

The sinking of local cargo boat M20223A near Sor Sze Mun (鎖匙門) of Sai Kung on 19 Aug 2004 with loss of one live

## **1. The Incident**

- 1.1 On 19 August 2004 at about 2000 hours, while proceeding to Tap Mun the motor cargo boat M20223A was reported to have capsized and sunk in the vicinity at the south entrance to Sor Sze Mun in Sai Kung.
- 1.2 All the nine crew on board fell into the sea. Seven of them managed to swim to shore while another one was rescued by a passing sampan. The master (the deceased) was found missing. After being rescued, two crewmembers were reported to have suffered from injury and were sent to hospital. The deceased was later found in nearby waters in an unconscious condition. He was sent to hospital for emergency treatment and was certified dead after arrival at the hospital.

## **2. Findings**

- 2.1 The investigation establishes the sinking of the vessel was probably caused by overloading and the improper stowage of cargo on deck which caused the vessel to become unstable. As a result when the vessel altered course to starboard and encountered waves from the starboard side at the same time, it heeled over and capsized to port almost instantly.
- 2.2 The master's lack of awareness on the danger associated with overloading and improper stowage of cargo is considered to have contributed to the occurrence of this accident.

## **3. Lessons**

- 3.1 Overloading reduces the freeboard and reserve buoyancy of the Vessel, thus hampering its capability to withstand rough weather. In this incident it appeared that the deceased, as the master and owner, had neglected the safe loading conditions of the Vessel. He appeared not aware of the dangerous situation brought about by the overloading and improper stowage of cargo.
- 3.2 The Local Vessel Section (LVS) of Marine Department responsible for

surveying and approving design of cargo boats should consider incorporating the cargo loading and stowage criteria into the license books of such vessels for easy reference of ship/shore staff and enforcement personnel.



Vessel similar to M20223A