

Inadvertent Release of a Lifeboat from “OGRADY” after Collision with Loss of Two Lives

A. The Incident

1. At about 2040 hours on 21 February 2003, a Hong Kong registered ship “Ogrady” collided with a Cambodian registered ship “Lora” in the Inland Sea of Japan. “Ogrady” sustained severe damage at the port side shell plating (fig. 1) while “Lora” crushed its stem. “Ogrady” developed a starboard list as a result of water ingress to its cargo hold. The master of “Ogrady” ordered to standby the ship’s lifeboats for emergency use. During the lowering of the port side lifeboat, the forward and aft lifting hooks suddenly released from its secured position and the lifeboat dropped 15 metres into the sea. Two crewmembers were later found dead inside the lifeboat (fig. 2).

B. Findings

1. “Ogrady” was navigating in the opposite traffic lane at Bisan Seto traffic separation zone before collision as a result of incorrectly plotting of ship’s positions. The master was not aware that the vessel was in the wrong lane and hence did not take action to bring the ship back to the correct lane. “Ogrady” also failed to take early action to avoid collision with “Lora”. On the other hand “Lora” was required to keep out of the way of “Ogrady” in a close quarter situation inside the Traffic Separation Scheme failed to take proper action.
2. The primary cause of this lifeboat incident is believed to be the inadvertent release of the on load release mechanism by person inside the lifeboat. A general lack of appreciation and understanding of the lifeboat launching equipment by the crew and inadequate safety familiarization training were apparent. Other contributing factors are the lack of clear operating instruction and conspicuous warning notice for the lifeboat on-load release mechanism which could enable the crew on board to understand the effect of the operating procedures and their associated danger.

C. The Lessons

1. The Master should have used the passage plan in preparing the voyage. Monitoring of ship’s position should not solely rely on the radar fixed positions. Fixes shall be taken at frequent intervals and

shall be carried out by more than one method whenever circumstances allow.

2. Adequate familiarization training and detailed operating procedures for the lifeboat on load release mechanism should be provided to the crew. The adequacy of the securing arrangement for the on load release lever should be reviewed and improved as necessary.



Fig. 1 Collision damage of “Ogrady”

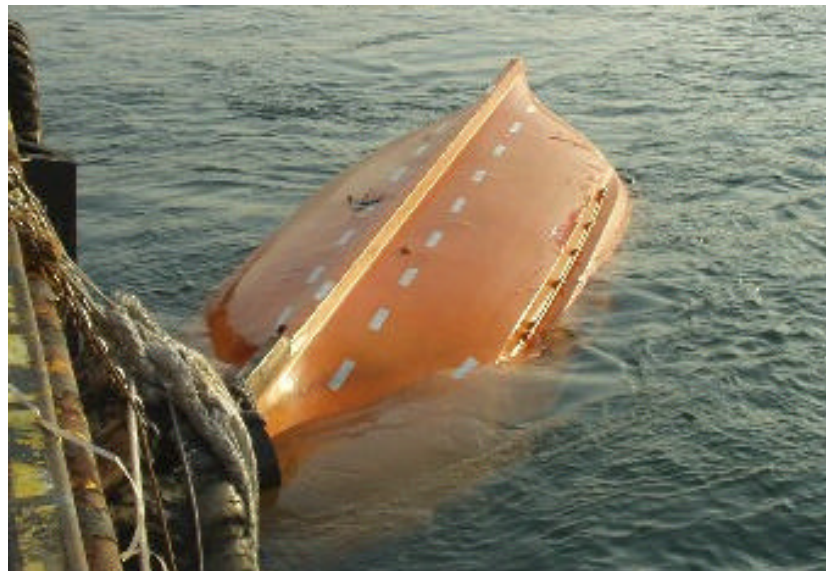


Fig. 2 The capsized lifeboat