

Collision between “Universal MK 2006” and the Towline between the PRC tug “Zhu Wai 102” and PRC Barge “Zhu Wai 201”

1. The Incident

- 1.1 At about 0055 on 21 September 2000, the Hong Kong registered passenger catamaran Universal MK 2006, whilst plying from Macau to Hong Kong, collided with the towlines between the PRC tug Zhu Wai 102 and PRC barge Anu Wai 203 in an approximate position 22° 11'N 113° 46'E, about 1 mile off Niutou Dao. The Collision resulted in the sinking of the tug Zhu Wai 102 and loss of 4 lives on that vessel. Universal MK 2006 sustained minor damage to the forward T-shape foils.

2. Lessons

- 2.1 The collision appears to be the result of an error of judgment by the Master and the Chief Officer of Universal MK 2006 in identifying Ahu Wai 102 and Zhu Wai 203 as two separate vessels instead of a tug towing a barge and failure of the Master of Zhu Wai 102 to make an appropriate light or sound signal to attract the attention of Universal MK2006 when the close quarter situation was developing.
- 2.2 The attempted passing by the Master of Universal MK 2006 between 2 crossing ships with a clearance of about 50 to 100 metres from each of them, was imprudent.
- 2.3 Failure of the Master of the catamaran Universal MK 2006 to stop and investigate when the lookout man reported to him that there were some floating objects which appeared like lifebuoys at the vicinity of the barge Zhu Wai 203 was irresponsible.