

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 120/2022

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

Man overboard incident while awaiting cargo operation

The Incident

A man overboard incident happened on board a Chinese Mainland-registered coastal container vessel (the vessel) while awaiting cargo operation at the Rambler Channel Typhoon Shelter, Hong Kong. Few hours before the incident, all crew members of the vessel dined together and drank beer in the crew messroom to celebrate festival. About an hour later, they left the crew messroom and returned to their cabins for rest. In the early morning of the next day, one able seafarer was found missing. Upon receiving the incident report, the Master mustered crew members to search for the missing able seafarer onboard but in vain, he then called the police for assistance. The missing able seafarer was found few hours later in the water near the northern entrance of the Rambler Channel Typhoon Shelter but was confirmed dead after being rescued.

2. The investigation revealed that the contributory factors leading to this fatal accident were as follows:

- (a) when the able seafarer was walking or standing on the deck, he lost his balance due to the influence of alcohol and might have been tripped by miscellaneous items on the deck, resulting in his falling over the bulwark of the vessel into the sea; and
- (b) the able seafarer's survivability in the water was greatly compromised by the influence of alcohol, leading to his eventual drowning.

Lessons Learnt

3. Shipowners shall inform all masters and crew members on board of the

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investigation results and the lessons learnt from this accident, and enhance the management on consumption of alcohol beverages by crew members onboard and their personal safety training.

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Date: 8 June 2022

Action file ref.: L/M No. 2/2022 in MAI/P 901/097-2020