1 nautical mile
CATZOC	-	Category of Zone of Confidence
CNIS	-	Channel Navigation Information Service
CO ₂	-	Carbon Dioxide
CPA	-	Closest Point of Approach
DSC	-	Digital Selective Calling
EBL	-	Electronic Bearing Line
ECDIS	-	Electronic Chart Display and Information System
ECS	-	Electronic Chart Systems
GPS	-	Global Positioning System
GRP	-	Glass Reinforced Plastic
GT	-	Gross tonnes
HGV	-	Heavy goods vehicle
HRU	-	Hydrostatic Release Unit
kW	-	kilowatt
LPG	-	Liquid Petroleum Gas
m	-	metre
“Mayday”	-	The international distress signal (spoken)
MGN	-	Marine Guidance Note
MOB	-	Man Overboard
Nm	-	nautical miles
OOW	-	Officer of the Watch
PPE	-	Personal Protective Equipment
RNLI	-	Royal National Lifeboat Institution
Ro-Ro	-	Roll on, roll off
RYA	-	Royal Yachting Association
SOLAS	-	International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea
STCW	-	International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
TSS	-	Traffic Separation Scheme
UHF	-	Ultra High Frequency
UTC	-	Universal Time Co-ordinated
VHF	-	Very High Frequency
VLCC	-	Very Large Crude Carrier

Introduction

In the last few months of each year, the MAIB puts considerable effort into compiling its statistics for marine accidents/ incidents in the previous year. These will be published in detail in the MAIB's Annual Report, due out in June. However, with the normal caveat that these numbers are still provisional, there are some sobering figures that should remind all of us of the need for vigilance at sea:

1. We are aware of 12 fatalities in merchant vessels over 100gt, the highest number since 1992. While 6 seafarers died in just 2 accidents (*Viking Islay* and *Flying Phantom*) the others died in 6 separate accidents.
2. We have recorded 55 deaths in the "leisure sector". While this dataset has a very broad definition, covering everything from canoes and canal barges to ocean-capable yachts and commercially operated leisure craft, it is still a tragically high number of deaths.
3. Although fishing has had a relatively average year (10 deaths, after 2006's high of 16), there is no room for complacency here either. In November the MCA published Dr Stephen Roberts's study updating "mortality for workers in the UK merchant shipping and fishing sectors", which shows that over the 10 years 1996-2005, fishing remained, by many orders of magnitude, the most dangerous industry in the UK.

Finally, I would like to thank the large number of readers who have responded to our recent readership survey. Details of the survey, and our responses are on our Noticeboard at page 68.



Stephen Meyer
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents
April 2008