



REASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE TO MARINE SAFETY RECOMMENDATION M00-07

Liferaft Release Mechanisms

Background

While crossing from Les Escoumins to Rimouski, Quebec, the *Brier Mist* swamped and sank some 10 miles offshore. The wreck was never found, two persons were recovered deceased and the other three crewmembers were missing.

The Board identified safety deficiencies with respect to the inspection of hatch covers on small fishing vessels, the lack of liferaft automatic release mechanisms and the absence of reliable means for indicating positions in emergency situations. The Board made four recommendations (recommendations M00-06, M00-07, M00-08, and M00-09).

The Board concluded its investigation and released Marine Investigation Report M98L0149 on 06 December 2000.

Board Recommendation M00-07 (December 2000)

Given that the chances of survival of fishermen abandoning a vessel depend on launching liferafts and considering the extremely difficult conditions in which such abandonments are often carried out on small fishing vessels, the Board believes that liferafts should be easy to release when the vessel sinks in order to allow access to the liferafts on abandoning.

Consequently, the Board recommended that:

The Department of Transport alert builders and owners of fishing vessels to the need for the liferafts on all vessels to be stowed with a launching system fitted with a release mechanism that allows the inflatable liferaft to be easily released when the vessel sinks.

TSB Recommendation M00-07

Transport Canada's response to Recommendation M00-07 (May 2001)

The response indicates acceptance of Recommendation M00-07 and states that Ship Safety Bulletin 03/2001 issued on 25 April 2001 addressed the correct stowage of liferafts and the float-

free stowage arrangement. In effect it recommends that deep chocks without lashings be used, or alternatively, a lashing fitted with a hydrostatic release, similar to requirements for other vessels in accordance with the *Lifesaving Equipment Regulations*.

Board assessment of the response to Recommendation M00-07 (July 2001)

The staff does not believe that the current practice of using Ship Safety Bulletins is an effective mean of disseminating safety messages to target audiences. In this respect, the Board recommended in 1993 that the Department of Transport evaluate the effectiveness of its distribution practices for marine safety information aimed at fishing masters and fishermen. As a result, a special SSB (02/93) was issued which advertised all post -1977 SSBs while soliciting additional mailing requirements. However, in checking the Transport Canada web site (on 22 June 2001) Ship Safety Bulletin section, it is noted that SSB 02/93 and SSB 18/96 included listings of all SSBs issued since 1977 but similar Special Edition SSBs issued in 1995 (#10/95) and 1997 (#12/97) did not have the lists attached. Special Edition 17/99 is not on the web site. There were no issues in 1994, 1998 or 2000. However, it must be noted that hard copies issued did include the listings. Although it is advertised that the listings were issued in the quarterly Notices to Mariners, it must be noted that not all fishermen subscribe to or receive such a publication.

The intended purpose of the Special Edition is to increase the effectiveness of the process and request recipients to distribute copies to colleagues, owners and maritime companies. A review of SSB mailing lists shows that a total of 917 (English) and 184 (French) versions are sent to 849 (English) and 172 (French) requestors. Of these, only 5 copies (English) and 1 copy (French) are sent to libraries, and the province of Manitoba, for example, which incorporates Lake Winnipeg with over a thousand small commercial fishing vessels, receives only 11 English copies of SSBs. Some 208 (English) and 40 (French) copies are forwarded to the general public - 419 (English) and 60 (French) are sent to companies.

It would therefore appear that a response by issuing a Ship Safety Bulletin will not necessarily reach all those persons or organizations that have an interest, or, indeed could take corrective action. However, the response also indicated that the issue of the float-free arrangements for liferafts will be discussed at the November 2001 CMAC meeting.

The Board considers the response to the recommendation to indicate Satisfactory Intent.

Board reassessment of the response to Recommendation M00-07 (April 2005)

As part of Transport Canada's Regulatory Reform, the new Fishing Vessel Safety Regulations will call for fishing vessels to require liferafts, if carried, to float free. The re-write is scheduled to come into force at the end of 2012. The actions taken by Transport Canada to alert builders and owners, and ongoing regulatory reform consultations to address the float-free stowage of liferafts, fully satisfies the intent of the recommendation. The re-assessment is changed from "Satisfactory Intent" to "**Fully Satisfactory**".

Next TSB Action (April 2005)

This deficiency file is **Closed**.