

MAIB

MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

SAFETY FLYER TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY

***Beryl*: fatal man overboard on 10 February 2015**



Beryl

At about 0910 on 10 February 2015, a deckhand on the 28m twin rig trawler *Beryl* was carried overboard by the vessel's port trawl net.

The net was being shot away through the stern 'shooting doors' when it snagged. To free the net, the deckhand stood on the net to release a float caught on lashings inside the net track. The vessel was underway before rough seas and the net was under significant load.

Without warning, the net suddenly released and quickly streamed astern carrying the deckhand with it. The deckhand was carried through the port 'shooting door' and into the sea. He was conscious and managed to hold onto the net. The deckhand's lifejacket inflated and *Beryl's* crew spent almost 50 minutes trying to recover him back on board; they were unsuccessful. The crewman was eventually recovered by a rescue craft launched from an offshore support vessel. He was transferred to a rescue helicopter and flown to hospital but he did not survive.

The MAIB's investigation found that *Beryl's* crew had discussed the hazard of jammed and tangled equipment with a Scottish Fishermen's Federation representative during an 'onboard support scheme' visit. The resulting risk assessment for this hazard was recorded under '*Abnormal conditions*' and the safety measure agreed with the crew was:

'The crew MUST stand back until the skipper assesses the situation and gives instructions.'



Shooting doors

Safety Lessons

- Initiatives such as the Scottish Fishermen's Federation 'onboard support scheme' and the 'Seafish safety folder' have helped to make risk assessments play an increasing role in the safety management of UK fishing vessels. However, risk assessments do not reduce the risk of accidents unless the control measures and safety precautions that they help to identify are implemented.
- It is easier to prevent crew from falling overboard than it is to recover them from the water.
- Work arrangements and practices require regular review to remove, as far as possible, the inherent risks in shooting and hauling operations. Brief 'toolbox talks' can be used to periodically remind crew of the procedures to be followed and the safety precautions to be taken.
- Many fishermen must change their behaviour if the risks encountered on board fishing vessels are to be minimised. A 'can-do' attitude can be a sign of a good worker but in the long run, 'can-do safely' is much more effective than 'can-do quickly'.
- All crew members must be encouraged to challenge unsafe acts whatever their role on board. This will help to prevent accidents resulting from shortcuts and individual errors of judgment.

This flyer and the MAIB's investigation report are posted on our website: www.maib.gov.uk

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