

SAFETY DIGEST

Lessons from Marine Accident Reports

No 2/2007

MAIB
is an



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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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.

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.”

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

3/O	– Third Officer
2/O	– Second Officer
AB	– Able Seaman
ARPA	– Automatic Radar Plotting Aid
CO ₂	– Carbon Dioxide
ECS	– Electronic Charting System
EPIRB	– Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon
FRC	– Fast Rescue Craft
HMPE	– High Modulus Polyethylene
HSC	– High Speed Craft
HSE	– Health and Safety Executive
ISM	– International Safety Management Code
kN	– kilo Newton
MCA	– Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MGN	– Marine Guidance Notice
MNTB	– Merchant Navy Training Board
OOW	– Officer of the Watch
PPE	– Personal Protective Equipment
SOLAS	– International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
TSS	– Traffic Separation Scheme
VDR	– Voyage Data Recorder
VHF	– Very High Frequency
VTS	– Vessel Traffic Services

Introduction

In our Safety Digests, we always group our cases into 3 generic sections: Merchant Vessels; Fishing Vessels; and Leisure Craft. However, I would urge you all, as seafarers, to look at each of the sections, as there are lessons for every one of us in all sections. In this edition: Case 20 involves a fishing vessel and a merchant ship; Case 22 could apply to any seafarer; Case 25 involves a motor yacht and a high speed craft; and the “noticeboard” on pages 64 & 65 contains a flyer that was produced for the leisure industry, but that should be read by all. More information on this accident, and lessons for merchant vessels, can be found in the full report on our website www.maib.gov.uk.

One of the recurring themes of many of the most serious accidents is seeing and being seen:

The case for keeping a good lookout is overwhelming. Regardless of who you are, it is essential that you keep a keen visual lookout and, where fitted, a good radar watch. With closing speeds now of 20 or 30 knots, and with an ever wider utilisation of the sea, OOWs, skippers and helmsmen cannot afford to lower their guard. Make sure your radar is well adjusted, and that your visual lookout regime is right, particularly in darkness, poor visibility etc.

But there is an equal responsibility to be seen, particularly in smaller vessels. Radar is not the universal panacea that some believe; small contacts (including quite large yachts and fishing vessels) will not necessarily be seen, particularly in choppy seas. Some lights, e.g. yacht sidelights, have a visibility range requirement of only 1 mile; these visibility ranges can be further reduced by crazing of the lenses or by the vessel heeling. In many cases they will not be seen in a large ship before it is too late. It makes sense to invest in a good radar reflector, and to have a powerful light to hand to draw attention to yourself in good time.

Please use the enclosed tales of others' misfortunes, to ensure that you stay safe.



Stephen Meyer
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents
August 2007