

# **Man overboard from the local fishing vessel "M60643T" at Wong Chuk Kok Tsui on 12 January 2005**

## **1. The Incident**

- 1.1 In the morning of 12 January 2005, locally licensed fishing vessel M60643T was proceeding from Wong Chuk Kok to Nan Ao in China for selling fish catches. A crewmember was found missing after the vessel had arrived Nan Ao. The case was reported to Hong Kong police and search operation was immediately initiated for the missing crew with negative result.
- 1.2 The body of the crewmember was found 15 days later on 27 January 2005 in waters near Wong Chuk Kok Tsui.

## **2. Findings**

- 2.1 The deceased was last seen by the Master at about 0445 on 12 January 2005 during the voyage to Nam Ao. He was walking aft to his cabin. No one on board knew how the deceased disappeared from the vessel. It is believed that the deceased might have fallen overboard as he intended to enter his cabin at the side of the fishing vessel.
- 2.2 The proper entrance on the main deck was not used for entry as it was covered by tarpaulin sheet and obstructed by other crew working in the area. There are some openings located at sides of the fishing vessel which could be used for entering the cabins. However entering from the side opening would require the crewmember to stand on the narrow gunwale. In maintaining balance one would use one hand holding the handrail while using the other hand to open the cover.
- 2.3 Crewmember standing on a narrow and possible wetted gunwale could easily lose his balance, slipped and fell overboard. They should be made aware of the possible danger and to avoid using the side door whilst the vessel is at sea.

## **3. Lessons**

- 3.1 The use of these side openings for entry to the cabin when the vessel is at sea is considered to be dangerous. Crewmembers are advised to use safe means of access to the accommodation at all times.