

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 58/2020

(Marine Industrial Safety)

Fatal Accident Happened in a Diving Operation

The incident

A local workboat carried on board a diving team and the person in charge of works to conduct diving operation off south of Shek Kwu Chau in order to re-link the sinker with the marking buoy that was blown off by typhoon. During the diving operation, a diver was hit by the propeller of the workboat and was missing. Two days later, the diver was found and confirmed dead.

2. The investigation into the incident revealed that:

- (i) the three parties involved (i.e. the coxswain, the diving team and the person in charge) were lack of effective communication when planning the diving operation;
- (ii) the three parties involved failed to discuss the diving operation and safety precautions in details, especially the risk posed to the diver when the propeller engaged in operation suddenly; and
- (iii) before engaging the propeller, the coxswain failed to notify the diving supervisor or dive assistant and confirmed that the diver was clear from the workboat, thus resulting in the diver was struck by the propeller.

Lessons Learnt

3. To avoid recurrence of similar incidents, the attention of the coxswain, the diving team and the person in charge are drawn to the following advices:

- (i) to strengthen the cooperation and communication among the three parties (the coxswain, the diving team and the person in charge), such

as establishing operational communication guidelines and carrying out training;

- (ii) to consider using workboat equipped with anchor for diving operation. Anchor the boat in position before diving operation can minimize the need to engage the propeller against wind and wave effect, thereby reducing the risk of the diver underwater; and
- (iii) to use better communications equipment for the diving team to strengthen the communications between the personnel on board and the diver underwater.

Agnes WONG
Director of Marine

Marine Department
Government of the HKSAR
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