

FLYER TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Fire leading to the foundering of the prawn trawler *Karinya* (FR 699) on 4 October 2015

Image courtesy of Davie Tait: not to be reproduced.



FV *Karinya* (FR699)

Narrative

On 4 October 2015, the 16.35m wooden twin-rig prawn trawler *Karinya*, FR699, was fishing in the Moray Firth. On board were the vessel's owner/skipper and four crew. At 1305, during shooting operations, the skipper, who was aft of the wheelhouse at the winch controls, smelled burning which he assumed was coming from the engine room. He entered the wheelhouse, heard the fire alarm sounding, and decided to proceed to the engine room to investigate. As he began descending the internal stairway, he saw thick smoke coming out of the open doorway at the top of the stairwell leading down to the cabin. He could not get close enough to the door to close it. He shouted to the four crew, who were on the aft deck, to collect their lifejackets and to close the doors. The crew were unable to collect their abandon ship lifejackets that were stowed in the burning cabin, so instead donned inflatable lifejackets that were stored in a locker on the aft deck. All five then mustered, deployed a liferaft and abandoned the vessel. The crew were rescued soon afterwards by another fishing vessel that was nearby. *Karinya* became overwhelmed by the fire and subsequently foundered at 2104.

The fire almost certainly started in the cabin. Smoke then spread quickly, forcing the crew to evacuate the vessel rather than to attempt to fight the fire.

The fire's ignition source has not been determined, but it is probable that the fire was caused by a poorly discarded cigarette end that was not fully extinguished.



Sequence showing *Karinya* on fire

Safety lessons

- *Karinya* was fitted with an automatic fire detection and alarm system which, if activated, provided a visual and audible alarm in the wheelhouse. The alarm did not provide the intended early notification of a fire as it could not be heard from the winch control position aft of the wheelhouse. It should be possible for a member of the crew to hear a fire alarm when activated.
- *Karinya's* cabin contained a lot of combustible material to fuel the fire. This included spare bedding and crew's personal effects, some of which might have been prone to spontaneous combustion. Good housekeeping, particularly on vessels in which crew are required to live aboard, is imperative.
- The rapid spread of smoke could have been prevented had the vessel operated a closed-door policy or had the cabin door been capable of remote closure.
- The vessel's abandon ship lifejackets were stored in the cabin and therefore were inaccessible due to the volume of smoke from the fire. Lifejackets and all other emergency equipment should be stowed in positions from which they can be readily accessed in an emergency.
- The rapid and controlled abandonment of *Karinya* demonstrates the benefit of conducting regular emergency drills and ensuring safety equipment is properly maintained.
- This accident demonstrates how quickly a fire can develop. Useful information for fishermen, including appropriate guidance on fire prevention and emergency procedures, is contained in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Fishermen's Safety Guide.

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

For all enquiries:

Marine Accident Investigation Branch
 First Floor, Spring Place
 105 Commercial Road
 Southampton
 SO15 1GH

Email: maib@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Tel:023 8039 5500