

MAIB

MARINE ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION BRANCH

SAFETY DIGEST

**Lessons from Marine
Accident Reports
2/2006**

Department for
Transport

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) is an independent part of the Department for Transport, the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents being responsible directly to the Secretary of State for Transport. The offices of the Branch are located at Carlton House, Carlton Place, Southampton, SO15 2DZ.

This Safety Digest draws the attention of the marine community to some of the lessons arising from investigations into recent accidents and incidents. It contains facts which have been determined up to the time of issue.

This information is published to inform the shipping and fishing industries, the pleasure craft community and the public of the general circumstances of marine accidents and to draw out the lessons to be learned. The sole purpose of the *Safety Digest* is to prevent similar accidents happening again. The content must necessarily be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available. The articles do not assign fault or blame nor do they determine liability. The lessons often extend beyond the events of the incidents themselves to ensure the maximum value can be achieved.

Extracts can be published without specific permission providing the source is duly acknowledged.

The Editor, Jan Hawes, welcomes any comments or suggestions regarding this issue.

The Safety Digest and other MAIB publications can be obtained by applying to the MAIB.

**If you wish to report an accident or incident
please call our 24 hour reporting line
023 8023 2527**

The telephone number for general use is 023 8039 5500.

The Branch fax number is 023 8023 2459.

The e-mail address is maib@dft.gov.uk

Summaries (pre 1997), and Safety Digests are available on the Internet:

www.maib.gov.uk



The role of the MAIB is to contribute to safety at sea by determining the causes and circumstances of marine accidents, and working with others to reduce the likelihood of such causes and circumstances recurring in the future.

**Extract from
The Merchant Shipping
(Accident Reporting and Investigation)
Regulations 2005 – Regulation 5:**

“The sole objective of the investigation of an accident under the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2005 shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

“Mayday”	– The international distress signal (spoken)
AB	– Able Seaman
AIS	– Automatic Identification System
ARPA	– Automatic Radar Plotting Aid
C	– Celsius
CO ₂	– Carbon Dioxide
COLREGS	– International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea
CPA	– Closest Point of Approach
DPA	– Designated Person Ashore
DSC	– Digital Selective Calling
EPIRB	– Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
GMDSS	– Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GPS	– Global Positioning System
Gt	– gross tonnes
HP	– Horsepower
Kg	– kilogram
m	– metre
MCA	– Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MRCC	– Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre
OOW	– Officer of the Watch
PPE	– Personal Protective Equipment
RIB	– Rigid Inflatable Boat
Ro-Ro	– Roll-on, roll-off
SAR	– Search and Rescue
SCBA	– Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
SOLAS	– International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
STCW	– International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
TCPA	– Time to Closest Point of Approach
VCU	– Vessel Capacity Unit
VHF	– Very High Frequency
VTIS	– Vessel Traffic Information Services
VTS	– Vessel Traffic Services

Introduction

Again, a mixed-bag of cases in this edition of the Safety Digest, reminding us all that danger lurks in many different places. People who remain alert and aware of the risks are the most likely to avoid trouble. Please use all these articles to think about the problems others have encountered, and how you can ensure that they don't happen to you.

Case 4 is an account of the death of a motorman while working on deck. This is one of a number of accidents MAIB has investigated recently, where engine room or catering staff have been killed or injured while undertaking a seaman's tasks. If you are using non-deck ratings to assist in mooring and other seamanship evolutions, think carefully about their lack of training and awareness. Extra briefing and supervision is essential to ensure the safety of all concerned.

A large number of merchant vessel accidents we investigate could have been avoided if only people had fully utilised the tools they were given. In nearly all recent cases of collisions and groundings at night or in restricted visibility, the lookout had been stood down by the officer of the watch, in contravention of STCW and, frequently, company standing orders. In most collisions and groundings, electronic aids such as ARPA, CPA and TCPA alarms, waypoint alarms and depth alarms had not been used. It is complacent to believe that you don't need such support; we all make mistakes sometimes, these safety barriers will prevent your simple error becoming a disaster.

In the leisure craft section, Case 25 reports two near-fatal accidents while gybing. MAIB has had seven similar accidents reported this year, one of them fatal. However experienced you are, be prepared for a gybe, and remember that sheets and blocks can be dangerous as well as the boom.

Finally, Case 24 is yet another cautionary tale on kill-cords. Although the photographs on page 73 are not for the faint-hearted, this young man was lucky. Use the kill-cord.



Stephen Meyer
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents
July 2006

Postscript:

1. After reading Case 17 in Safety Digest 1/2006, the MCA asked us to remind all seafarers that their Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres are always happy to answer telephone requests for local weather forecasts.
2. Our apologies to Chris Venmore, who wrote the Fishing Vessel introduction in Safety Digest 1/2006, for failing to print his name. Thank you Chris.