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**REPORT INTO FATAL INCIDENT  
ONBOARD THE  
MV “CEOL NA FARRAIGE”  
ON  
1st JULY 2012**

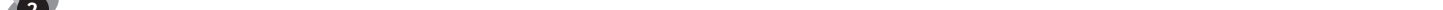
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**REPORT No. MCIB/218  
(No.6 of 2013)**



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## 1. SUMMARY

**Note: All times are in IST**

- 1.1 On the morning of the 1st July 2012 two ferryboats were moored alongside each other at the ferry berth at Kilronan Harbour, Inis Mór. The MV Ceol Na Farraige moored starboard side alongside the pier and the MV Draiocht Na Farraige moored to the port side of the MV Ceol Na Farraige.
- 1.2 The engineer of the MV Draiocht Na Farraige Mr James McLean was standing in the wheelhouse of the MV Ceol Na Farraige tallying the passengers boarding the MV Draiocht Na Farraige. Mr McLean moved to improve his viewpoint and in doing so lost his balance and fell down the stairway, striking his head against the door at the bottom.
- 1.3 The emergency services were immediately alerted and Mr McLean was airlifted to Galway hospital where he subsequently died.

## 2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 Particulars of the Vessel

Name:	MV Ceol Na Farraiqe
Builder:	Wave Master International, Freemantle, Australia.
Year of Build:	2001
IMO Number:	9246750
Call Sign:	EI6418
MMSI Number:	250134440
Gross Tonnage:	234 Tons
Type of Ship:	Passenger Ship
Official Number:	403549
Overall Length:	31.83m
Breadth:	8.0m
Moulded Depth:	3.0m
Moulded Draft:	2.48m
Material of Construction:	Aluminium
Service Speed:	19.9 knots
Engines:	Twin Caterpillar D 3412s
Name & Address of Owner:	Island Ferries Teoranta, Galway, Ireland.
General Description of Vessel:	Twin screw, aluminium built ferry of carvel construction with a raked stem and transom stern.



General View of the MV Ceol Na Farraiqe

- 2.2 At time of incident the vessel had an Irish Passenger Ship Safety Certificate issued under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1992 and European Communities (Passenger Ship) Regulations 2006 for the carriage of up to 294 passengers plying between Rossaveal and the Aran Islands.
- 2.3 Met Éireann estimate of weather conditions Kilronan Harbour, Inis Mór between 06:00hrs and 12:00hrs 1st July 2012. Winds: Light Force 2 to 3, from a westerly direction at first, backed south to southeast later. Weather: dry and bright at first. It became cloudy with spells of rain by 10:00hrs. Visibility: good at first but decreased to moderate in rain.
- 2.4 The deceased James Patrick McLean was 73 years of age, he was employed as a Chief Engineer with Island Ferries Teoranta, and he was in possession of a Chief Engineer's Certificate of Competency valid until 9th December 2012. On the day of the incident he was employed as the Chief Engineer on the MV Draiocht Na Farraige a similar sister ship to the MV Ceol Na Farraige.
- 2.5 The stairs from the main deck to the wheelhouse consisted of 11 steps, the stairwell being 880mm wide. Each step had a riser of 240mm and a tread width of 235mm. A handrail was fitted to both sides of the stairwell 1,050mm above the steps. Each step was fitted with a slip resistant surface.



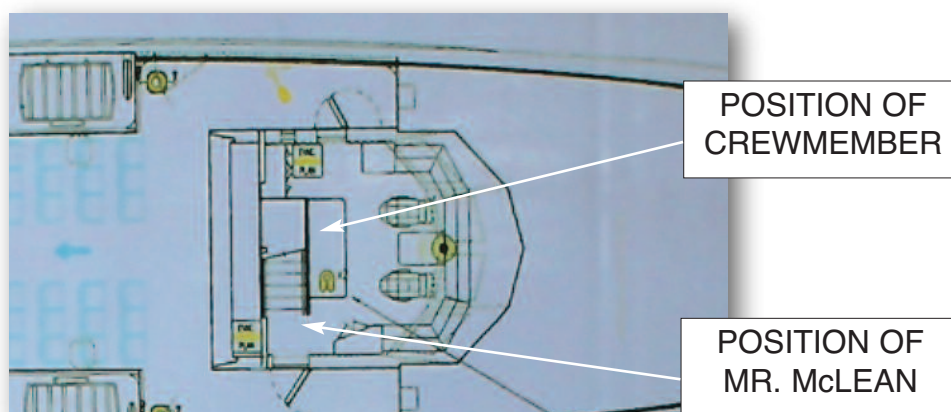
View of Stairwell from Top



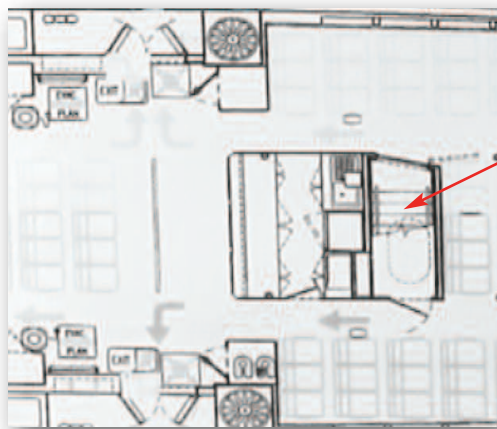
View of Stairwell from Bottom

### 3. NARRATIVE

- 3.1 On the morning of the 1st July Mr McLean travelled from his home and joined the MV Draiocht Na Farraige.
- 3.2 The MV Draiocht Na Farraige sailed Rossaveal for Kilronan at approximately 10:15hrs, arriving at approximately 11:00hrs.
- 3.3 On arrival at Kilronan the MV Draiocht Na Farraige moored starboard side to the port side of the MV Ceol Na Farraige, which was moored starboard side alongside the ferry berth.
- 3.4 The embarkation of passengers onboard the MV Draiocht Na Farraige commenced at approximately 11:30hrs. The embarkation was via the upper deck of the MV Ceol Na Farraige.
- 3.5 Mr McLean was tallying the passengers onboard the MV Draiocht Na Farraige and to carry out this task he positioned himself at the entrance to the gangway situated onboard the MV Ceol Na Farraige.
- 3.6 As rain had commenced a crewmember on the MV Ceol Na Farraige invited Mr McLean into the wheelhouse, where he would be out of the weather and still in a position to view and tally the passengers boarding the MV Draiocht Na Farraige.
- 3.7 Mr McLean was standing inside the starboard aft window at the top of the stairway leading to the main cabin, facing aft; ready to count the passengers as they boarded within his view. The crewmember was standing in front of the chart table facing Mr McLean's back.
- 3.8 The crewmember suggested to Mr McLean to improve his viewpoint he should move to the front of the chart table where he was standing.



- 3.9 To change his position from the top of the stairwell to in front of the chart table, Mr McLean turned to his left and in so doing his right foot stepped backwards onto the first downward step. Caught unawares by this loss of footing he lost his balance and fell backwards and headfirst down the stairway, striking the back of his head against the door at the bottom of the 11-step stairway.
- 3.10 The crewmember went down the stairway to find Mr McLean lying unconscious at the foot of the stairway with blood coming from a wound at the back of his head. His feet and lower legs were inside the door and in contact with the lowest step. His head and upper body were in the port aisle.



POSITION OF  
MR. McLEAN

- 3.11 The crewmember ran back up the stairs to alert the Garda stationed on the pier. He also summoned all available crew to assist at the scene of the casualty, and for them to alert the Medical Centre and Coast Guard.
- 3.12 The Kilonan Medical Centre was contacted at 11:33hrs and made aware of the incident.
- 3.13 The Coast Guard was contacted at 11:36hrs and informed of an injured man onboard the MV Ceol Na Farraige.
- 3.14 At 11:40hrs request to Coast Guard for medical evacuation of crewmember to hospital.
- 3.15 At approximately 11:40hrs personnel from Medical Centre arrive on ship with defibrillator.
- 3.16 At approximately 11:50hrs Doctor arrives at scene of casualty.
- 3.17 At approximately 12:00hrs a second Doctor arrived on the scene of the casualty. The patient was secured on a stretcher and taken by ambulance to the helicopter landing site.
- 3.18 At 12:15hrs helicopter landed and departed at 12:43hrs for Galway Hospital.



- 3.19 At 12:51hrs Helicopter arrived at Galway Hospital and casualty transferred to medical team.
- 3.20 Mr McLean died in Galway Hospital at 03:28hrs on the 3rd July 2012.

## 4. ANALYSIS

- 4.1 The vessel was built in 2001 and had undergone no modifications in the area of the incident since the vessel was built.
- 4.2 At the bottom of the stairs there was fitted a heavy steel door with a handle situated 1,060mm above deck.
- 4.3 There was no means at the top of the stairwell to prevent any person inadvertently stepping into a gaping void.
- 4.4 It is apparent that Mr McLean accidentally lost his footing when going to change his position from at the top of the stairwell to a position by the chart table.
- 4.5 Caught unawares by this loss of footing he lost his balance and fell backwards and headfirst down the stairway, striking the back of his head against the door at the bottom of the 11-step stairway. Mr McLean subsequently died of his injuries.
- 4.6 Prior to the incident the stairway had not been considered as a risk area.
- 4.7 An unprotected access to a stairwell from wheelhouse to main deck can be a potential hazard particularly in relatively small vessels. Even more so during night-time navigation when illumination in the wheelhouse will be limited.
- 4.8 Since the incident the Owners have fitted spring-loaded doors at the top of the stairwell, which will prevent anyone unintentionally stepping into a void.



Spring Loaded Gate Subsequently Fitted at Top of Stairs, Preventing Accidental Stepping onto Stairs.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Mr McLean accidentally lost his footing when going to change his position from the top of the stairwell to a position by the chart table. Caught unawares by this loss of footing he lost his balance and fell backwards and headfirst down the stairway, striking the back of his head against the door at the bottom of the 11-step stairway. He subsequently died of his injuries.

## 6. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Board notes that the Owners have taken the necessary actions to prevent a similar incident occurring by fitting a spring loaded gate at the top of the stairwell on both the MV Draiocht Na Farraige and MV Ceol Na Farraige. No further actions are required.
- 6.2 It is recommended that a Marine notice be issued for owners reminding them of the need to carry out a risk analysis in accordance with the Domestic Safety Management code. This should address all risks including open stairwells leading from the wheelhouse and take any necessary precautions resulting out of the analysis.

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## Appendix 7.1 Met Éireann Weather Information.



**MET ÉIREANN**  
*The Irish Meteorological Service*

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18/7/2012

*Our Ref.* WS 3018/2\_14672

*Your Ref.* MCIB/12/218

**Estimate of weather conditions at Kilronan Harbour, Inis Mór, on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 between 6 and 18 hours.**

**General Situation**

A weak ridge of High Pressure at 6 hours moved eastwards quickly as frontal troughs followed during the morning.

**Details**

**06 to 12 hours**

Winds: Light Force 2 to 3, from a westerly direction at first, backed south to south-east later.

Weather: dry and bright at first. It became cloudy with spells of rain by 10 hours.

Visibility: good at first but decreased moderate in rain.

**12 to 18 hours**

Winds: quickly increased Moderate, Force 4 and occasionally touched Fresh, Force 5, from a south-easterly direction. The winds veered to between south and south-west at about 15 hours UTC (16 hours local time). This would have been a more sheltered direction for the Harbour with some consequent reduction in the wind speed inside Killeany Bay.

Weather: Cloudy with further spells of rain and drizzle during the afternoon.

Visibility: moderate to poor.

The seastate on the Atlantic side of Inis Mór was Rough from a north-westerly direction in the early morning but decreased during the day to Slight from a mainly westerly direction. The air temperatures ranged 10°C to 14°C.

**Evelyn Murphy B.Sc. M.Sc. Meteorologist**  
Research & Applications Division  
Met Éireann

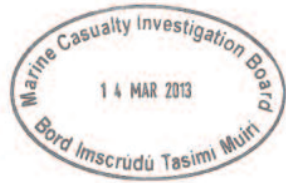
**8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

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**Note:** The address and contact details of the individual respondent have been obscured for privacy reasons.

## CORRESPONDENCE 8.1

Correspondence 8.1 Ms Fiona McLean and MCIB Response.



11<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Dear Ms Dand,

Thank you for the draft report on MV Ceol na Faraige 1st July 2012. We do not have any further comments or observations to offer.


Kind regards,

Fiona McLean

**MCIB RESPONSE:**  
The MCIB notes the contents of this correspondence



Correspondence 8.2 Aran Island Ferries and MCIB Response.



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Fax: (091) 572448

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Ceol na Farraige, Deisce na Farraige,  
Glór na Farraige, Banríon na Farraige,  
Banríon Chionnara.

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19/02/2013

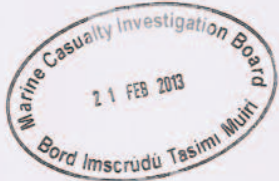
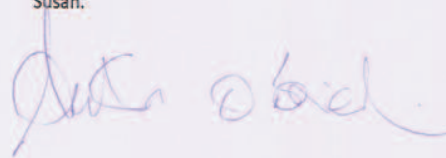
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Assumpta,

As per your letter of February 14<sup>th</sup> referring to the draft report of the investigation into the fatal incident on board M.V. Ceol na Farraige on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2012 I wish to inform you that we have no comments or observations to offer.

Thankyou for sending on a copy.

Kind Regards,  
Susan.



Directors: Paddy & Sally O'Brien.

**MCIB RESPONSE:**  
The MCIB notes the contents of this correspondence.





