

Collision between Passenger Ferry “First Ferry VI”(新輝陸) and Mainland Sand Carrier “圍機 292 ”

A. The Incident

1. At about 2224 on 26 July 2003, a fast passenger ferry “First Ferry VI” (新輝 6) with 310 passengers on board collided with a mainland sand barge “圍機 292” while overtaking in the traffic lane south east of Hei Ling Chau. “First Ferry VI” sustained minor structural damage at the starboard bow. “圍機 292” sustained minor paint scraping at the port side.
2. “First Ferry VI” did not stop after the collision and the accident was not reported immediately to the Marine Department. “First Ferry VI” continued to proceed to its destination in Cheung Chau at normal cruising speed of 22 knots and disembarked the passengers after arrival. It was later found that 22 passengers had suffered from minor injuries in this accident.

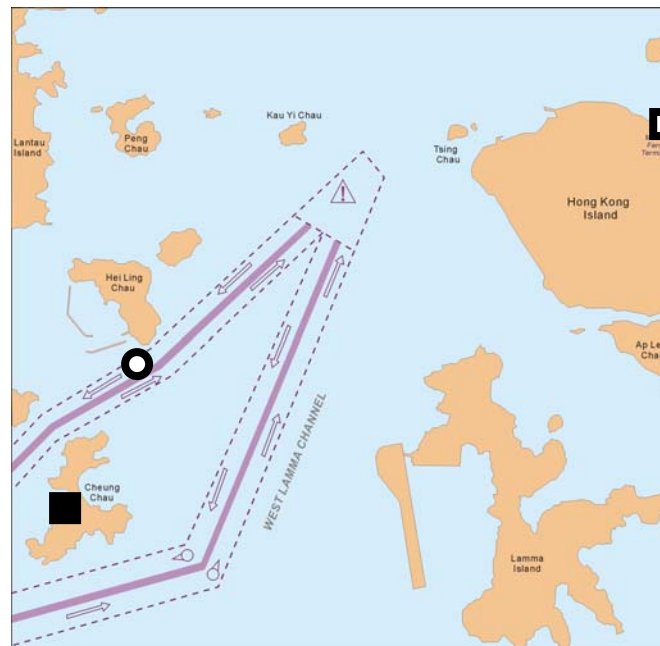
B. Findings

1. The cause of the incident was that the bridge team of “First Ferry VI” had failed to keep a proper lookout before the collision. The dozing off of the Master and the lack of concentration of the Assistant Master on lookout was evident that the bridge team of “First Ferry VI” had failed to discharge their duty in keeping a safe navigational watch.
2. The Master did not properly handle the accident follow up in accordance with the company procedures for emergency situation in this collision. Due to the short duration of time it is believed that the Assistant Master had not conducted a thorough damage inspection after the collision and it was a dangerous practice for the Master to steer the ferry at normal cruising speed of 22 knots proceeding to Cheung Chau after the collision.

C. The Lessons

1. The existing working schedule is recommended to review with an aim to address the possible fatigue issue in relation to the frequency of sailings and in between rest period particularly towards the end of nighttime operation when an officer is engaged in a continuous 24 hours operation. Monitoring of the performance during nighttime operation is recommended to ensure safe navigational duties are properly discharged.

- The existing drills under the fleet of the ferry company may need further monitoring and enhancement to improve its performance in order to cater for the scenario under a real emergency. Special attention should be drawn to the ferry crew of the importance of making announcement to notify the passengers of the situation after an incident and promulgate to the crewmembers of the message to check the condition of passengers.



□ Central Pier ■ Destination in Cheung Chau ● Approximate collision position

Fig. 1 Route of First Ferry VI



Fig. 2 : Photograph of First Ferry VI after collision