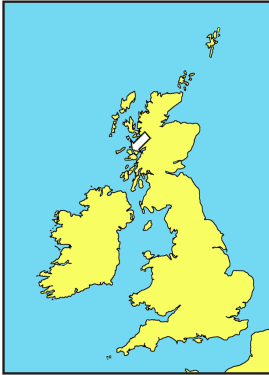


SYNOPSIS



On 18 May 2009 at 2330, the 6.3m RIB *Sooty* grounded on the rocky shores of Calve Island off Tobermory, Isle of Mull, at a speed of about 20 knots. On impact, one of the boat's four occupants was thrown out of the boat onto the rocks and suffered severe head injuries from which he died shortly afterwards.

The accident occurred on the last day of a 5 day diving and fishing excursion after the crew had spent the evening in a public house in Tobermory. It was a very dark night and the grounding occurred 1 to 2 minutes after the RIB's speed had been increased on clearing the harbour.

The investigation identified several factors contributing to this fatal accident, including:

- The lack of an effective lookout;
- The RIB's speed;
- The ineffective use of the GPS mapper to plan and monitor the passage; and importantly,
- The coxswain was navigating while under the influence of alcohol.

This is yet another tragic leisure craft accident in which a life has been lost due to the consumption of alcohol. A breath specimen voluntarily provided by the coxswain, and toxicology analysis of the deceased, indicated both to be more than three times over the road drink drive limit.

A recommendation has been made to the vessel's owners, which is intended to promote their safe use of leisure craft in the future. In view of the MAIB's previous recommendation regarding the introduction of national regulations establishing limits on the amount of alcohol which may be consumed by operators of leisure vessels, and the work currently being undertaken by the DfT in respect of the proposed implementation of section 80 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003, no further recommendations are considered necessary.