

Marine Department Notice No. 175 of 2006

(Statutory Requirements and Related Information)

Safe Lookout on Local Oil Barge

At about 0820 on 22 February 2006, in good visibility and weather, a local oil barge in ballast condition collided with a wooden fishing vessel outside Shaukeiwan Typhoon Shelter. The Master of the oil barge claimed to be unaware of the presence of the fishing vessel before the collision. After the collision the fishing vessel capsized and sank immediately. Two persons on board fell into the water. One of them was rescued but the other person was hit and killed by the propeller of the oil barge.

2. During the investigation of this incident, the oil barge was found to have navigated on the wrong side of the fairway contravening the fairway rules. End on situations develop much more rapidly than overtaking and failure to follow fairway rules inevitably causes dangerous situations to other through traffic following the fairway.

3. In the wheelhouse of the oil barge, it was found that two pieces of flat securing bar had been installed transversely across the forward facing windows to prevent any unauthorized break in. However, the securing bars together with the heavy stern trim of the barge whilst in lightweight condition created a blind sector to the lookout for small vessels nearing the bow of the oil barge.

4. In order to maintain a proper lookout at all times, masters of local oil barges in ballast condition should:

- arrange dedicated person(s) to assist the master in keeping a proper lookout, one person should not be engaged in steering and lookout at the same time;
- remove any securing bars in the wheelhouse that might affect the proper lookout;
- use radar during navigation to assist in detection of small vessels at close distance; and
- observe the fairway rules at all times.

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