

SYNOPSIS

On 3 August 1999 the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) was notified of the flooding and foundering of the trawler *Sharona* 80 miles north-east of Peterhead. An investigation conducted by an MAIB inspector began that day.

Sharona had been fishing 80 miles north-east of Peterhead when the crew discovered flooding in the engine room.

A sequence of events on board led to further flooding of the engine room until eventually all electrical power was lost. The skipper then requested assistance from the coastguard in the form of a tow.

While the vessel was under tow, the flooding continued, eventually leading to her loss. There were no injuries and all the crew were transferred to the towing vessel, which arrived in Aberdeen the following day.

The cause of the accident was uncontrolled flooding to the engine room through a fractured copper main engine cooling water outlet pipe.

Contributory causes were: The decision to haul the fishing gear, which resulted in a failure to stop the main engine immediately and thereby, prevent further flooding; the failure of the engine room bilge alarm; and the failure to detect defective pipework.

The investigation has resulted in a recommendation to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to consider updating its advice given in *Merchant Shipping Notice M631*, and to include a reference on the work-hardening of copper piping.