

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As the full investigation report will not be published within 12 months of the accident date, this interim report is published, pursuant to Regulation 14(2)(b) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and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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Interim report on the investigation of the flooding and foundering of the fishing vessel *Freedom II* (CN 111) 11 nautical miles south-west of Oban, Scotland on 21 February 2024

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 1249 on 21 February 2024, the skipper of the prawn trawler *Freedom II* made a distress call to report the vessel had been flooding for over an hour. His Majesty's Coastguard Stornoway mobilised the Royal National Lifeboat Institute lifeboat at Oban to assist. A search and rescue helicopter and local shipping were also alerted. Unable to identify the source of the flood and control the water ingress, the skipper evacuated two of their three crew members into a liferaft. The two crew were recovered to the lifeboat, which also took *Freedom II* under tow. At 1535, *Freedom II* was low in the water; the lifeboat crew released the tow and recovered the skipper and remaining crew member, who were unharmed. The vessel foundered and sank in 150m of water 11 nautical miles south-west of Oban, Scotland.

INVESTIGATION

The MAIB's investigation has considered various aspects of the accident to determine the causes and circumstances of the flooding and subsequent foundering, including probable flood sources; decision-making; guidance on flooding and on board training and induction practices.

ONGOING ACTION

The MAIB's 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.

Image courtesy of [Bristow Group HM Coastguard helicopter rescue service](#)



Freedom II with liferaft alongside 2 hours before foundering

VESSEL PARTICULARS

Vessel's name	<i>Freedom II</i>
Flag	UK
Classification society	Not applicable
IMO number	CN 111
Type	Stern trawler
Registered owner	Privately owned
Manager(s)	Privately managed
Year of build	1975
Construction	Wood
Length overall	16.74m
Registered length	15.94m
Gross tonnage	74
Minimum safe manning	Not applicable
Authorised cargo	Fish

VOYAGE PARTICULARS

Port of departure	Crinan, Scotland
Port of arrival	Oban, Scotland (intended)
Type of voyage	Coastal
Cargo information	Prawns
Manning	4

MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION

Date and time	21 February 2024 at 1535
Type of marine casualty or incident	Very Serious Marine Casualty
Location of incident	11nm south-west of Oban, Scotland
Place on board	Working deck
Injuries/fatalities	None
Damage/environmental impact	Vessel lost, negligible harm to the environment
Ship operation	Fishing
Voyage segment	Mid-water
External & internal environment	West to south-west force 4 to 6; sea state 4 to 5 offshore; sea surface temperature 8°C to 9°C; good visibility
Persons on board	4