

# **Sinking of local licensed vessel "M20242A" on 19 February 2005 causing two fatalities**

## **1. The incident**

- 1.1 In the evening of 18 February 2005, local licensed wooden cargo vessel "M20242A" (the Vessel) was loaded with used TV sets and departed from Chai Wan Public Cargo Working Area. Two crewmembers were on board.
- 1.2 At about 0500 on 19 February 2005, the Vessel was taking in water and started to sink near Ping Chau (see fig. 2). The crewmembers called their friends in Hong Kong via mobile phone for assistance. At about 0530, a report was made to the Hong Kong Police via '999'.
- 1.3 At 0541, a marine police launch arrived at scene searching for the vessel. However only floating TV sets were seen at the vicinity, no trace of the Vessel could be found. At 0712, the police launch picked up the Master of the Vessel. He was immediately sent to hospital but was later certified dead.
- 1.4 The other crewmember was not found during the search. About 11 days later his body was recovered near the water of Crooked Island, at about 4 nautical miles west of Ping Chau.

## **2. Findings**

- 2.1 The exact cause of foundering of the Vessel could not be established as the vessel has been sunk and all crew on board were dead in the incident.
- 2.2 During the investigation, it was found that the Vessel had been aground one day before this voyage. After re-float, the owner took the Vessel to a shipyard in Shaukiwan for inspection on 18 February 2005. No damage was reported. The Vessel left the shipyard to carry cargo on the same day.
- 2.3 According to the weather report, the weather and visibility in Hong Kong were good on the day of incident.
- 2.4 It is not known if the previous grounding of the vessel had contributed to the sinking of the Vessel. As no other anomaly was found in the incident, this possibility could not be ruled out.

### 3 Lessons

- 3.1 Minor cracks and damages of the caulking to the hull of vessel could occur during grounding. Such defects may not be easily detected in a short period of time. If not properly repaired, these damages would worsen in future voyages and causes ingress of water to the Vessel.



Fig 1 "M20242A" before the incident

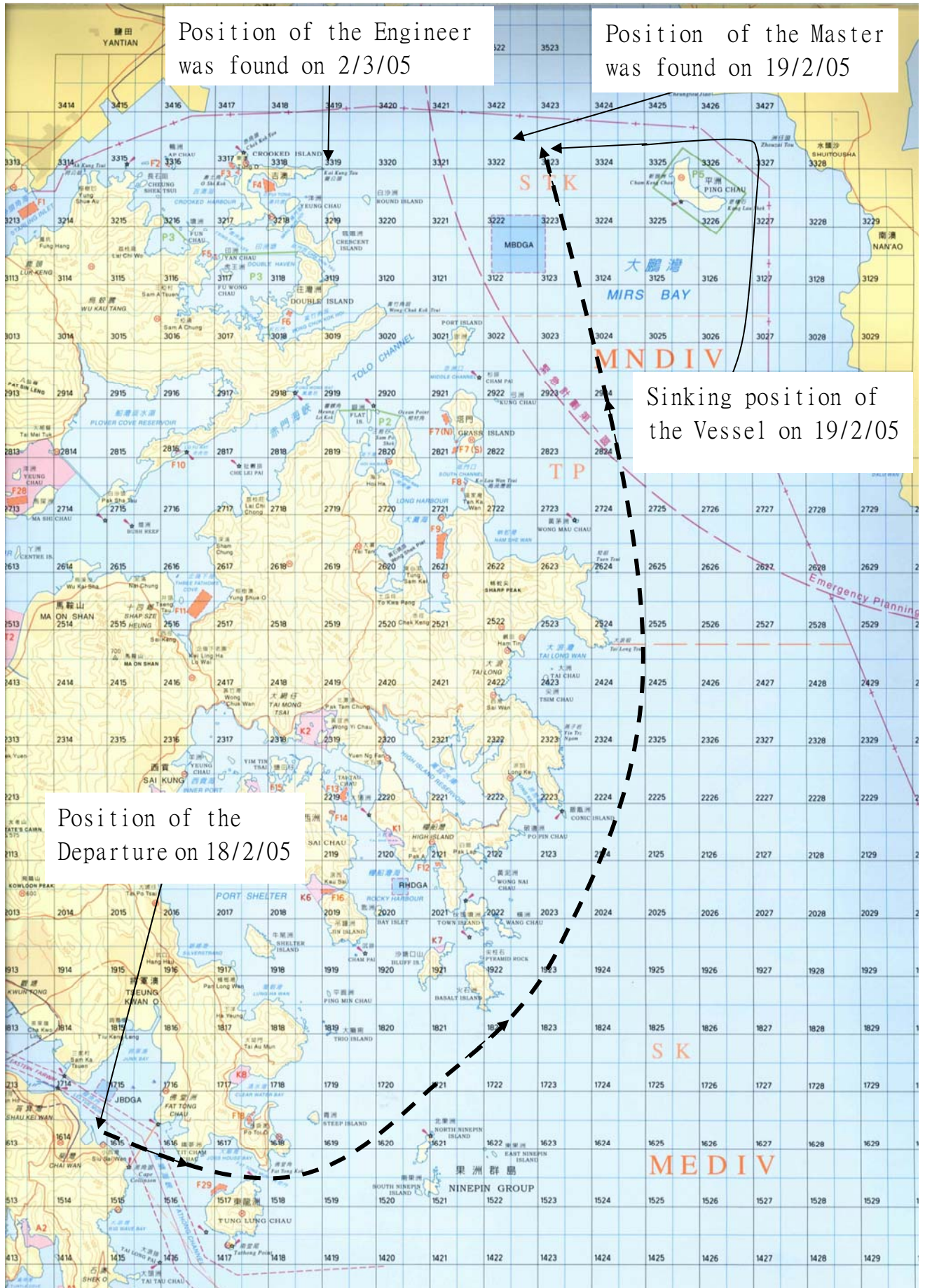


Fig. 2 The course of the vessel