

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 139/2024**

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

### **Fatal accident occurred on a locally licensed fishing vessel in a typhoon shelter during the fishing moratorium**

#### **The Accident**

In the morning of the day of the accident, a locally licensed fishing vessel (*the vessel*) was anchored at the Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter during the fishing moratorium. The owner of *the vessel* boarded *the vessel* alone as usual to perform routine inspection and maintenance work. During the work, *the vessel's* generator was not switched on to provide lighting for compartment. Under dimly lit condition, the owner might trip or slip and lose balance thus falling through the open hatch of the fish hold located in the semi-enclosed compartment of the main deck to the bottom of the fish hold at a height of about three metres. The accident might also occur when the owner attempted to retrieve the hatch protection net that had fallen into the fish hold whereby he might lose his balance or physical strength and therefore fell from the vertical ladder of the fish hold to the hold's bottom. The accident resulted in the owner's head and neck injuries, leading to his unconsciousness. He was not discovered until dusk and certified dead after being sent to the hospital on the same day.

2. The investigation revealed that the owner had insufficient safety awareness and was not aware of the potential dangers of working alone on *the vessel*; he did not take safety measures when working under inadequate lighting condition; and he did not wear appropriate personal protective equipment while performing the work.

## **Lessons Learnt**

3. In order to avoid the recurrence of similar accidents in future, owners and crew members of fishing vessels should take the following safety precautions when working on board:

- (a) to wear appropriate personal protective equipment, such as gloves, safety shoes and helmets;
- (b) to ensure adequate lighting being provided in compartments;
- (c) to properly store tools and clutter;
- (d) to avoid working alone on board vessel whenever possible; and
- (e) to keep hatch covers closed when working near the hatches of fish holds.

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**Director of Marine**

Marine Department

Government of the HKSAR

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