



# 香 港 商 船 資 訊

## HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

### A collision of Vessels in Yellow Sea

*To : Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers*

#### *Summary*

A collision between a Hong Kong registered container ship and a fishing vessel in Yellow Sea resulted in missing of one fisherman. This information note draws the attention of Ship owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers to the lessons learnt from this accident.

#### **The Accident**

1. A Hong Kong registered container ship collided with a fishing vessel in Yellow Sea. The collision occurred under foggy weather condition which lasted for a prolong period of time. At time of the collision, only the junior and inexperienced third officer was on the bridge of the container ship, while the senior officer and the master left the bridge for their meal. As a result of the collision, one crewmember of the fishing vessel was reported missing.
2. Investigation into the incident identified that the container ship did not proceed at a safe speed and take proper and effective action to avoid collision in a timely manner. Based on scanty radar information, the navigating officer of the watch (OOW) first made a succession of small alteration of the course to port until finally he substantially changed course to port. The succession of small alterations of course was not readily apparent to the fishing vessel either observing visually or by radar. The OOW did not call the master even though the movement of the fishing vessel could cause concern afterwards. The container ship did not comply with Rule 6 (safe speed), Rule 8 (action to avoid collision) of International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS).

3. Investigation also revealed that in restricted visibility, the OOW made an alteration of course to port for a vessel forward of the beam which was against the Rule 19 (conduct of vessels in restricted visibility) of the COLREGS. While the bridge team of the fishing vessel did not maintain a proper and effective look-out for full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision as required in Rule 5 (look-out) of the COLREGS.

### **Lessons Learnt**

4. The master and the OOWs shall strictly comply with the COLREGS at all times.

5. The management company of the container ship should review the relevant procedures in its Safety Management System with respect to:

- a) the instructions and guidance for their master and officers on circumstances when the OOWs should call the master; and
- b) whenever a vessel is navigating under restricted visibility weather condition for a prolong period, the master of the vessel should ensure sufficient bridge resource for safe navigation at all times.

6. The attention of Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

Marine Department  
Multi-lateral Policy Division

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