



REASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE TO MARINE SAFETY RECOMMENDATION M00-08

Liferaft Automatic 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 M00-08 (December 2000)

The Board has expressed its concern that the absence of automatic release mechanisms on liferafts on small fishing vessels needlessly compromises the chances of survival of crews in an emergency at sea when the liferaft goes down with the vessel. As the chances of survival of fishermen on abandoning the vessel depend on launching the liferafts, and considering the extremely difficult conditions in which abandonments are often carried out on small fishing vessels, the Board is of the opinion that liferafts should be easy to release when the vessel sinks in order to allow the crew members to access the liferafts on abandoning ship.

Accordingly, the Board recommends that:

The Department of Transport examine the effectiveness of liferaft automatic release mechanisms to prevent premature activation of those mechanisms on small fishing vessels in rough sea conditions.

TSB Recommendation M00-08

Transport Canada's response to Recommendation M00-08 (May 2001)

The Department of Transport notes TSB Recommendation M00-08 and the response indicates that float-free arrangements as well as the issue of premature activation of release mechanisms will be discussed at the November 2001 CMAC meeting as part of the work of the Standing Committee on Fishing Vessel Safety.

Board assessment of the response to Recommendation M00-08 (July 2001)

Since there is no proposal of any specific measures, nor is there a definite schedule in place to implement the recommendation, the staff considers the response to Recommendation M00-08 as having "Satisfactory Intent". The staff will monitor the results of the November 2001 CMAC meeting and any other action taken on the subject.

Board reassessment of the response to Recommendation M00-08 (April 2005)

Premature activation of release mechanisms were discussed at the November 2001 CMAC meeting. One failure related to a lack of an expiry date on the unit. Transport Canada (TC) has recently received notification from the United States Coast Guard of defective hydrostatic releases being found in use on vessels, in North America. Subsequent investigation found that these defective units had not been tested and approved to the internationally accepted standard. Ship Safety Bulletin 01/2002 was issued 24 January 2002 to remind owners and operators that hydrostatic release units that are fitted on Canadian vessels as float-free devices must be approved by TC. The actions taken by TC fully satisfy the intent of the recommendation.

Therefore, the response to the recommendation is considered to be **Fully Satisfactory**.

Next TSB Action (April 2005)

This deficiency file is **Closed**.