

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 35 OF 2003

Statutory Requirements and Related Information

Donning of Lifejackets

On 19 September 2002 a locally licensed fishing vessel sank in a position about one nautical mile south east of Shek O. The incident was caused by accumulation of seawater on deck leading to negative stability in rough sea conditions. The vessel capsized suddenly and all the persons onboard fell overboard. All the persons were rescued but one of them was subsequently certified dead. Cause of the death was established to be drowning.

2. Investigation of the incident revealed that none of the persons on board were wearing a lifejacket at the material time. Had the deceased donned a lifejacket before the vessel capsized, he is likely to have survived the incident.

Lessons Learnt

3. Owners, masters and persons in charge of locally licensed vessels are recommended to ensure that:

1. lifejackets are properly maintained and stowed in dry, well-ventilated and easily accessible places clearly marked and made known to all persons on board;
2. instructions on how to don a lifejacket are posted in conspicuous places onboard the vessel;
3. all persons on board understand how to don the lifejackets available on board; and
4. all persons onboard wear lifejackets if and when the weather and/or the ship's condition deteriorates such that emergency escape may be necessary.

4. This notice supersedes the Marine Department Notice No. 27 of 1996 issued on 12 March 1996.

S.Y. TSUI
Director of Marine

Marine Department
Government of the HKSAR
Date: 20 March 2003
Action File Ref.: SD/CRT 117/1