

# MAIB

MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

## FLYER TO THE SAIL TRAINING INDUSTRY

### TS *ROYALIST*

#### GROUNDING OFF CHAPMAN'S POOL

5 APRIL 2009



TS *Royalist*

At about 1120 on 5 April 2009, the square-rigged sail training vessel, TS *Royalist*, ran aground while leaving Chapman's Pool off the south coast of the UK. There were no resulting injuries to the 32 people on board, which included 23 sea cadets, and the vessel sustained no damage.

While navigating and steering the vessel under power, the master became distracted by overseeing the setting of sails and inadvertently allowed the vessel to deviate from her intended track into shallow waters. The vessel's watertight doors were closed following the grounding and an inspection of the internal compartments confirmed no resulting ingress of water. TS *Royalist* was refloated with the help of Weymouth RNLI lifeboat, and she was then able to return to her home port of Gosport without further assistance.

The master, although a qualified yachtmaster, was not a professional mariner, but served as a relief master for one or two weeks per year. He had not had any assessment at sea during the 3 years leading up to the accident. He had joined TS *Royalist* on the previous day. Although he had navigated yachts to and from Chapman's Pool, he did not recognise the need for additional caution in view of the fact that TS *Royalist* was a larger and more demanding vessel than the yachts he had previously navigated; he was over-confident that his level of planning and monitoring would suffice. He did not plot his intended track, or employ anyone to navigate, take the helm or act as lookout. In deciding to set sail while continuing to navigate, look out and steer the vessel himself, he became distracted. No other crew members were in place to monitor his actions, so his error in deviating from the intended track went undetected and unaddressed, resulting in the grounding.

Although there was no statutory requirement for TS *Royalist* to be operated under a formal safety management system, MSSC did provide a suite of safety management procedures for its fleet. However, with respect to cockpit manning and navigational practices, the causes and circumstances of this accident demonstrate that those procedures were insufficient.

The Association of Sail Training Organisations and the MCA are setting up a working group to consider the management of safety and establish best practice guidelines.

### **Safety Lessons**

- For many sail training vessels, there is no legal requirement to have a Safety Management System. Nevertheless, in order to execute their duty of care, it is essential that sail training organisations ensure that best practice is consistently applied onboard their vessels. Actions should include the provision of detailed safety instructions, and sufficient training, continuation training and monitoring to ensure that the organisation's required standards are achieved and maintained.
- The master is key to the safety of a sail training vessel. It is therefore imperative that his/her selection is carefully considered and that his/her continued knowledge and proficiency are regularly assessed.
- In sail training vessels with a number of crew, permanent and/or trainees, team working is a key requirement. In particular, it is essential that those responsible for the safe navigation of a vessel work closely together, and are free from potential distractions; in vessels with sufficient crew, there should routinely be a helmsman and a dedicated lookout to support the watch officer. When in confined waters, or in heavy traffic, the master must organise the crew, so that he/she is left free to maintain a safety oversight.

This flyer and the MAIB's investigation report are posted on its website:

[www.maib.gov.uk](http://www.maib.gov.uk)

Alternatively, a copy of the flyer and / or report will be sent on request, free of charge.

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