

Marine Department Notice No. 190 of 2007

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

Sinking of a non-propelled dredger

The Accident

In a recent accident, a towed non-propelled crane dredger was sunk in heavy weather in position 22-13N 114-20E at about 2 nautical miles southwest of Ninepin Group Islands. Seven of the crewmembers were rescued by other vessels while one crewmember was drowned.

The investigation revealed the following contributory factors:

- The dredger had a low freeboard and was towed by a tug beyond its permitted operating areas;
- The Master and Engineer of the tug were insufficiently qualified for the intended voyage; and
- Openings on deck had not been properly closed.

Lessons Learnt

2.1 Vessels with low freeboard are susceptible to flooding, especially in adverse weather condition. They should not operate beyond their permitted operating areas;

2.2 Master and Engineer operating a vessel must hold appropriate certificates; and

2.3 To ensure water integrity, all deck openings must be secured properly while vessel is underway.

3. Owners, operators, masters and persons-in-charge of vessels, dredgers and lighters, are required to observe the above-mentioned lessons learnt in order to prevent recurrence of a similar accident.

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