

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 140 OF 2019**

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

### **Kap Shui Mun Bridge Contacted by a Derrick of a Locally Licensed Dumb Lighter**

#### **The Incident**

1. A locally licensed dumb lighter (“dumb lighter”) was on tow by a locally licensed tug boat (“tug boat”) from Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge construction area in the waters off Tai O to the New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter for repairing the faulty derrick (“the derrick”) of the dumb lighter. When the tug-and-tow passed under the Kap Shui Mun Bridge (“the Bridge”), the derrick contacted the bottom part of the Bridge causing damage to its bottom structures in various parts.

2. Investigation into the accident revealed that -

- (i) the main cause of the accident was that the coxswain of the tug boat violated the regulations for passing under the Bridge by towing the dumb lighter with a faulty derrick which could not be lowered;
- (ii) although the tug boat coxswain had many years of experience in towing and navigating in the Kap Shui Mun Fairway, he was unfamiliar with the navigational restrictions of passing the Bridge; and
- (iii) the crew of the dumb lighter failed to confirm with the tug boat coxswain whether he knew the derrick could not be lowered and the navigational restrictions of the dumb lighter.

#### **Lessons Learnt**

3. To avoid recurrence of similar incident, the attention of owners, shipboard personnel and person-in-charge of locally licensed tug boats are drawn to the following important advice -

- (i) remind tug boat coxswains that they must know clearly the conditions of the vessels to be towed and the conditions stipulated in their licences; and

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- (ii) enhance the crew's knowledge of the "General Guide to Safety during Towing and Lightering Operations" published by the Marine Department and, which is available for downloading from the following website address:

[https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub\\_services/ocean/pdf/ggs\\_tlo.pdf](https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/ocean/pdf/ggs_tlo.pdf).

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