

Accommodation Fire on board m.v. “*New Anhui*” on 26 April 2007

1. The Incident

- 1.1 At about 0930 local time on 26 April 2007, a fire broke out in the accommodation spaces of the Hong Kong registered general cargo ship "*New Anhui*", when repair work was being undertaken in Lifeng Shipyard, Shanghai, China. The fire spread throughout the accommodation spaces resulting in the injury of a Bosun, the death of a technical manager and the Bosun's wife. The accident caused substantial damage to the accommodation spaces.
- 1.2 The accident was caused by the heat produced by the flame-cutting work on a weather-tight doorsill at port aft on the boat deck. The heat ignited the wooden lining of the bulkhead in the vicinity of the weather-tight door. The flammable materials in the vicinity had not been removed before carrying out hot work. The fire broke out of control because no adequate safety precautionary measures had been taken when the hot work was carried out.

2. Lessons

- 2.1 The repair contract/agreement signed between a ship manager and a shipyard should clearly define the key responsibilities in respect of safety.
- 2.2 Safety awareness of ship staff should be enhanced.
- 2.3 Ship staff should not hesitate to intervene and even stop the repair work if they see something that, in their opinion, poses an immediate threat to the safety of or life on the ship.
- 2.4 Security measures, such as the steel grilles fitted at windows of the accommodation spaces, should not obstruct the emergency escape of the crew.