

The fatal accident on board Hong Kong registered ship “Alpine Mystery” in Mossel Bay anchorage of South Africa on 30 October 2015. (All times were Local Time, UTC +2)

1. Incident

- 1.1 On 30 October 2015, *the vessel* anchored at the approximate position 34°07.36’S, 022°09.94’E in Mossel Bay of South Africa waiting for berth to discharge cargo. The chief engineer had finished his service on the *vessel* and left the *vessel* at about 0745 hours to board a launch through a pilot ladder.
- 1.2 The chief engineer wore a life vest, of unknown performance standard, provided by the launch. At about half way down the pilot ladder, the chief engineer fell into the sea and was found 5 minutes later drowned in an unconscious face down position.
- 1.3 The investigation had identified the following contributory factors to this accident:
 - (a) a proper risk assessment for the disembarkation arrangement had not been carried out by taking into account the chief engineer’s obese body, his health condition (coronary artery disease) and the prevailing weather and sea conditions; and
 - (b) the chief engineer did not wear shipboard inflatable lifejacket or SOLAS lifejacket in accordance with the requirements of the shipboard safety management system.

2. Lessons learnt

- 2.1 All crew shall strictly follow the procedures of safety management system:-
 - (a) wearing certified inflatable lifejacket or SOLAS lifejacket for disembarkation and embarkation through gangway and pilot ladder on seaside of the ship.
 - (b) For embarkation or disembarkation, proper risk assessment should be carried out by taking into account the prevailing weather and sea conditions as well as personnel’s body and health condition, so as to determine the most appropriate arrangement (such as the use of pilot transfer combination arrangement).