

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 101 OF 2019

(Navigational and Seaman Safety Practices)

Fatal Man Overboard Accident onboard a Fishing Vessel

The Incident

A local oil carrier delivered bunker to a local fishing vessel when they were moored together at the Tuen Mun Immigration Anchorage. In the course of the delivery, the coxswain of the fishing vessel fell overboard and died.

2. The investigation revealed that the main cause of the accident was the use of single-point mooring to tie the bow of the fishing vessel with the oil carrier instead of two-point mooring (i.e. two vessels are tied at both their bows and sterns). The use of single-point mooring resulted in unstable tying of the two vessels. When waves made by passing-by vessels pounded on the hulls of the moored vessels, the smaller fishing vessel rolled severely and a gap was formed between the two vessels. The coxswain working on the open deck of the fishing vessel without guard rails fell over its side and was stuck in the gap between the two vessels. The coxswain was crushed by the rubber fenders of the two vessels and injured. He died eventually.

Lessons Learnt

3. In order to avoid recurrence of a similar accident, the attention of owners, shipboard personnel and persons-in-charge of local vessels are drawn to the following important lessons learnt:

- (i) vessels delivering bunker must be carried out in a designated bunkering area; and
- (ii) during the delivery of bunker, appropriate preventive measures must be in place to moor the two vessels safely. Extra measures should also be put in place to prevent man overboard, such as installing temporary safety lines or additional guard ropes on the sides of the vessels.

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