

## SYNOPSIS

(all times are Universal Co-ordinated Time)

The accident was notified to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) by HM Coastguard at 2053 on 2 March 1999. An investigation began on 8 March and was conducted by MAIB Inspector, Captain N Beer.

On 2 March 1999, *Hoo Robin*, a low air draught coaster of 58m in length (**Photograph 1**) left the berth at Gunnes on the River Trent bound for Antwerp. As the vessel made her way down-river against the last of the flood tide, her master contacted a number of inbound vessels as he approached them to agree the side on which they should pass. At about 1830 he became concerned when an approaching vessel did not move over to the side of the river that he thought had been agreed. Confusion arose and *Hoo Robin* attempted to cross the other vessel's bow at the last minute. A collision occurred in which both vessels were damaged. There were no injuries and there was no pollution as a result of the accident.

The collision was caused by *Hoo Robin*'s last minute course alteration.

The underlying factors were:

- poor Very High Frequency (VHF) radio procedures;
- bridge undermanning;
- probable fatigue;
- lack of effective Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) coverage and
- a lack of clarity as to the required actions on the part of approaching vessels.

Recommendations have been addressed to Associated British Ports, Humber Marine Services and *Hoo Robin*'s owners, R Laphorn and Co Ltd.