



Report of Investigation
into the Fatal Accident of a
Crewmember Onboard
HKR Jin Da
on 26 February 2006



The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Marine Department
Marine Accident Investigation Section

Purpose of Investigation

This incident is investigated, and published in accordance with the IMO Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents promulgated under IMO Assembly Resolution A.849(20). The purpose of this investigation conducted by the Marine Accident Investigation and Shipping Security Policy Branch (MAISSPB) of Marine Department is to determine the circumstances and the causes of the incident with the aim of improving the safety of life at sea and avoiding similar incidents in future.

The conclusions drawn in this report aim to identify the different factors contributing to the incident. They are not intended to apportion blame or liability towards any particular organization or individual except so far as necessary to achieve the said purpose.

The MAISSPB has no involvement in any prosecution or disciplinary action that may be taken by the Marine Department or others resulting from this accident.

Table of Contents

Page

1	Summary	2
2	Description of the Vessel	3
3	Sources of Information	4
4	Outline of Events	5
5	Analysis of Evidences	6
6	Conclusions	8
7	Recommendations	8
8	Submissions	8

1. **Summary**

1.1 At about 1348 on 26 February 2006, while the Hong Kong registered ship *Jin Da* was departing from a berth in Qingdao in China, the Chief Officer who was in charge of the unmooring operations on the forecastle deck was hit by the parted forward spring rope. He was sent to the hospital and later certified dead there.

1.2 The cause of the accident was due to the failure of the Chief Officer to keep himself away from the snap-back zone when heaving the forward back spring rope with the winch. When the vessel was moving astern, the forward back spring rope was unexpectedly jammed by the fender ashore. The forward back spring rope was caused to part under excessive tension and hit the Chief Officer.

2. Description of the Vessel

2.1 *Jin Da*

Port of Registry	:	Hong Kong
IMO No.	:	9085704
Call Sign	:	VRAM7
Type	:	Container Ship
Length Overall	:	107.0 metres
Breadth	:	17.20 metres
Gross Tonnage:	:	3,994
Classification Society	:	China Classification Society
Year of Built	:	1994
Propulsion Power	:	Diesel, SSHI-MAN B&W 7L35MC 3,912 kW



Figure 1 – Photograph of *Jin Da*

3. Sources of Evidence

- 3.1 The Master and Crews of the Vessel;
- 3.2 The ship management company of the Vessel;
- 3.3 Accident report submitted by the Master of the Vessel;
- 3.4 The ship's file in the Hong Kong Register.

4. Outline of Events

- 4.1 Upon completion of cargo work, the Vessel was ready to depart from Berth No. 71 of Huangdao in Qingdao, China at 1336 on 26 February 2006. At 1340, the Master on the Pilot's advice ordered the Chief Officer to single up forward i.e. to let go all mooring ropes leaving one head rope and one forward back spring rope and the Second Mate to single up aft i.e. to let go all mooring ropes leaving one stern rope and one aft back spring rope.
- 4.2 At 1341, both the Chief Officer and Second Officer reported to the Master that it had singled up forward and aft. Immediately, the Master ordered the Second Officer to let go all the remaining ropes i.e. the stern rope and aft back spring rope. At 1342, the Master ordered the Chief Officer to let go the head rope and maintained the forward back spring rope. At 1343, the Second Mate reported to the Master that all the ropes aft had been let go and the stern was clear while the Chief Officer informed the Master that the head rope had been let go.
- 4.3 At 1344, the Pilot ordered the engine to go slow astern and the Chief Officer was ordered to let go forward back spring rope. At 1345, the Chief Officer reported to the Master that the forward back spring rope had been let go. When the Vessel was in the course of moving astern from the berth, the Master heard a noise at the forecastle deck and he asked the Chief Officer what had happened. The Carpenter reported to the Master that the Chief Officer had been hit by a parting rope and fell on the deck.
- 4.4 The Master instructed the Second Officer to go to the forecastle deck to offer assistance and requested the Pilot to arrange for a tug boat to send the Chief Officer for medical treatment. At 1400, the Chief Officer was transferred from the Vessel to a tug boat and was sent to the hospital ashore. The Chief Officer was certified dead by a doctor later in the hospital.

5. Analysis of Evidences

Experience of the Chief Officer

- 5.1 The Chief Officer had a total sea service of about 12 years. He had been a Chief Officer for about 3 years and worked on board the Vessel for about 3 months.

Physical Condition of the Chief Officer

- 5.2 The Chief Officer had a medical examination prior to joining the Vessel on 11 November 2005. There was no evidence that he had suffered from bad health. The other crew members were not aware that the Chief Officer had taken any medicine or alcohol before he commenced duty on the forecastle deck.

5.3 Weather Conditions

The weather was cloudy with a force-4 northeasterly wind. There was a slight sea and a good visibility.

Unmooring Operations – Safety Precautions

- 5.4.1 The ISM Manual of the company had laid down the safety procedures for mooring/unmooring operations. Crew members are also advised to follow the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen published by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) of the United Kingdom. It was stipulated in the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen that when moorings are under strain, all personnel in the vicinity should remain in positions of safety i.e. avoiding all snap-back zones.
- 5.4.2 In this particular case, the above safety precautions had not been followed by the Chief Officer. After the forward back spring rope had been let go from the bollard ashore, the Chief Officer ordered the Bosun to commence heaving it with the winch. However, the forward back spring rope was unexpectedly jammed by the fender ashore in the course of heaving. The rope parted due to excessive tension caused by jamming and the vessel's astern movement. The Chief Officer who was standing within the snap-back zone was hit by the parted forward back spring rope (Figures 2 & 3).

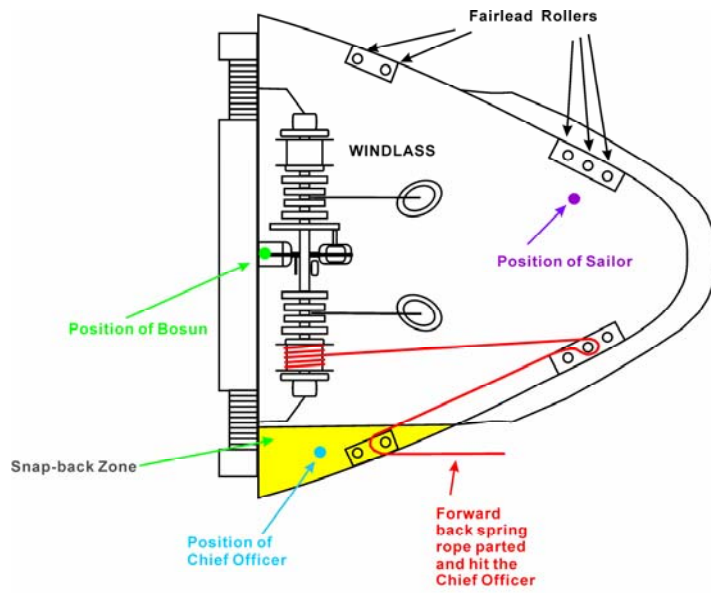


Figure 2 – Diagram showing the positions of the Chief Officer, Bosun and Sailor

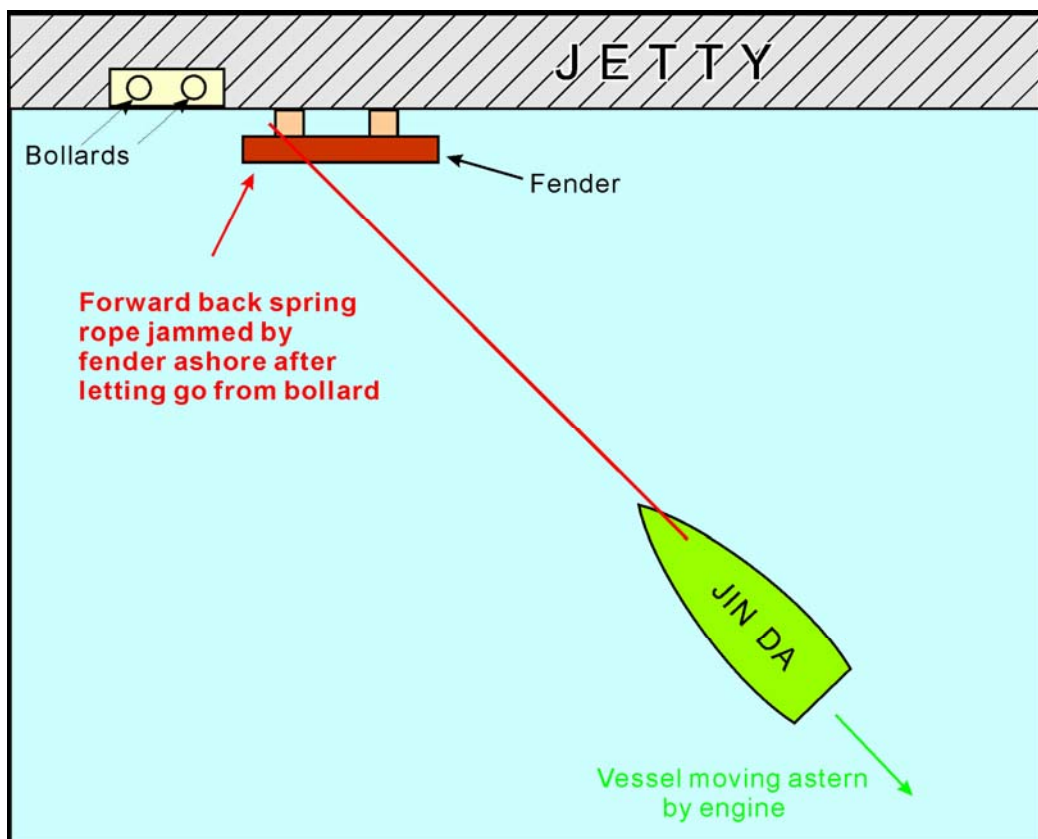


Figure 3 – Diagram showing the forward back spring rope was jammed by fender ashore when *Jin Da* was moving astern

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 At about 1348 on 26 February 2006, the Chief Officer who was in charge of the unmooring operations on the forecastle deck was hit by the parted forward spring rope on board the Hong Kong registered ship *Jin Da*. The Vessel was departing from a berth in Qingdao in China and moving astern. The Chief Officer was sent to the hospital and later certified dead there.
- 6.2 The safety precautions stipulated in the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen during mooring/unmooring operations were not followed by the Chief Officer. The Chief Officer was standing within the snap-back zone when the accident occurred.
- 6.3 Weather, health condition, medicine and alcohol were not considered as contributory factors in this accident.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 A copy of the report should be sent to the ship management company of the vessel. They should be advised of the findings of the accident and the importance of reminding their crewmembers not to position themselves within the snap-back zone when the moorings are under strain during mooring/unmooring operations on forecastle or poop deck.
- 7.2 A Merchant Shipping Information Note (MSIN) should be issued to draw the attentions of all concerned parties to the lessons learnt in the incident.

8. Submissions

- 8.1 In the event that the conduct of any person or organization is commented in an accident investigation report, it is the policy of the Marine Department to send a copy of the relevant part of the draft report to that person or organization for their comment.
- 8.2 Submission was received from the Master of *Jin Da* and the text of the draft was amended as appropriate according to the submission.