

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 29/2023**

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

### **Fatal capsizing of a sailing boat while manoeuvring under adverse weather**

#### **The Incident**

A catamaran sailing boat engaged in windsurfing activities at sea was suddenly blown by a strong breeze, and she was caused to list to starboard side and capsize eventually. Two sailors on board the boat fell into the sea. One of the sailors (*Sailor A*) climbed onto the capsized boat to seek help, while the other sailor (*Sailor B*) was trapped in the water underneath the capsized boat and was unable to extricate himself. *Sailor A* tried but in vain to rescue *Sailor B*. The Marine Police came to their rescue and sent them to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. Unfortunately, *Sailor B* was eventually pronounced dead in the hospital.

2. The investigation revealed that the contributory factors leading to this incident might be as follows: the weather conditions were severe at the scene, with strong breeze and rough sea; the sailors might have underestimated the impact of weather and failed to take appropriate safety measures; and it might be beyond the skills and experience of the sailors to handle a catamaran sailing boat for windsurfing and deal with capsizing in adverse weather conditions.

## **Lessons Learnt**

3. To avoid similar incidents in future, water sports participants should assess the impact of weather on water activities, including understanding the skills and experience of their fellow participants before engaging in the activities; and they should pay attention to the latest weather forecasts and weather warnings while also assessing their skills, experience and physical fitness during water activities, bearing in mind that no risk should be taken when sailing.

**Ms Carol Yuen**  
**Director of Marine**

Marine Department

Government of the HKSAR

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