

SYNOPSIS

(all times are BST)

The accident occurred at approximately 1230 British Summer Time (UTC + 1) on 14 May 1999 and was notified to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) by the Marine Police Unit, Cowes at 1500 on the same day. After gaining further information, MAIB Inspector, Captain Nick Beer, began an investigation on 21 May.

A student who was attending a Professional Crew and Skipper Training course at the United Kingdom Sailing Academy (UKSA), fell from *Wahoo*, an Etchells 22 keelboat (**Photograph**) while sailing with two other students off Yarmouth, Isle of Wight. The boat had gybed accidentally and the student, who was of very large build, was unable to get out of the way of the boom which knocked him overboard.

Two instructors who were accompanying the sailing boat in a diesel launch were unable to recover the student from the water, and he quickly became unconscious. After 24 minutes in the water, the student was airlifted to hospital, where despite extensive efforts to resuscitate him, first in the water and later in the aircraft and at hospital, he was eventually declared dead.

The investigation found the UKSA's safety management to be deficient, because the risks associated with this particular student's involvement in the activity were not fully assessed and minimised. The academy has since corrected this shortfall and therefore no recommendations are made.