

**REPORT OF THE
INVESTIGATION INTO THE
COLLISION BETWEEN
THE FISHING VESSEL
"FIONA PATRICIA" AND
THE BARGE "MONTGOMERY"
ON THE 20TH AUGUST 2000.**

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board was established on the 23rd, May 2002 under The Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000

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1. SYNOPSIS.

- 1.1 On Saturday the 20th August 2000 at approximately 2300 hours local time the fishing vessel "Fiona Patricia" collided with an unlit barge "Montgomery" at the southern entrance to Castletownbere Harbour.
- 1.2 The vessel "Fiona Patricia" suffered significant damage along her starboard side, which necessitated repairs on the slipway at Castletownbere (See photograph at Appendix 8.1). There were no injuries.

2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

2.1 Description of MFV "Fiona Patricia"

Construction:	Wooden Hull fishing boat of carvel construction with a raked stem and cruiser stern (See photograph at Appendix 8.1).
Name of Builders:	Herbert & Herand, Belz, France
Year of Build:	1971
Engines:	One Internal Combustion, V-Form, Geared, BHP: 360
Gross Tonnage:	97.53
Register Tonnage:	55.54
Port of Registry:	Tralee
Owner:	Damien Turner Fisheries, Castletownbere
Registered Length:	22.07 Metres
Breadth:	6.51 Metres
Depth:	3.23 Metres

2.1.1 Navigation Equipment:

1 x Furuno FR1510MK2 Radar
 1 x Koden MD3000 Radar
 1 x Magnetic Compass
 1 x MLR 2008M2 DGPS
 1 x MLR FX412GPS
 2 x 'Skipper' Sounders
 2 x Taiyo Direction Finders

2.1.2 Deck Machinery:

Rigged for Seine Fishing

2.2 Description of MV "Cava Lass"

Owner:	Blue Ocean Marine, Ltd Castletownbere.*
Operator:	Mr. Colum Harrington, Castletownbere, Co. Cork
Type of vessel:	40 foot Mooring Launch (See photograph at Appendix 8.1)
Gross Tonnage:	15.09 tons
Register Tonnage:	6.79 tons
Length:	36.8 feet
Breadth:	11.75 feet
Depth:	5.7 feet
Built:	1975 at Cowes, Isle of Wight
Engine:	Rolls Royce, 348 BHP

2.3 Description of Barge "Montgomery"

Owner:	Blue Ocean Marine, Ltd Castletownbere.
Type of Barge:	Dumb Hopper Barge with Hopper Space 25 Metres long
Built:	1965, Netherlands
Length Overall:	36.27 Metres
Breadth:	6,71 Metres
(See photographs at Appendix 8.1)	

* Blue Ocean Marine is a company owned by Mr. & Mrs. Colum Harrington

3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

- 3.1 The weather conditions were good on the evening of Sunday 20th August 2000 (See Appendix 8.2).
- 3.2 The vessel "Cava Lass" under the command of Mr. Colum Harrington proceeded with the barge 'Montgomery' in tow from the port earlier in the day with the intention of raising a sunken fishing vessel west of Castletownbere harbour. There were three crew on board including the Master.
- 3.3 According to the Master of the "Cava Lass", they secured chains from the "Montgomery" to the sunken fishing vessel at low water and intended towing the raised vessel at high water to a nearby strand at Dunboy woods within Castletownbere Harbour.
- 3.4 They fell behind schedule by one and a half hours. The "Cava Lass" proceeded with the barge "Montgomery" in tow and the wreck of the sunken fishing vessel suspended underneath the barge.

The "combination" of vessels entered the sound at the southern entrance to Castletownbere harbour but grounded at approximately 2010 hours about 200 metres northwest of Naglas Point (See Appendix 8.3).

- 3.5 On diving from the "Cava Lass" it was noted that one of the chains had broken and the fishing vessel was lying at a steeper angle than at the outset and was grounded in the bow.
- 3.6 At approximately 2240 hours according to the Master, he and the two crew left the combination of vessels to go ashore and get oil for the pumps and additional lights for the barge and left the "Cava Lass" tied to the "Montgomery" on the Montgomery's Port side amidships. He left the steaming lights turned on and a searchlight shining to starboard on to the barge.

4. THE INCIDENT

- 4.1 At approximately 2230 hours on Sunday the 20th August the fishing vessel "Fiona Patricia" cast off from her berth at Castletownbere. All navigation equipment was reported to be in good order. According to the Skipper the vessel was lined up in the white sector of Dinish Island light when he observed a small craft ahead in the channel showing a starboard navigational light.
- 4.2 According to the Skipper of the "Fiona Patricia" as he was passing starboard to starboard, clear of the small craft, he decided to maintain course to remain in the channel.
- 4.3 At approximately 2300 hours the "Fiona Patricia" collided with the unlit barge "Montgomery".

5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

- 5.1 The Skipper of the "Fiona Patricia" instructed his crew to put on their lifejackets and checked his own vessel for damage. The Skipper checked with his searchlight to see if there was anybody on board the other vessel. He contacted the Coast Guard Radio and then went alongside the "Cava Lass" and sent some of his crew on board to check for persons.
- 5.2 At approximately 2345 hours the Harbour Master arrived at the scene and recognizing the "Cava Lass" he made contact with Mr. Colum Harrington (owner).
- 5.3 Castletownbere Lifeboat arrived at the scene, assessed the situation and subsequently departed.
- 5.4 On Monday the 21st August 2000 the barge with the sunken fishing vessel suspended underneath was moved to a position clear of the channel.
- 5.5 The fishing vessel "Fiona Patricia" suffered significant damage along her starboard side and proceeded to be repaired whilst out of the water at the repair slip at Castletownbere. Damage was noted to include quite a number of fractured planks with a number of frames and beams also fractured. All major damage was above the waterline.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

- 6.1 A combination of vessels consisting of a mooring launch and a dumb barge with a sunken fishing vessel suspended underneath was left unattended without notice to authorities or mariners in the navigational channel in Castletownbere Harbour.
- 6.2 This combination of vessels was not lit in accordance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.
- 6.3 It is unlikely that the vessel "Fiona Patricia" would have collided with the barge if it was properly lit.
- 6.4 It is unlikely that the Skipper was aware of the presence of the combination of vessels in the channel.
- 6.5 No notice was given to the Harbour Master in respect of the 'salvage' operation that was attempted by Mr. Colum Harrington on Sunday 20th August 2000. According to Mr. Harrington he may have probably mentioned at some stage in the past his intentions to the Harbour Master but he never discussed any details.
- 6.6 Mr. Harrington in his capacity as Master of the "Cava Lass" and being in charge of the 'salvage' operation did not inform the Harbour Master or a Coast Radio station that he was leaving vessel unlit in the navigational channel in Castletownbere. According to Mr. Harrington he discussed this matter with one of the two crew and both assumed that each other had done so.
- 6.7 The "Cava Lass" does not possess the appropriate Load Line Certification to carry out this type of operation.
- 6.8 There is no statutory manning requirement in respect of a vessel of the size and length of the "Cava Lass" when operating as a workboat. Mr. Colum Harrington has approximately thirty years experience with boats. In February 1998 the "Cava Lass" passed survey for the issue of a passenger boat licence.
- 6.9 The vessel "Fiona Patricia" complied with manning regulations. The Skipper has a Skipper Full Certificate of Competency.
- 6.10 No injuries or pollution occurred as a result of this incident.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 All mariners when operating within any harbour should maintain contact appropriate to the nature of their operations with the Harbour Master or other relevant authority. When operating along our coast, mariners should maintain appropriate contact as necessary with Coast Guard Coast Radio stations.
- 7.2 Mariners are required to comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. Appropriate lights are required to be shown at night and appropriate shapes are required to be carried by day where they can best be seen.
- 7.3 Appropriate notice of marine operations should be promulgated by notice in a newspaper, marine notice and by radio to the extent necessary to inform the marine public.

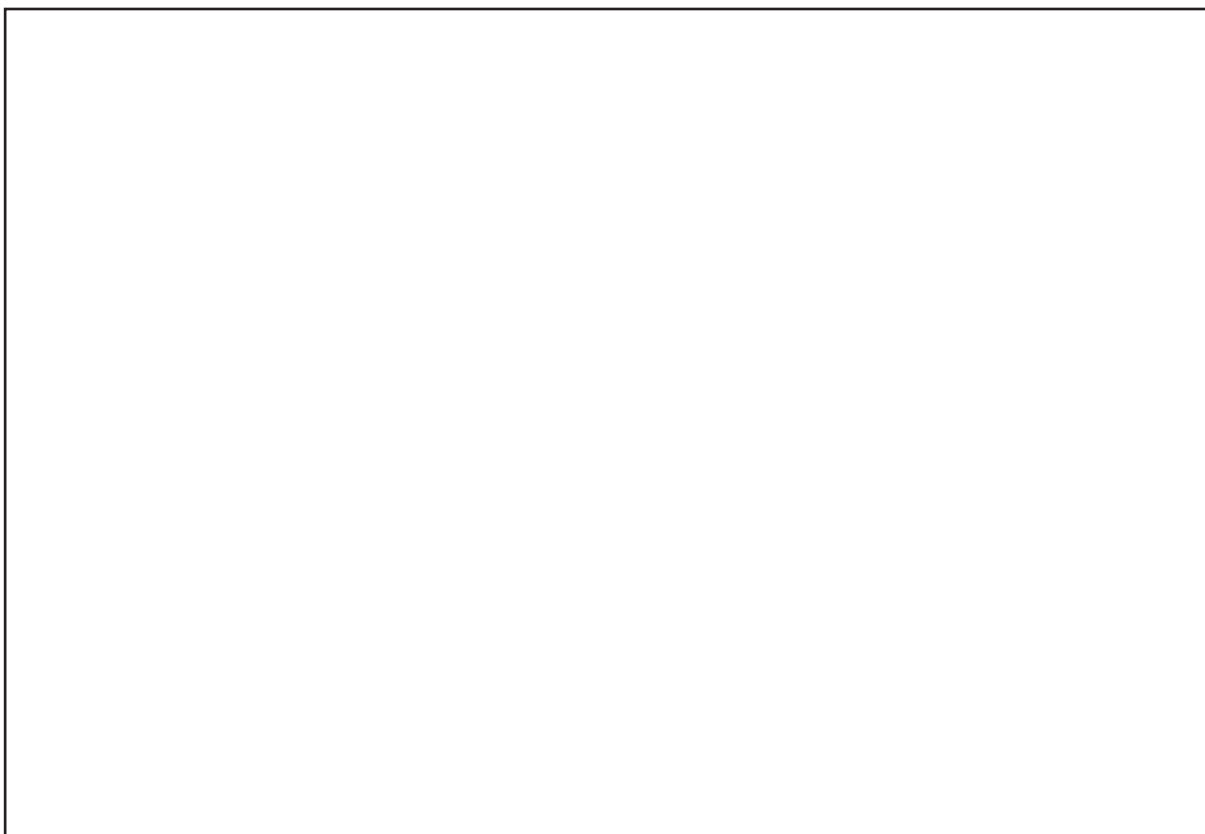
8. APPENDICES

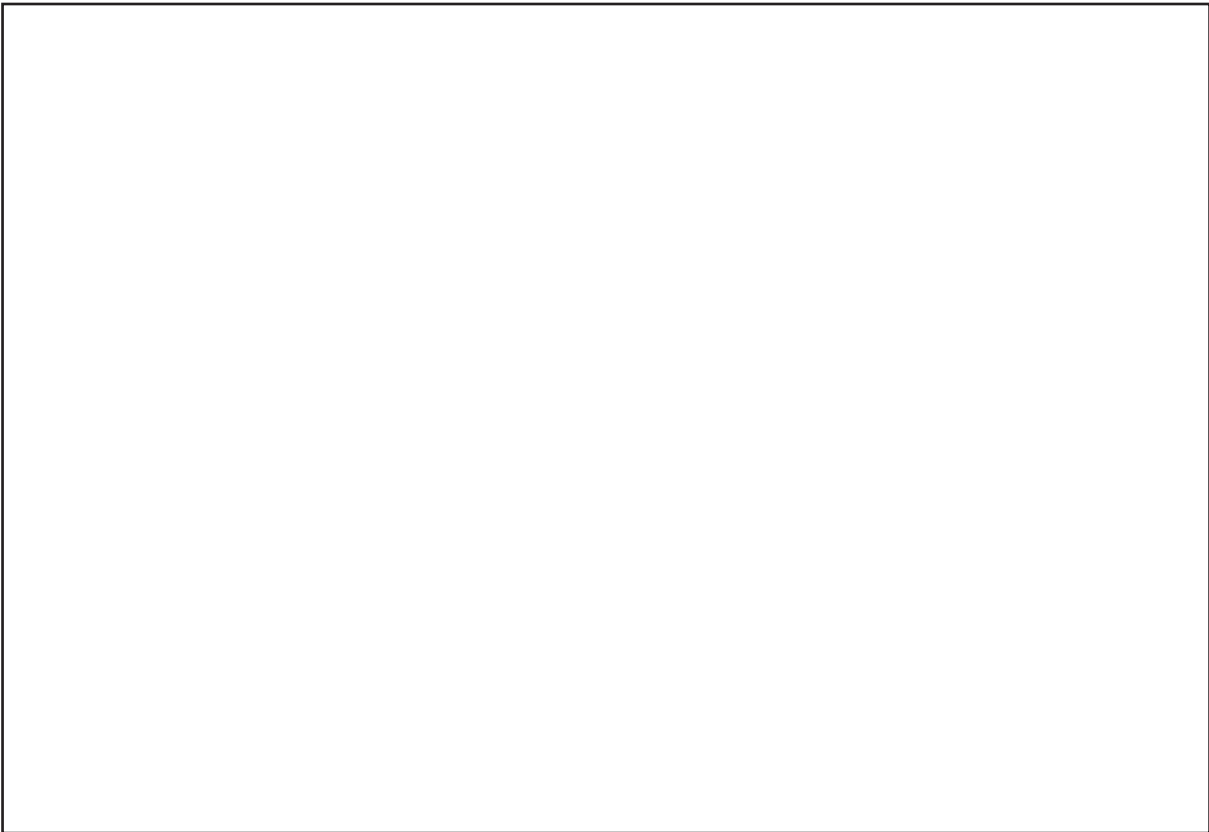
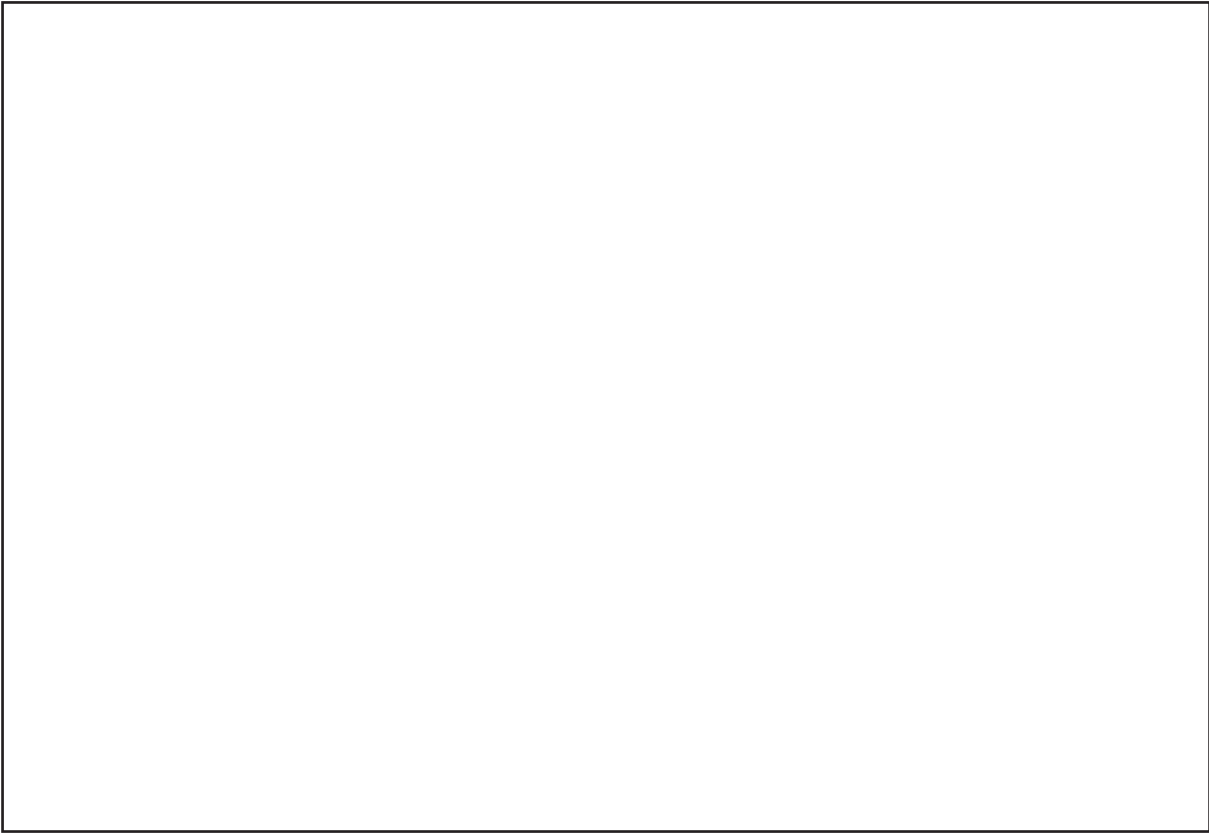
8.1: Photographs of the three vessels.

8.2 Met Eireann Weather Report.

8.3 Map of accident locus.


8.1: Photographs of the three vessels.







8.2 Met Éireann Weather Report.



MET ÉIREANN
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**Weather Report for Castletownbere Harbour
on the 20th August 2000
between 20 and 24 hours**

General situation

A weak low pressure area west of Ireland

Details

Winds: west to south-west in direction. In Bantry Bay the winds were Force 2 to 4 but inside the Harbour they were probably only Force 1 or 2.

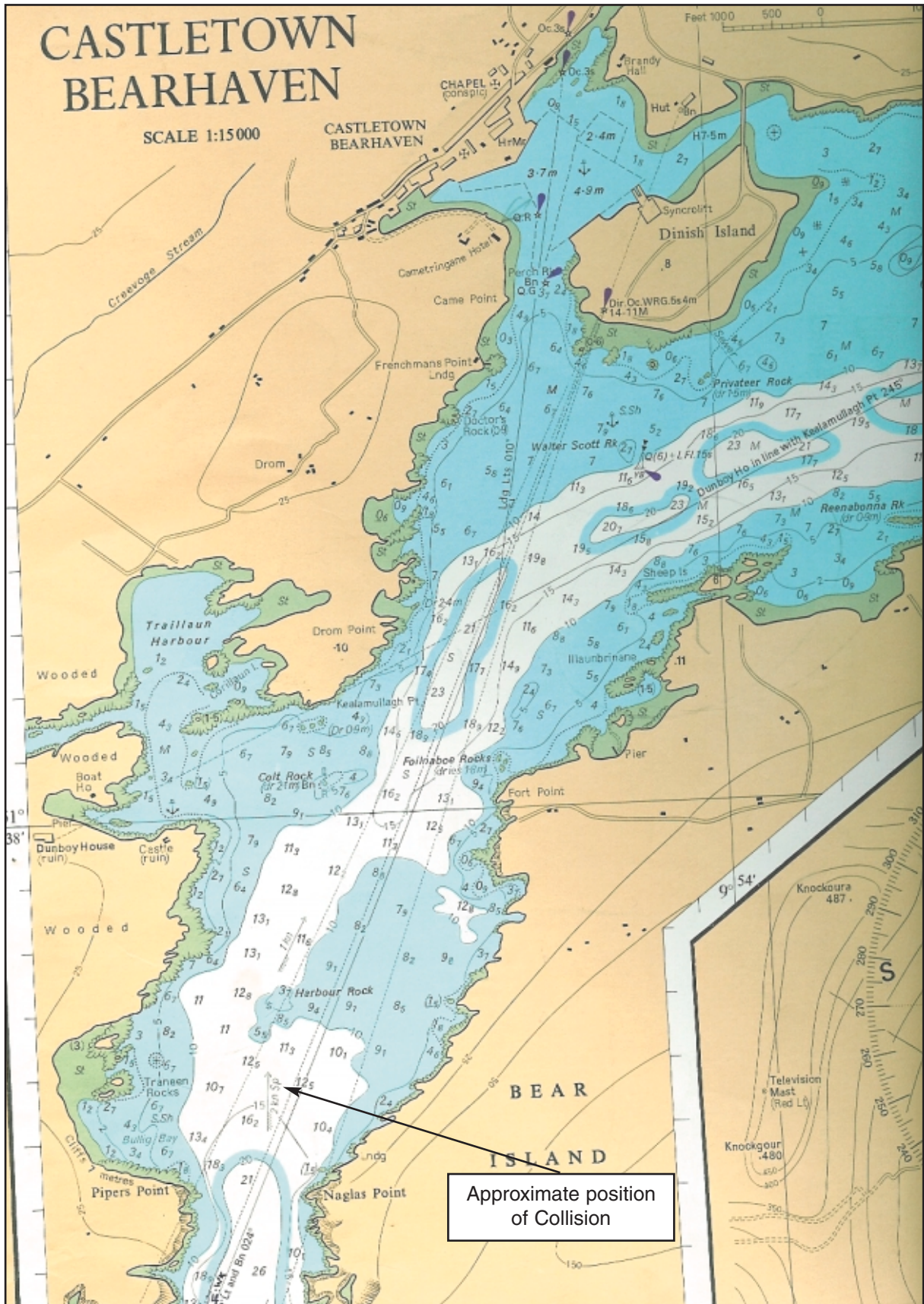
weather: generally dry (isolated showers were reported at some of our stations)

visibility: good

Seastate: outside Bantry Bay the seastate was Slight.

Note: There were no observations in the area. This report is based on the routine weather charts drawn up by this office. The waves are based on our operational wave model predictions.

8.3 Map of accident locus.



NOT TO USE FOR NAVIGATION

9. INDEX OF CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

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**Royal National
Lifeboat Institution**
Registered charity number 2678
Supported entirely by voluntary contributions

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Mr Dick Heron
Secretary
Marine Casualty Investigation Board
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 4

8 December 2003



Dear Mr Heron,

Re: MCIB 25 Report into Collision at Castletownbere 20 August 2000

Thank you for affording the Royal National Lifeboat Institution the opportunity to comment upon the above report.

We have no further comment to make in relation to this report.

Yours sincerely

Colin Williams
Inspector of Lifeboats (Ireland)

MCIB RESPONSE

The MCIB notes the contents of this letter.

