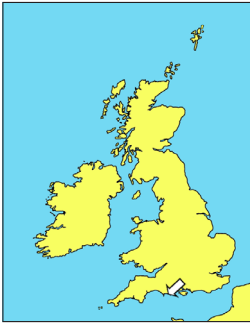


SYNOPSIS



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 monitoring 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 of his performance as master at sea during the 3 years leading up to the accident. He had joined TS *Royalist* on the previous day. He had developed a low perception of risk after navigating yachts to and from Chapman's Pool, and became complacent. 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. With no other crew members in place to monitor his actions, his error in deviating from the intended track went undetected and unaddressed, resulting in the grounding. A recommendation has been made to the Marine Society & Sea Cadets (MSSC) for it to develop a structured system for the selection and audit of relief masters.

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, these procedures were insufficient to prevent the accident.

Subsequent to the accident, the MSSC has made extensive changes designed to improve navigational procedures on board its vessels. Additionally, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Association of Sail Training Organisations (ASTO) have agreed to set up a working group to consider the management of safety and establish best practice guidelines for the UK sail training industry.