

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 154 OF 2002**

(Navigational and Seamanship Safety Practices)

### **Notice to Owners, Operators and Persons -in-charge of Small Craft – Danger of Synchronized Rolling and Failure to Carry Life Saving Appliances on Board**

#### **The Accident**

A fatal accident happened on 5 April 2002 in that a person was drowned and another went missing after their sampan capsized and sank. In the incident the sampan, which was unlicensed, capsized after being hit by side waves having a wave period that synchronized with the vessel's rolling period. All three persons onboard fell into the water. Initially they managed to hold on to the capsized sampan but after the vessel sank, they were left with no life saving appliances to use as floating aids as none were carried on board the sampan. Only one survivor managed to swim to a nearby oyster farm and was rescued.

#### **Advice**

2. Synchronized rolling movement of sampans may be induced by successive beam waves and can lead to capsize. It may be avoided by adjusting the heading and/or speed of the sampan to alter the resultant wave encountering period.
3. Lack of life saving appliance on board the sampan had directly contributed to the loss of two lives in this incident.
4. Owners, operators and persons-in-charge of small craft are reminded that operating a local vessel in Hong Kong waters without a valid licence is a violation of law. They are also requested to take note of the above-mentioned accident, the danger of synchronized rolling to the vessel and the requirement to carry sufficient life saving appliances at all time while operating their craft.

**S.Y. TSUI**  
**Director of Marine**

Marine Department,  
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