

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 160/2022**

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

### **Semi-submerging accident of a fishing vessel during voyage**

#### **The Incident**

A fatal listing accident happened on board a locally licensed fishing vessel (*the vessel*) passing through Tung Chung and Sha Lo Wan. The cargoes on *the vessel* slid and collapsed under the influence of waves in the waters west of the Hong Kong International Airport, leading to *the vessel* eventually semi-submerging in the water. All eight persons on board *the vessel* fell into the sea and seven of them were rescued by a passing vessel with the remaining one missing. After a joint search and rescue operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland authorities, the missing person's body was found in the waters near Sha Lo Wan a few days later.

2. The investigation into the accident revealed that the main contributory factors were: *the vessel* was only permitted for fishing or related purposes but it had violated the regulations at the time of the incident, as it was being used to carry general cargoes and their weight had exceeded the cargo capacity of *the vessel* for safe carriage; and the coxswain of *the vessel* lacked proper understanding of the stability of *the vessel* and the fastening of the cargoes, as he had not properly stowed and secured the loaded frozen cargo items which were prone to slip, and did not take the necessary safety precautions.
3. The investigation also revealed that the certificate of the coxswain of *the vessel* did not meet the requirements for operating *the vessel*.

#### **Lessons Learnt**

4. The crew of fishing vessels, fishery organisations and fishermen's groups should note that:

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- (a) the operation of fishing vessels should comply with the requirements of relevant regulations and operating licence conditions, i.e. Class III vessels must be used solely for fishing and related purposes; and
- (b) the crew manning on fishing vessels should comply with the requirements of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap.548D), i.e. the vessels should be operated by persons with appropriate local certificates of competency.

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Marine Department

Government of the HKSAR

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