

Extract from The United Kingdom Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 – Regulation 5:

“The sole objective of a safety investigation into an accident under these Regulations shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of such an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”

As the full investigation report will not be published within 12 months of the accident date, this interim report is published, pursuant to Regulation 14(2)(b) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012.

NOTE

This report is not written with litigation in mind and, pursuant to Regulation 14(14) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame.

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For all enquiries:

Email: maib@dft.gov.uk
Tel: +44 (0)23 8039 5500

Interim report on the investigation of the grounding of the roll-on/roll-off passenger ferry *Alfred* at Swona Island, Pentland Firth, Scotland on 5 July 2022

The information contained in this interim report is based on the various aspects of the investigation completed to date. Readers are cautioned that there is the possibility new evidence may become available that might alter the circumstances as depicted in this report.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

At 1400 on 5 July 2022, the UK registered roll-on/roll-off passenger ferry *Alfred* grounded on the east coast of Swona Island, Pentland Firth, Scotland while on passage from Gills Bay, mainland Scotland to St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay, Scotland. The impact caused injuries to 41 passengers and crew and damage to *Alfred's* port bulbous bow and almost all the vehicles being transported on board. The vessel subsequently refloated on the rising tide and returned to St Margaret's Hope under its own power later that afternoon; there was no pollution.

Image courtesy of the [RNLI](#)



Alfred aground on Swona Island

INVESTIGATION

The MAIB's investigation has considered the identified aspects of the accident to determine the causes and circumstances of the grounding. The investigation report will analyse: the vessel's grounding; the watchkeeper's situational awareness; its passage planning; the survey audit and inspection regime; the emergency response; the oversight provided by the harbour authority; the injuries and damage to the crew, passengers and vehicles; and the significance of the voyage data recorder in determining what happened.

ONGOING ACTION

The MAIB investigation is complete, and a draft of the report is being prepared and will be distributed to stakeholders for a 30-day consultation period in due course.

VESSEL PARTICULARS

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Vessel's name | <i>Alfred</i> |
| Flag | United Kingdom |
| Classification society | Lloyd's Register |
| IMO number | 9823467 |
| Type | Domestic roll-on/roll-off passenger ferry |
| Registered owner | Pentland Ferries |
| Manager | Pentland Ferries |
| Construction | Steel |
| Year of build | 2019 |
| Length overall | 84.5m |
| Registered length | 79.71m |
| Gross tonnage | 2963 |
| Minimum safe manning | 13 crew |
| Authorised cargo | 418 passengers and up to 85 vehicles |

VOYAGE PARTICULARS

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Port of departure | Gills Bay, mainland Scotland |
| Port of arrival | St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay, Scotland |
| Type of voyage | Coastal |
| Cargo information | 84 passengers and 37 vehicles |
| Manning | 13 crew |

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Date and time | 5 July 2022 at 1400 |
| Type of marine casualty | Serious Marine Casualty |
| Location of incident | Swona Island, Pentland Firth, Scotland |
| Place on board | Port bow |
| Injuries/fatalities | Injuries to 36 passengers and 5 crew, 10 of whom were seriously injured |
| Damage/environmental impact | Hull and internal damage; no environmental impact |
| Ship operation | In passage |
| Voyage segment | Transit |
| External & internal environment | Wind westerly Beaufort force 2; sea state calm; visibility good. Tidal stream easterly at 6.7kts through outer sound of the Pentland Firth. |
| Persons on board | 97 |