

# **Manoverboard accident on board Local Dumb Steel Lighter "順發 18" on 30 June 2005 causing one fatality**

## **1. The incident**

- 1.1 At about 0035 on 30 June 2005, while being towed from Western Anchorage to North Lamma Anchorage, a worker fell overboard from the locally licensed Dumb Steel Lighter (DSL) 順發18 and went missing in the approximate position 22° 17.751'N 114° 05.326'E, north east of Kau Yi Chau.
- 1.2 At time of the incident, the weather condition was cloudy with southwesterly wind force 2. The visibility was about 10 km.
- 1.3 After sailing, the workers got ready wire ropes for mooring at the fore deck. The deceased stood on the gunwale at the port side of the stem tendering a wire rope (figure).
- 1.4 At about 0035, the Person in Charge of the DSL saw the deceased slipped and fell overboard. He immediately reported the incident to the company and the police.
- 1.5 At about 0218, the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) co-ordinated a search and rescue operation. After nearly 40 hours of search, the missing person could not be found. The search and rescue operation suspended at 1900 on 1 July 2005.
- 1.6 On 3 July 2005, the body of the worker was found off Sunshine Island.

## **2. Findings**

- 2.1 It was stated by other crewmembers that the deck was slightly wet and slippery. It is probable that the deceased lost his balance, slipped and fell overboard while standing on the gunwale.
- 2.2 The deceased had not worn a lifejacket at the time of the accident. As the freeboard height of the DSL was about 3.5 m, the deceased who was a non-swimmer, when fell from such height into the sea would probably sink quickly and be drown.

2.3 The probable cause of this fatal incident is that when the deceased was tendering the wire rope, he accidentally slipped and lost his balance. As a result he fell overboard and was drown.

### 3 Lessons

3.1 Workers on board DSL should take extra precaution against the risk of falling overboard while working on deck. They should also observe the Local Vessel Safety Practice i.e. wear a lifejacket when working or walking on the deck during rough seas, rain or whenever the deck is wet.



The stem of DSL 順發18