Grounding of the Togo registered general cargo ship “Yu Hai 1” in Discovery Bay, Hong Kong on 23 August 2017

1. The incident

1.1 At about 0825 hours in the morning on 23 August 2017, a Togo registered general cargo ship “YU HAI 1” (the vessel) began to drag her anchor southwesterly in Western Anchorage No.1 in Hong Kong due to the super typhoon “Hato”. The master was unable to control his ship in light ship condition with port anchor malfunctioning under the extreme weather. A tug was arranged to render assistance, but was unable to reach the vessel, when arriving on the scene. This was because the vessel moved further to west and close to the shoreline of Lantau Island.

1.2 At about 1126 hours, the vessel ran aground near the entrance of Marina Club basin at Discovery Bay and listed to port side due to water ingress through the breach at ship bottom. All the crew including the master abandoned the vessel. They swam ashore without injury. The vessel was refloated and towed away from Hong Kong for scrapping after about two months’ salvage operation.

2. Lessons learnt

2.1 All vessels in Hong Kong waters should be properly maintained to prepare for emergency.

2.2 All vessels in Hong Kong waters should ensure that safety message broadcasted by Vessel Traffic Centre should be properly received and preventive measures should be implemented accordingly considering the prevailing circumstances and conditions.