

A PRC Registered Coaster “盛世9號” Collided With A Hong Kong Licensed Wooden Fishing Vessel “M68747Y” South East of Ma Wan

A. The Incident

At about 1232 on 14 April 2004, a PRC registered coaster named “盛世9號” collided with a Hong Kong licensed wooden fishing vessel “M68747Y”. The collision took place in good visibility and good weather condition. The location of the collision was in the approximate position of 22° 19.8’N 114° 04.7’E, which was about 0.9 of a nautical mile (nm) south-east of Ma Wan Island. Both vessels collided at about 8 knots. According to radar surveillance record of Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) there was no reduction of speed for both vessels before collision. The wooden fishing vessel “M68747Y” was hit at the port bow and sank after collision. “盛世9號” sustained only minor paint scratches at the bow. All four persons on board the fishing vessel were rescued by another passing fishing vessel. There was no casualty and oil pollution in the incident.

B. Findings

1. Both masters appeared to have failed in maintaining a proper lookout to detect the risk of collision with the other vessel. “盛世9號” was a give way vessel but it did not take any action to avoid collision. It had also navigated at the wrong side of Kap Shui Mun fairway trying to take a short cut to cross Ma Wan fairway. The master of the fishing vessel considered himself a stand on vessel and diverted his attention to watch for other traffic.

2. In this incident poor awareness of both masters on their obligations under the Collision Regulations (Colregs) was apparent. It is also believed that the primary cause of this accident is due to the state of alertness and attentiveness of both masters being reduced under the favorable condition of good visibility. Both masters were expecting and relying on the other vessel to take avoidance action.

C. The Lessons

1. The Colregs requires every vessel should at all times maintain a proper lookout, irrespective whether it is a stand on or a give way vessel. It further states that a stand on vessel may take action to avoid collision by its manoeuvre alone, as soon as it becomes apparent that the give way vessel is not taking appropriate action. The Colregs further require that a stand on vessel should take such action as will best aid to avoid collision when it finds itself so close that collision cannot be avoided by the action of the give way vessel alone.

2. Masters of all vessels should be reminded that any action taken to avoid collision should be positive and made in ample time in accordance with the Colregs.

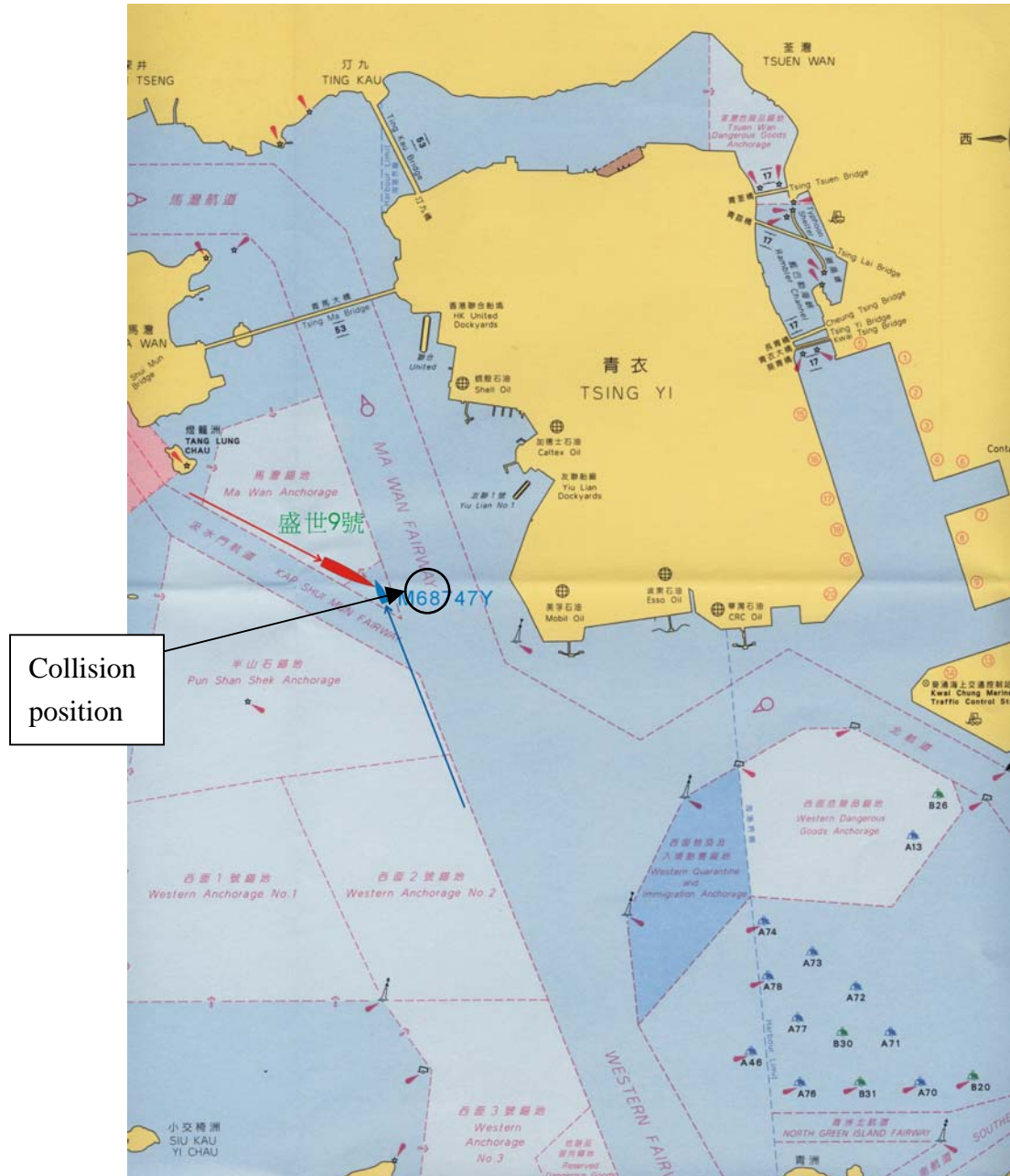


Figure 1 Location of collision