

MAIB

MARINE ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION BRANCH

SAFETY DIGEST

**Lessons from Marine
Accident Reports
3/2006**

Department for
Transport

MAIB
is an

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

SAFETY DIGEST

Lessons from Marine Accident Reports

No 3/2006

MAIB
is an



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Department for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR
Telephone 020 7944 8300
Web site: www.dft.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2006

This publication, excluding any logos, may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium for research, private study or for internal circulation within an organisation. This is subject to it being reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the publication specified.

Further copies of this report are available from:
Marine Accident Investigation Branch
First Floor,
Carlton House
Southampton
SO15 2DZ

Printed in Great Britain. Text printed on material containing 100% post-consumer waste.
Cover printed on material containing 75% post-consumer waste and 25% ECF pulp.
December 2006

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.

The Safety Digest and other MAIB publications can be obtained by applying to the MAIB.

**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.”

INDEX

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	6
--	----------

INTRODUCTION	7
---------------------	----------

PART 1 – MERCHANT VESSELS **8**

1. Bulk Carrier Grounds in Fog	10
2. Fast Rescue Craft Launching – Faster Than Planned	12
3. Sleeping With One Eye Open?	15
4. Hot Stuff	18
5. “Flying” Cylinder Causes Blackout	21
6. Proper Planning Will Prevent a Pretty Poor Performance	23
7. Messenger Line Message?	26
8. Whoops!	29
9. Bridge Organisation – Use Your Experts	30
10. Needless Death	33
11. Fire in a Cargo of Coal	36
12. Closer Than You Thought	38
13. Previous Maintenance History is so Important	40
14. Hot Oil And Water Will Not Mix	42
15. Another Low Pressure Fuel Line Fire	43
16. High But Not Dry!	45

PART 2 – FISHING VESSELS **48**

17. Delay Structural Repairs at Your Peril	50
18. Mobile Phone Causes Grounding	53
19. Loss of “Rulebeater” With Poor Freeboard	56
20. Aggregate Bags Sink Mussel Dredger	58
21. Are Lifejackets Really Too Much Trouble?	60

PART 3 – LEISURE CRAFT**64**

- | | |
|---|----|
| 22. Secure Anchorage Proves to be Anything But | 66 |
| 23. Divers at Work in Port – Ensure Everyone is Fully Aware Before Signing the Permit | 68 |
| 24. Kill Cords Save Lives, When Used Properly | 71 |

APPENDICES**75**

- | | |
|--|----|
| Appendix A – Preliminary examinations and investigations started in the period 01/07/06 – 31/10/06 | 75 |
| Appendix B – Reports issued in 2006 | 76 |

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

AB	– Able Seaman
AIS	– Automatic Identification System
ARPA	– Automatic Radar Plotting Aid
CO ₂	– Carbon Dioxide
FRC	– Fast Rescue Craft
GPS	– Global Positioning System
GRT	– Gross Registered Tonnes
HP	– Horsepower
IMO	– International Maritime Organization
ISM	– International Safety Management Code
kg	– kilogram
kW	– kilowatt
“Mayday”	– The international distress signal (spoken)
mm	– millimetre
OOW	– Officer of the Watch
“Pan Pan”	– The international urgency signal (spoken)
PEC	– Pilotage Exemption Certificate
PMS	– Power Management System
RIB	– Rigid Inflatable Boat
SOP	– Standard Operating Procedure
STCW	– Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers
UTC	– Universal Co-ordinated Time
VHF	– Very High Frequency

Introduction

In the introduction to the MAIB Annual Report 2005, I wrote that one of our greatest concerns for safety at sea is complacency. This caused something of a stir, with a small number of people feeling that this was an affront to the professionalism of mariners, but with a much larger body of opinion agreeing that it was a serious issue that had yet to be addressed.

One of the first hurdles to overcome – before we can begin to address the issue – is the word itself. Complacency is seen to have derogatory connotations, to imply smugness or self satisfaction. That is not what is intended when used in terms of accident investigation. We are looking at the normal human response to a familiar situation. When we do something for the first time, we are intent on what we are doing and are painfully aware of the hazards or dangers; by the time we have done it a thousand times with no problems, we have lost that stimulation, we have become so familiar with the operation that we have largely forgotten the possible consequences of something going wrong, and our guard is lowered. So complacency, in this context, is not a criticism, but is an aspect of human nature – one that I believe every experienced mariner will recognize.

I would like to see this issue on everyone's agenda, because it is the business of everyone: masters and officers; owners and managers; professional bodies, unions, fishermen, leisure sailors. It is now starting to be considered, and I hope that useful actions will be taken as a result of this work. In the meantime, what can we, as ordinary seafarers do? A starting point would be for all of us – in merchant ships, fishing vessels or leisure craft – to remember the dangers in what we are doing. Please read the cases highlighted in this edition of the Safety Digest – could something similar happen to you?



Stephen Meyer
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents
December 2006