

Sailor Hit by Towing Rope on board Local Dumb Lighter “*Shun Keung 8*” on 3 June 2007

1. The Incident

- 1.1 On 3 June 2007, an accident happened onboard the dumb lighter “*Shun Keung 8*”. While the lighter was being towed, a fairlead roller detached and the towing rope sprang and hit a sailor on the deck. Consequently his right arm was amputated.
- 1.2 The roller fairlead was poorly fabricated. The welds fixing the roller pin to the bedplate were sheared off by the large pulling force of the towing rope during towing operation. The arrangement of towlines was improper and had imposed large pulling force on the roller fairlead which was not designed to withstand such loading.

2. Lessons

- 2.1 Roller fairleads should be properly designed and of good mechanical construction.
- 2.2 Roller fairleads should be properly maintained and periodically inspected.
- 2.3 During towing, the force on towline should rest on bitts rather than on roller fairleads unless the design of fairleads is intended for such loading.
- 2.4 The design of fairleads should be substantially strengthened if the fairleads are intended to take up the force of towlines under tow.