



SYNOPSIS

On 20 April 2008, when participating in a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) powerboat course, three trainees and their instructor were conducting high speed manoeuvring drills on *Partner 1*, a new RIB-X, XP510 rigid inflatable boat. Soon after the boat had started a wide turn to starboard at a speed of between 20 and 25 knots, its combined double jockey seat and steering console suddenly detached and the instructor was thrown overboard. The trainee helmsman was also thrown to port and his movement was sufficient to operate the engine kill cord. With the

boat stopped in the water, the trainees re-positioned the console, then re-started the engine and recovered the instructor. The instructor's automatic lifejacket had inflated and he was uninjured.

The investigation identified a number of factors which contributed to the detachment of the console, including:

- The console module was secured to the deck with only four screws, of which only one had effectively penetrated the deck's plywood base.
- The console module had not been fitted in accordance with the RIB manufacturer's guidance.
- The RIB was not returned to an approved installer, as intended by its manufacturer, before entering service.
- The craft was not thoroughly inspected before being delivered to its owner.

A number of safety issues regarding the quality management of the RIB's manufacturer and its conformity with the Recreational Craft Directive were also identified during the investigation. These included:

- The manufacturer did not effectively monitor the activities of its dealers and did not take sufficient precautions to prevent its RIBs being put into service without being subjected to a pre-delivery inspection by an authorised installer.
- The manufacturer did not meet its responsibilities with respect to the requirements of the RCD. In particular, a CE marked builder's plate was affixed to the hull before the craft had been completed and its adherence to the essential requirements of the RCD had been verified.

In May 2008, the MAIB wrote to RIB-X (manufacturer) recommending that it determine which of its boats that had been sold had not been completed by approved installers, and to check that the standard of rigging on these hulls was at least equivalent to the standard detailed in its own procedures.

To prevent a similar accident occurring in the future, the British Marine Federation (BMF) and the Royal Yachting Association have taken action to raise the awareness of the issues raised by this accident, and the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) has undertaken to review current guidance on the application of the RCD and facilitate action by industry to ensure that boats sold within the UK are safe to operate. The International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) has been recommended to advise its members that CE marked builder's plates should not be affixed to partly completed boats. A further recommendation has been made to RIB-X aimed at improving its quality management system and compliance with the RCD. A recommendation has also been made to Holes Bay Marine, which is intended to ensure it meets industry best practice.