



Leeson Lane, Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01-678 3485/86.
Fax: 01-678 3493.
email: info@mcib.ie
www.mcib.ie

**REPORT OF THE
INVESTIGATION INTO THE
INCIDENT ON BOARD
FV "ATLANTIC WEST" WITH
THE RESULTANT LOSS OF LIFE,
NORTH OF MAYO STAGS,
2nd JULY 2007**

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board was established on the 25th March, 2003 under The Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000

The copyright in the enclosed report remains with the Marine Casualty Investigation Board by virtue of section 35(5) of the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act, 2000. No person may produce, reproduce or transmit in any form or by any means this report or any part thereof without the express permission of the Marine Casualty Investigation Board. This report may be freely used for educational purposes.

REPORT No. MCIB/144



Report MCIB/144 published by The Marine Casualty Investigation Board
31st August 2009



	PAGE
1. SYNOPSIS	4
2. FACTUAL INFORMATION	5
3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT	7
4. THE INCIDENT	8
5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT	9
6. CONCLUSIONS	10
7. RECOMMENDATIONS	11
8. LIST OF APPENDICES	12
9. LIST OF CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED	21

1. SYNOPSIS

- 1.1 At 12.55 hrs. on the afternoon of the 2nd July 2007, the Fishing vessel "Atlantic West" was engaged in shooting crab pots 36 miles north off the North Mayo Stags. Mr. Pavol Juhas, a native of Slovakia, became entangled in fishing gear and was pulled over the stern of the vessel.
- 1.2 The vessel's crew retrieved Mr. Juhas from the sea, who was still attached to the rope, within a very short time. Efforts to revive Mr. Juhas were unsuccessful and the body was air lifted to Sligo General Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

2.1 Description of vessel



2.2 Technical details

Name of Vessel	FV Atlantic West
Port of Registry	Sligo
Port Letter(s) & Numbers	S0994
Overall Length	11.35 metres
Registered Length	10.45 metres
Beam	4.15 metres
Depth	1.59 metres
Propelling Engines	Ford six cylinder diesel internal combustion engine
Estimated Brake Power	89 KW
Date of Construction	1999
Gross Tonnage	12 Tonnes
Vessel Description	Steel Decked Fishing Vessel

2.3 Vessel Complement

Skipper/ Owners Name: Mr. John Stephen O'Donnell
Address: Ballina, Co. Mayo.

Crew Member: Mr. Darren Doherty
Address: Ballina, Co. Mayo.

Crew Member: Mr. Pavol Juhas
Address: Ballina, Co. Mayo.

2.4 Navigation equipment on board

- 1 x G.P.S. receiver.
- 1 x Radar.
- 1 x Magnetic compass.
- Set of charts for the intended voyage.
- 1 x V.H.F. set.
- 1 x EPIRB.

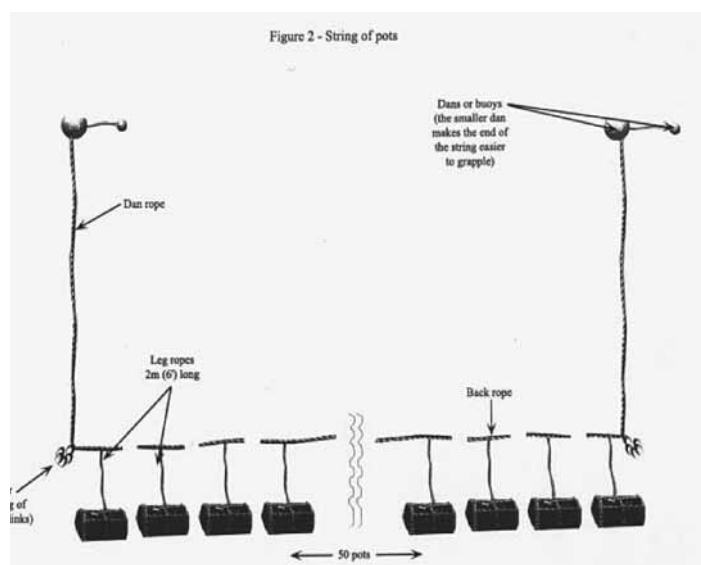
2.5 Life saving equipment carried

- 1 x Life raft: one six man.
- 6 x Red Star flares.
- 6 x Lifejackets.
- 3 x Lifebuoys, 1 with 18m line.
- 6 x PFD's
- Means of recovering persons from the water

2.6 Potting Operation

Six strings of pots were usually hauled and shot each day. There were 60 pots to each string (See illustration below). A maximum of one string was on board at any time during fishing, although sometimes two strings were carried when pots needed to be shifted to another area, but this was only carried out in fine weather. The pots were laid either east to west or west to east. The sea area being used was very popular with potters; there were about 6,000 pots there. To prevent the ropes from getting tangled, they were laid in the same direction. During hauling and shooting, the FV "Atlantic West" was steered by the auto-pilot.

A string of pots took about 6 minutes to deploy. There was 22 fathoms (40m) of back rope between each pot. The vessel was motored at about 6 knots, so a pot was deployed about every 7 seconds.



3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

- 3.1 On Sunday evening the 1st July 2007, Mr. John O'Donnell received news that one of his regular crew would not be attending work that morning, and had organised a replacement, a young man called Mr. Pavol Juhas.
- 3.2 At 00.30 hrs. Mr. O'Donnell went to Rossport where he collected Mr. Juhas and Mr. Darren Doherty and then drove to the pier at Porturlin. They loaded some bait into a currach and then went out to the FV "Atlantic West", which was at anchor in the bay and proceeded to load the bait on board.
- 3.3 The complement for the FV "Atlantic West" was three persons including the Skipper. On this occasion the crew consisted of Mr. Doherty, Mr. Juhas and the Skipper, Mr. O'Donnell.
- 3.4 At approximately 01.00 hrs. on the 2nd July 2007, having established that his vessel, the FV "Atlantic West" was ready for sea, and his crew were rested and ready, the vessel departed the bay at Porturlin bound for the Ices Area VIa and Statistical Rectangle 38 EO (54.5 Degrees North and 9.5 Degrees West).
- 3.5 The vessel was to haul and re-shoot crab pots that were set previously in that area. The steaming time to the ground was approximately 6 hours and the crew slept during this period. Fishing operations commenced at approximately 07.30 hrs.
- 3.6 The procedure followed a pattern of hauling the pots, clearing the catch, baiting and stacking the pots as they were hauled. The vessel then steamed to a new position and the pots were discharged into the sea.

4. THE INCIDENT

- 4.1 During the shooting operation the autopilot was set by the Skipper, Mr. O'Donnell. He was manning the controls and had a clear view of the after deck and was observing the shooting pots, while maintaining a lookout forward.
- 4.2 The sea condition was moderate with winds West to Southwest Force 5 and gusty with visibility moderate, reducing to poor in showers.
- 4.3 The vessel was in Ices Area VIa., Statistical Rectangle 38 EO approximately 54.7 Degrees North and 9.5 Degrees West .
- 4.4 The operation proceeded without event having hauled and shot a number of spirits (lines of pots) without incident.
- 4.5 At approximately 12.55 hrs. they had a spirit of pots ready, and shooting commenced. Mr. Juhas was standing by the pot hauler on the starboard side of vessel amidships. (See Appendix 8.1, Figure 1).
- 4.6 Mr. Juhas was visible to the Skipper from his position in the wheelhouse (See Appendix 8.1, Figure 2). Approximately 25 pots of the total were gone to sea at that point.
- 4.7 The Skipper observed Mr. Juhas being dragged along the deck by the departing rope toward the stern of the vessel and eventually overboard. The next pot in sequence had departed into the sea when the throttle was reduced and vessel was put astern in order to reduce pressure on the back rope to assist in the recovery of Mr. Juhas.
- 4.8 The vessel was taken out of gear and the crew went to the stern of the vessel. Mr. Juhas was recovered from the water, and taken on board and placed in the recovery position. His airways were checked and CPR was initiated.
- 4.9 The gear attached to Mr. Juhas was cut away, the rope was circled twice around the lower part of his right leg.

5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

- 5.1 Mr. O'Donnell administered CPR and was relieved by Mr. Doherty. Mr. O'Donnell immediately made contact with Malin Head Coastal Radio Station, which instructed the crew to continue CPR and commence steaming for homeport. The vessel was placed on autopilot and Mr. Doherty and Mr. O'Donnell attended to Mr. Juhas.
- 5.2 Mr. Juhas was dressed in oilskin trousers, rubber boots and wearing a Personal Flotation Device
- 5.3 The fishing vessel "James Collins", a vessel from Porturlin, arrived along side and crew member Mr. Gary O'Malley who was trained in first aid assisted with CPR until Mr. Juhas was removed from the vessel.
- 5.4 Approximately 45 minutes later, the air sea rescue helicopter arrived. A linesman was winched to deck and removed Mr. Juhas to Sligo General Hospital.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Mr. Juhas had no qualifications as a deckhand and may not have been fully aware of the inherent dangers of the back rope coiling around his leg as it was let out.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Skippers should not permit unqualified crew to work onboard during fishing operations and should ensure that all crewmembers have relevant qualifications for the work they are involved in.
- 7.2 The Department should ensure the enforcement of the Basic Safety Training requirements for all crewmembers engaged in fishing.
- 7.3 The Department should enforce penalties set out in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1992 as amended by Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act, 2000 when unqualified crew are employed aboard fishing Vessels.
- 7.4 Consideration should be given to the development of a Safety Management System for all vessels engaged in fishing operations.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

	PAGE
8.1 Illustrations	13
Figure 1 Hauling area	
Figure 2 Skippers view	
Figure 3 Pot discharge	
Figure 4 Stern door	
8.2 Met Éireann Weather Report	15
8.3 Chartlet	17
8.4 Situation Report	18
8.5 Toggle System	19

Appendix 8.1 Illustrations.



Figure 1. Hauling Area - Starboard amidships



Figure 2. Skipper's view of after deck from wheelhouse

Appendix 8.1 Illustrations.



Figure 3. Pot discharge during shooting operations



Figure 4. Stern door arrangement

Appendix 8.2 Met Éireann Weather Report.



MET ÉIREANN
The Irish Meteorological Service

Glasnevin Hill, Dublin 9, Ireland.	Cnoc Ghlas Naíon Baile Átha Cliath 9, Éire. www.met.ie	Tel: +353-1-806 4200 Fax: +353-1-806 4247 E-mail: met.eireann@met.ie
---------------------------------------	--	--

Weather and Sea Condition Report
for the area north of Staggs, Co. Mayo
for the period 0000 to 2400 hours on 2nd July 2007

General Meteorological Situation: During the morning an unstable west to northwest airflow covered the area, this became west to southwest during the late morning and afternoon.

From 0000 to 0600 hours 2 July 2007:

Winds: West to Northwest Force 3 to 5 and gusty
Weather: Fair
Visibility: Good
Sea State: Moderate

From 0600 to 1200 hours 2 July 2007:

Winds: West to Southwest Force 4 to 5 and gusty
Weather: Scattered showers
Visibility: Mostly good, reducing moderate in showers
Sea State: Moderate

From 1200 to 1800 hours 2 July 2007:

Winds: West to Southwest Force 5 and gusty
Weather: Squally showers
Visibility: Moderate, reducing to poor in showers
Sea State: Moderate

From 1800 to 2400 hours 2 July 2007:

Winds: West to Southwest Force 4 to 5 and gusty
Weather: Scattered showers
Visibility: Moderate, reducing to poor in showers
Sea State: Moderate

Eoin Sherlock,
Meteorologist,
Phone: 01 8065538
email: marine@met.ie

(Please note that all times are given in UTC)

Appendix 8.2 Met Éireann Weather Report.



MET ÉIREANN
The Irish Meteorological Service

Glasnevin Hill, Dublin 9, Ireland. Cnoc Ghlas Naíon Baile Átha Cliath 9, Éire. www.met.ie Tel: +353-1-806 4200 Fax: +353-1-806 4247 E-mail: met.eireann@met.ie

Observations from Buoy M4(55.0N, 10.0W) for 2 July 2007

Date and Time	Wind Direction	Speed (knots)	Wind Gust (knots)	Wave Height (metres)	Wave Period (seconds)
02/07/2007 00:00	310	11	14	2.2	8
02/07/2007 01:00	330	9	12	2.1	7
02/07/2007 02:00	290	8	10	2.0	7
02/07/2007 03:00	280	14	21	1.8	8
02/07/2007 04:00	270	15	21	1.9	8
02/07/2007 05:00	260	17	23	2.0	6
02/07/2007 06:00	250	17	23	2.0	6
02/07/2007 07:00	240	16	23	1.9	6
02/07/2007 08:00	240	18	24	2.0	6
02/07/2007 09:00	250	16	23	1.9	6
02/07/2007 10:00	240	16	24	2.0	6
02/07/2007 11:00	240	19	24	2.0	6
02/07/2007 12:00	230	17	24	2.2	6
02/07/2007 13:00	230	17	25	2.1	6
02/07/2007 14:00	230	19	25	2.2	6
02/07/2007 15:00	240	19	25	2.4	6
02/07/2007 16:00	250	18	25	2.4	6
02/07/2007 17:00	250	18	26	2.4	6
02/07/2007 18:00	250	19	25	2.4	6
02/07/2007 19:00	250	19	25	2.3	6
02/07/2007 20:00	240	19	25	2.3	5
02/07/2007 21:00	250	20	25	2.1	6
02/07/2007 22:00	250	17	24	2.1	6
02/07/2007 23:00	250	16	22	2.2	6

Appendix 8.3 Chartlet.



Appendix 8.4 Situation Report

TRANSMISSION PRIORITY Routine Ref No. 0003383 File Date 02/07/2007
 DTG 200707021206 UIN Reference 0000890
 INCIDENT NAME MAN OVERBOARD
 FROM MRSC MALIN HEAD
 TO MRCC DUBLIN
 MRSC VALENTIA
 MSO
 PRESS OFFICE
 SAR OPS MANAGER

SITREP NUMBER ONE AND FINAL

A. Identity Of Casualty ATLANTIC WEST --- DECKHAND
 B. Position 5446.8N 00945W 35 MLS NORTH OF STAGGS
 C. Situation CREWMAN RECOVERED FROM WATER
 D. Number of Persons at risk ONE
 E. Assistance Required MEDEVAC TO HOSPITAL
 F. Co-Ordinating RCC MRSC MALIN HEAD
 G. Description Of Casualty 19 YO LATVIAN

H. Weather WNW 4
 I. Initial Action Taken TASKED R118
 CONTACTED MEDICO CORK

J. Search Area

K. Co-Ordinating Instructions

L. Future Plans

M. Additional Information / Conclusion

1206:FV,ATLANTIC WEST REPORTED CREWMAN RECOVERED FROM WATER
 CASUALTY IS UNCONSCIOUS,ADVISED SKIPPER TO APPLY CPR
 1208:TASKED R 118
 1215:PASSED SITREP TO MEDICO CORK,INFORMED CORK THAT CPR WAS BEING ADMINISTERED
 ADVISED BY CORK TO CONTINUE
 1254/1305:R118 ONSCENE / CASUALTY ON BOARD,ETA SLIGO HOSPITAL 1340
 1331:R118 LANDED SLIGO HOSPITAL
 1343/1345:LIFTED OFF/LANDED AIRPORT

'CORRECTED VERSION'

Appendix 8.5 Toggle System

The toggle system is now used by most large potting vessels. Some fishermen believe that it requires more deck space and therefore will be difficult to operate on small vessels. If this is the case, the simple remedy is to work less pots.

The key to this system is a toggle clip which connects into a loop to join together the two piece leg rope at a point quite close to the pot. By slipping the toggle clip out of the loop, the pot can be detached from the back rope enabling it to be stored anywhere and without worrying about sequence. On hauling, the pots are lifted on board as normal, but once on board, the toggle is disconnected and the loop, which it fits into, is slipped over a vertical steel pole. The pot, now separate from the back rope is emptied, baited and stacked.

The back rope, as normal, is allowed to pile up on deck, and the loop of each disconnected leg rope, is dropped over the pole in sequence. Thus at the end of the haul, the back rope is in a pile on the deck with each leg rope leading to the pole. The pots are stacked 'wherever' on the vessel, as there is no need to keep them in sequence.

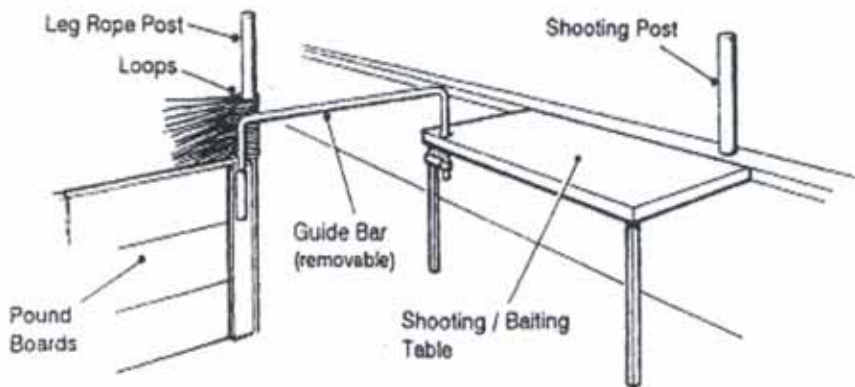
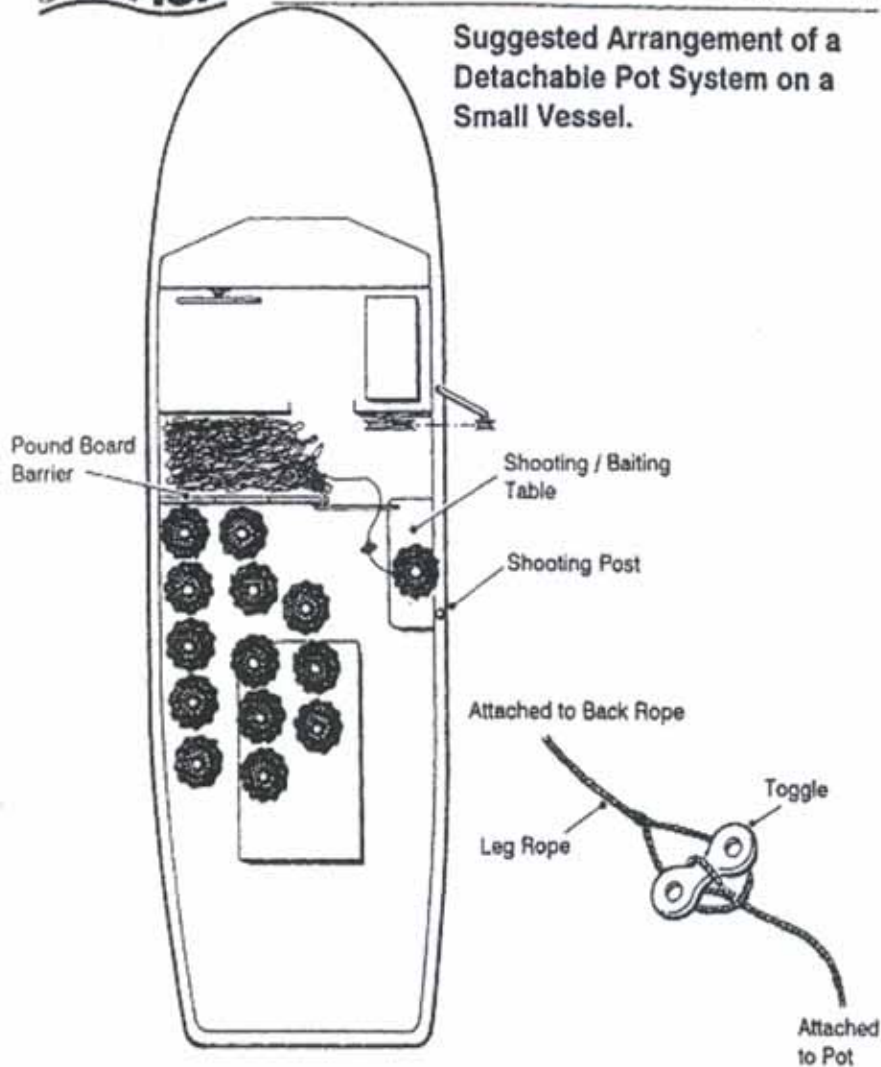
During, the shooting operation, the pot is placed on a shooting table and the first leg rope loop removed from the pole. The toggle is slipped into the loop, thus connecting the pot, which is pulled into the sea when the back rope tightens. The next pot is placed in position and connected to the next leg rope from the pole. Thus the shoot proceeds with one man connecting the toggles and one man bringing the pots to the shooting table. Aside from the ability to stack the pots out of sequence, the system gives more compact storage of the back rope with all the leg ropes leading to the pole. There is a division to separate the ropes from the deck area where the crew handle the pots.

Appendix 8.5 Toggle System

SEAFISH

Potting Safety Assessment

Suggested Arrangement of a Detachable Pot System on a Small Vessel.



9.	LIST OF CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED	PAGE
9.1	Bursec International Limited	22
	MCIB Response	24
9.2	An Garda Síochána	25
	MCIB Response	25
9.3	Irish Coast Guard	26
	MCIB Response	26



Bursecc International Limited

Marine General, fishery, Aquaculture and foreshore
Health & Safety / Sea-Food Safety & Hygiene/
Access, Control and Stock management Consultants

Chancery, Turlough, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

V.A.T.No. 6376084L

Tel: 094 9031234 / 9031985

Mobile: 086 8334685

E-mail: bursecc@eircom.net

Your reference MCIB/144

Mr John G. O'Donnell, B.L.
Chairman,
Marine Casualty Investigation Board,
Leeson Lane,
Dublin 2.



**Re: Draft Report of Fatal Accident on board the FV "Atlantic West"
North Mayo Staggs on the 2/7/07**

Dear Mr O'Donnell,

At the outset I wish to thank you for the draft copy and the opportunity to present comment. Mr. O'Donnell (owner/skipper) and the crew have asked me to convey to you and all involved in the removal of Mr. Juhas and subsequent investigation their thanks and appreciation for the efficiency, professionalism and courtesy shown at all times.

The following observations are presented by way of clarity rather than criticism

1. [Section 6, page 10] While it is true that Mr. Juhas did not have any deckhand qualification he did have several months experience on a number of vessels engaged in this fishery, using similar methodology. He was considered by skippers to be competent and such a level of experience would be the norm in the Industry. The experience would be considered in the industry as the required qualification.
2. Mr. O'Donnell (owner/skipper) states that as a general precaution he advised Mr. Juhas of the nature of the operations on board the vessel and the hazards involved.
3. The vessel and operation specific Safety Statement (2005 Act) details the hazards involved but Mr Juhas, due to the short time on board (the early stage of his first day) had not the opportunity to study the matter in full detail.
4. [Section 4.5, page 8] While Mr. Juhas was standing by the pot hauler he was standing against the gunwale and so well away from the departing ropes. This is a position that would be considered safe by experienced fishermen.

Marine operations (control and management solutions), employment Regulations,
Emergency planning, grounding and salvage, Fire Safety, accident investigation and expert witness.

Page 1 of 2

5. [Section 4.5, page 8 & Appendix 8.4 (MRSC situation Report)] It is the evidence of the skipper and crew that the incident happened at approx 12.55hours and this time is stated at page 8 of the report. However the MRSC in their situation report states that they received the FV call at 1206hours that the crewman was recovered from the water. The MRSC situation report document states the time almost one hour earlier.

It is accepted that the above observations do not affect the general direction of the report or indicate any significant inaccuracy in the report.

The skipper and crew of the vessel consider the report to be, other than the observations above, an accurate and true presentation of what occurred.


(Pat Burke).

Date 14/5/09

MCIB RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM BURSEC INTERNATIONAL LTD. RECEIVED ON THE 18TH MAY 2009

The MCIB notes with concern the contents of the above letter especially in point 3 where it is confirmed that the deceased had no opportunity to study the safety statement.

The skipper should ensure that all crew members, especially those for whom English is not their first language, are fully briefed on the safety statement.

It is the opinion of the MCIB that this response confirms the necessity for Skippers, Owners and Operators to ensure that all crew study the Safety Statement. The MCIB feels that it is no excuse that the day of the incident was the deceased's first day on the vessel.

In relation to point 4, both paragraph 4.5 and 4.7 of our report make it clear that the fact that Mr. Juhas was caught by a rope coil clearly demonstrates that he could not have been standing in a safe position.

The Board confirms the conclusion of recommendations 7.1 and 7.2 of its report. The Board further points out that under Irish Legislation all crew members are required to be conversant with and understand the Safety Statement.

An Garda Síochána

An tArd-Cheannfort
An Garda Síochána,
Caisleán an Bharraigh,
Contae Mhaigh Eo.



Chief Superintendent
An Garda Síochána
Castlebar
Co. Mayo

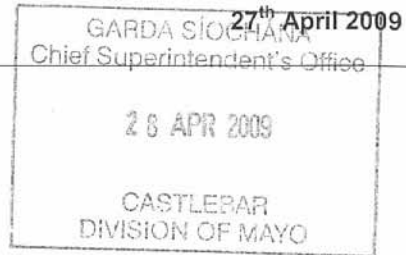
Tel/Teileafón: 094 9038211
Fax/ Faes: 094 9038281

Web site: www.garda.ie

E-mail: anthony.c.menamara@garda.ie

Please quote the following ref. number

MA 01C/159/08
WR31/4/08




Marine Casualty Investigation Board
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2

RE: DRAFT REPORT OF INVESTIGATION INTO FATAL ACCIDENT ON
BOARD FV 'ATLANTIC WEST' NORTH OF MAYO STAGS 2ND JULY
2007

A Chara,

I refer to above and your minute of 22nd April 2009 and am to inform you that Chief Superintendent A.C. McNamara has studied the contents of the report. He has no submissions to make in relation to its contents.

Mise le meas,


W. KEAVENEY
Superintendent for
Chief Superintendent



Ráiteas Misin / Mission Statement:

An leibhéal inscروichte is aird a bhaint amach maidir le Cosaint Phearsanta, Tíomantas don Phobal agus Slándáil Stáit

To achieve the highest attainable level of Personal Protection, Community Commitment and State Security

MCIB RESPONSE

The MCIB notes the contents of this letter.


Irish Coast Guard
GARDA CÓSTA na hÉIREANN
27th April 2009



Mr. John G. O'Donnell, B.L.,
Chairman MCIB,
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

**Draft Report of Investigation into fatal accident on board FV "Atlantic West",
north of Mayo Staggs, 2nd July 2007.**

I refer to your letter of 22nd April, 2009 inviting a response to the above. I am to
advise you that the Irish Coast Guard has no observations on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,

Liz O'Donnell
Irish Coast Guard
Department of Transport
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
phone 01 6783450 fax 6783459
lizodonnell@transport.ie



MCIB RESPONSE

The MCIB notes the contents of this letter.

