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**REPORT OF INVESTIGATION  
INTO FATAL INCIDENT OFF  
HELVICK HEAD,  
CO. WATERFORD  
23rd MAY 2010.**

**REPORT No. MCIB/186  
(No.1 of 2012)**



Report MCIB/186 published by The Marine Casualty Investigation Board.  
Published 8th February 2012.

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## 1. SYNOPSIS

- 1.1 Mr. John O'Brien & Mr. Pat Esmonde departed from Helvick Pier, Co. Waterford on 23rd May 2010 in a small RIB to go angling close to Helvick Head. The alarm was raised when the RIB was seen drifting and empty with one man close-by in the water. Both men were lost overboard and their remains were recovered on 25th May 2010.

## 2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 Description of the vessel

The vessel is a Force 3 GT Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) manufactured by Flatacraft Ltd, Leicester, UK. The fibreglass hull is surrounded by inflated flexible tubes at sides and front and a rigid transom carried an outboard engine. The engine fitted was a Suzuki 8 outboard with a separate fuel tank connected to the engine by a flexible tube. The boat is steered at the stern by direct control of the outboard engine. A remote control lever at the steering position is used to control the engine gears and throttle. The RIB is designed to carry up to four persons and to use an engine up to 30 horsepower.



### 2.2 Technical specification

Boat maker: Flatacraft Ltd  
 Model: Force 3 GT  
 Length: 3m  
 Material: GRP Hull & Inflated Tubes  
 Engine type: Suzuki outboard motor  
 Engine power: 8 horsepower  
 Max allowed: 30 horsepower

### 2.3 Equipment

Equipment on board the day of the incident included

- 8 hp Suzuki outboard motor
- P.V.C. fuel tank and feed hose

- 2 Paddles
- 2 Lifejackets. COSALT Premier, DOT (UK) approved with light & whistle
- Foot operated pump to inflate RIB tubes
- 1 Fishing Rod & Reel

No VHF Radio or flares were found aboard.

## 2.4 Crew List

Mr. John O'Brien, Co. Waterford.

Mr. Pat Esmonde, Co. Tipperary.

## 2.5 Tidal Information

23rd May 2010

High water - 14:16 hrs.

Low water - 20:51 hrs.

## 2.6 Weather conditions

The weather at the time of the accident was calm and clear. Visibility was greater than 10km. Met Éireann weather forecast and reports are attached in Appendix 1.

## 2.7 Location

The location of the incident was noted as Lat 52° 02.63N. Long 07° 32.04W. This position was taken as the search datum point.

## 2.8 Timeline of the incident

**23 May 2010. (Local Time: GMT +1)**

12:00 hrs. Two men departed home by road with RIB in tow.

13:15 hrs. RNLI Crew member spoke to two men launching the RIB at Helvick.

16:00 hrs. RIB located in the vicinity of Helvick Head. RIB sighted by a fisherman North East of Helvick Head, in Dungarvan Bay.

17:00 hrs. RIB sighted by the Fisherman 200m East of Helvick Head.

17:15 hrs. RIB sighted by the Fisherman to West of Helvick Head.

17:16 hrs. Anglers noted RIB stopped with two men in the water.

17:18 hrs. The Fisherman noted RIB stopped with one man in the water.

- 17:20 hrs. The Fisherman phoned Lifeboat to report empty RIB and one man in distress in the water.
- 17:20 hrs. Whale watchers located at Helvick Head at the top of the Headland by the Old Lookout Tower, phoned 999 to report empty RIB and one man in distress in the water.
- 17:32 hrs. Lifeboat launched.
- 17:39hrs. First Lifeboat arrived on scene.
- 21:17 hrs. Search suspended for night.

**24 May 2010**

- 04:38 hrs. Search resumed.
- 21:00 hrs. Search suspended for night.

**25 May 2010**

- 08:10 hrs. Search resumed.
- 11:25 hrs. Reported recovery of two bodies.
- 11:54 hrs. Remains of two men landed ashore and search stood down.

### 3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

- 3.1 Mr. Pat Esmonde purchased the RIB on or about 15th May 2010.
- 3.2 Mr. Esmonde accompanied by Mr. John O'Brien left home at about noon on Sunday 23rd May 2010.
- 3.3 At 13:15 hrs. the two men launched the RIB at Helvick Pier where they were approached by a member of the local RNLI crew. Mr. O'Brien told the RNLI crewmember that he had not previously been to sea. Mr. Esmonde then described his own experience of the sea.
- 3.4 At about 17:15 hrs. the RIB passed close to a small fishing boat, "*Emily Jane*", to the West of Helvick Head with the two men standing up in the RIB. They were not wearing shirts or life jackets. They passed within 80m of the fisherman and a point close to the shore to the West of Carrig a Scamall when they turned South. The Fisherman had already noticed them on two occasions on the same day at about 16:00 hrs. some distance to the North East of Helvick Head and at about 17:00 hrs. when the RIB was about 200m East of Helvick Head.
- 3.5 The owner of an angling boat, "*Mary O*", reports that while fishing to the South South East of Helvick Head he saw the RIB passing between him and the land with two men sitting down. One was sitting on the starboard side tube and the second low down in the RIB. Neither man was wearing a shirt or lifejacket.



## 4. THE INCIDENT

- 4.1 At about 17:18 hrs. the occupant of the "*Emily Jane*" was trolling with engine power on when he saw the RIB about 200m away from him and to the South West of Carrig a Scamall. The RIB was empty and one man was visible in the water moving as if swimming. Evidence received states that Mr. Pat Esmonde was a non-swimmer, see correspondence.
- 4.2 At about the same time two people aboard the "*Mary O*" describe how they were stopped close to, East or North East, of the RIB. They describe seeing two men swimming close to the RIB. At that moment they decided to move to another location to the East and closer to Helvick head. Evidence received states that Mr. Pat Esmonde was a non-swimmer, see correspondence.
- 4.3 When the occupant on the "*Emily Jane*" had almost retrieved his gear, he throttled back his engine and heard a cry for help. He immediately retrieved the remainder of his line and proceeded at maximum speed towards the RIB while telephoning the Lifeboat at Helvick.
- 4.4 As the occupant of the "*Emily Jane*" made his way to the casualty the "*Mary O*" started up and moved away towards Helvick Head.
- 4.5 Two local whale-watchers were standing on Helvick Head when they heard a cry for help. They saw the empty RIB with one man close-by in the water clearly in distress. They dialled 999 to raise the alarm. They also saw the "*Mary O*" stopped in the water about 100m from the RIB before it started up and turned away towards Helvick Head.
- 4.6 As the occupant of the "*Emily Jane*" approached the casualty, at a distance of about 40m, he saw the drowning man go beneath the surface. This was also witnessed by the whale-watchers above.
- 4.7 The occupant of the "*Emily Jane*" reported a tyre floating at the surface of the water at a distance of 4 - 5m from the RIB.

### 5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

- 5.1 The Marine Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Dublin launched a search operation involving:
- Helvick Lifeboat
  - Helvick Coastguard
  - Local boats
  - Rescue Helicopter R117 from Waterford
  - Youghal Lifeboat
  - An Air Corps Casa fixed wing aeroplane C253
  - Irish Naval Service L.E. Orla
  - Irish Naval Service Diving Unit
- 5.2 The search operation was carried out during all available daylight hours until 11:25 hrs. (local time) on 25th May 2010 when the recovery of two bodies by Naval Divers was reported.
- 5.3 The remains of the two men were recovered by Naval Service divers and landed ashore by Helvick Lifeboat at Helvick Lifeboat Station at 10:54 hrs. on 25th May 2010. The remains were identified by family members at Helvick Lifeboat station.
- 5.4 Post Mortem's carried out on both men concluded that death was due to drowning.

## 6. FINDINGS

- 6.1 The weather at the time of the accident was calm with negligible wind or wave action.
- 6.2 The RIB, though relatively small, was in good condition and suitable for use in that area on that day. A "kill cord" arrangement is fitted to stop the engine in the event of the driver being thrown clear. It was not in use. When the empty RIB was picked up it was out of gear with the engine stopped.
- 6.3 Mr. Esmonde had boating experience while Mr. O'Brien did not. Neither man wore a lifejacket or personal floatation device (PFD).
- 6.4 The RIB travelled East across Dungarvan Bay from Helvick Pier before moving South West to Helvick Head and on to Carrig a Scamall over a period of about four hours.
- 6.5 The two persons aboard the "*Mary O*" state that they saw and heard the two men swimming in the sea before deciding to move to another location to fish.
- 6.6 Three other witnesses state that they saw and heard one distressed man in the water before they saw him descend below the surface.
- 6.7 The floating tyre was a relatively large submerged obstacle compared to this small RIB. Had the RIB struck this obstacle with both men standing, they may both have been thrown overboard. However when the RIB was recovered the engine was out of gear and stopped. This indicates that the RIB was not underway when the two men entered the water.
- 6.8 Gardaí have had the data from the GPS of the "*Mary O*" downloaded from its memory and are considering the implications of that information.
- 6.9 The alarm was raised by the "*Emily Jane*" using a mobile phone. A distress call put out by VHF on channel 16 will be picked up by the Coast Guard and any vessel within range that may be in a position to render assistance. In this instance the action of using the mobile phone made no difference to the outcome.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The safety equipment carried on the RIB was inadequate. All personnel on vessels of 7 metres and less in length are required to wear a personal floatation device (PFD) when aboard such a vessel. [ref. Pleasure Craft (Personal Flotation Devices and Operation)(Safety) Regulations S.I. 921 of 2005)].
- 7.2 Neither man wore a (PFD) during their boat trip. If the reason they came to be in the water was accidental their lives would probably have been saved by wearing same. There were two lifejackets on board the RIB of a type suitable for emergency use rather than constant wearing in such a vessel.
- 7.3 The "kill cord" provided with the outboard motor was not in use.
- 7.4 There are inconsistencies in the various accounts of this incident in terms of the location, tracks and relative positions of the vessels.
- 7.5 It is becoming more common that mobile phones are used in emergency situations at sea. The closed nature of the communication can have a negative influence on the outcome.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Safety awareness among leisure boat users must be increased in relation to the need to wear a PFD as one of the basic steps needed to improve the chance of survival when an accident occurs. It is recommended that the Minister undertakes a highly visible information poster campaign on piers and launching areas relating to lifejackets, VHF radio and emergency contact details.
- 8.2 It is recommended that the Minister for Transport remind leisure boaters of their obligations regarding the wearing of PFDs aboard pleasure craft as required by S.I. No.921 of 2005 - Pleasure Craft (Personal Flotation Devices and Operation) (Safety) Regulations 2005.

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Appendix 9.1 Photographs of the RIB.



Appendix 9.1 Photographs of the RIB.





Appendix 9.2 Met Éireann Weather report.



**MET ÉIREANN**  
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Ms Eve Reddin  
MCIB  
Leeson Lane  
Dublin 2

28/5/2010

*Our Ref.* WS 3018/2B\_13692  
*Your Ref.* MCIB/186

**Re: Estimate of weather conditions in the sea area off Helvick Head, near Dungarvan,  
Co. Waterford, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010.**

Dear Ms Reddin,

Please find enclosed the above weather report. Attached also are the sea area forecasts in operation at that time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Murphy'.

**Evelyn Murphy B.Sc. M.Sc. Meteorologist**  
(Climatology & Observations Div.)  
Ph 01- 8064290 Fax 01 - 8064247  
Email: evelyn.murphy@met.ie



## Appendix 9.2 Met Éireann Weather report.



**MET ÉIREANN**  
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*Our Ref:* WS 3018/2B\_13692

28/5/2010

**Estimate of weather conditions in the sea area off Helvick Head, near  
Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010.**

General Situation

A weak High Pressure area remained over Ireland

Details:

Winds: Light winds, Force 2 to 3, from variable directions throughout the day, but mainly the south-east.

Weather: A little mist at times, otherwise dry with good sunny spells during the day and clear spells at night.

Visibility: mostly good, greater than 10 km, occasionally moderate, 4 km

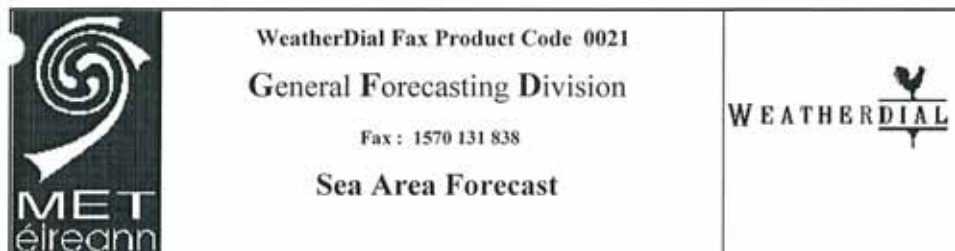
Waves: wavelets, with a significant wave height of 0.5m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Evelyn Murphy'.

**Evelyn Murphy B.Sc. M.Sc. Meteorologist**  
Climatology & Observations Div.  
Met Éireann



Appendix 9.2 Met Eireann Weather report.



Sea Area Forecast until 2400 Sunday 23 May 2010

Issued at 2400 Saturday 22 May 2010

**1. Gale warning:** Nil.

**Small craft warning:** Nil.

**2. Meteorological situation at 2100:** An anticyclone of central pressure 1028 hPa, covering Ireland and Britain, will continue to decline slowly allowing a weak cold front to approach the country from the north.

**3. Forecast for coasts from Carnsore Point to Mizen Head to Slyne Head :-**

**Wind:** Southeast force 3 or 4, becoming variable force 2 or 3 tonight but increasing force 4 locally in onshore sea breezes during Sunday.

**Weather:** Fair.

**Visibility:** Good.

**Forecast for coasts from Slyne Head to Fair Head to Carnsore Point and the Irish Sea :-**

**Wind:** Variable force 2 or 3 but with onshore sea breezes of around force 4 locally during daytime Sunday.

**Weather:** Mainly fair but with local, mist or haze, especially further north.

**Visibility:** Good, locally moderate.

**4. Outlook for a further 24 hours until 2400 Monday 24 May 2010:** Light to moderate, northerly winds gradually veering northeast to east. Continuing generally fair, but isolated showers likely in places later, mainly on north and northeast coasts.

## Appendix 9.2 Met Éireann Weather report.

Varning of heavy Atlantic swell: NIL
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Text of Gale Warning
NIL

Text of Small Craft Warning
NIL

Coastal Reports	at 11 PM Saturday 22 May 2010
Malin Head Automatic	South, 02 Knots, Cloudy, 8 Miles, 1027, Falling slowly
Buoy M5	North, 05 Knots, The visibility at Tuskar Lighthouse is Greater than 10 Miles, 1027, Steady
Roche's Pt (Automatic)	North, 02 Knots, Fair, Greater than 10 Miles, 1027, Steady
Valentia	Southeast, 08 Knots, Fine, 13 Miles, 1026, Steady
Belmullet	East, 06 Knots, Fair, 13 Miles, 1025, Steady
Dublin Airport	East-Southeast, 04 Knots, Fine, 16 Miles, 1027, Steady
Buoy M1 53° 8'N, 11° 12'W	NOT AVAILABLE,
Buoy M2 53° 29'N, 5° 26'W	East, 05 Knots, WAVE HT 00.2 m, 1027, Steady
Buoy M3 51° 13'N, 10° 33'W	East-Southeast, 10 Knots, WAVE HT 01.5 m, 1026, Steady
Buoy M4 55° 0'N 10° 0'W	East, 08 Knots, WAVE HT 01.5 m, 1025, Falling slowly
Buoy M5 51° 41'N 6° 42'W	North, 05 Knots, WAVE HT 00.7 m, 1027, Steady
Buoy M6 53° 4'N 15° 56'W	East-Southeast, NOT AVAILABLE Knots, WAVE HT 01.1 m, 1024, Steady

Disclaimer: buoy locations are approximate and are not for navigational purposes

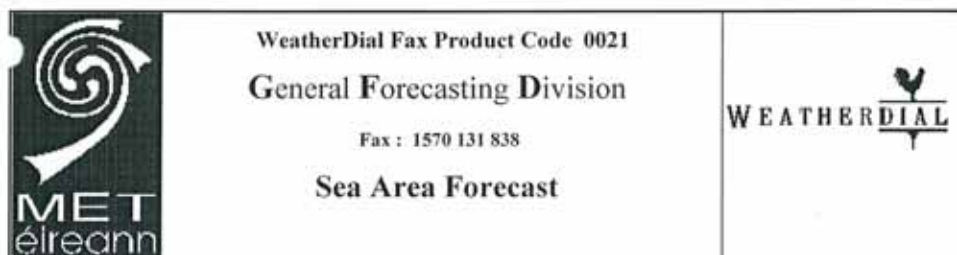
Sea Crossings	State of sea until 2400 Monday 24 May 2010
Dublin - Holyhead	Slight or less.
Rosslare - South Wales	Slight or less.
Cork - South Wales	Slight or less.
Rosslare - France	Slight to moderate.
Cork - France	Slight to moderate.

**Next update before 0700 Sunday 23 May 2010**

A detailed forecast may be obtained by dialling *Weatherdial* on 1550 123 855.  
Calls cost € 0.95 per minute (Incl. VAT).

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Appendix 9.2 Met Eireann Weather report.



Sea Area Forecast until 0600 Monday 24 May 2010  
 Issued at 0600 Sunday 23 May 2010

**1. Gale warning:** NIL

**Small craft warning:** NIL.

**2. Meteorological situation at 0300:** An anticyclone of a 1026 hPa that covers both Ireland and Britain is gradually declining. A weak cold front is approaching from the north and will move down over Ireland during Monday.

**3. Forecast for coasts from:** Erris Head to Malin Head to Belfast Lough

**Wind:** Variable force 1 to 3 becoming north or northwest force 3 or 4

**Weather:** Mainly fair. Becoming increasingly cloudy and misty tonight with patches of drizzle and fog.

**Visibility:** Good. Becoming moderate locally poor

**Forecast for coasts from:** Belfast Lough to Roches Point to Erris Head and the Irish Sea

**Wind:** Variable force 1 to 3, but reaching force 4 locally in sea breeze this afternoon.

**Weather:** Mainly fair, but misty in places

**Visibility:** Good locally moderate

**3a. Warning of heavy swell:** Nil

**4. Outlook for a further 24 hours until 0600 Tuesday 25 May 2010:** Light or moderate north or northeast winds veering northeast to east. Misty with a few scattered showers at first on north and northeast coasts - mainly fair elsewhere.

## Appendix 9.2 Met Éireann Weather report.

Warning of heavy Atlantic swell: NIL
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Text of Gale Warning
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NIL
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Text of Small Craft Warning
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NIL
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Coastal Reports	at 5 AM Sunday 23 May 2010
Malin Head Automatic	East, 07 Knots, MIST, 3 Miles, 1024, Falling slowly
Buoy M5	East-Northeast, 08 Knots, The visibility at Tuskar Lighthouse is 10 Miles, 1025, Falling slowly
Roche's Pt (Automatic)	North-Northwest, 07 Knots, MIST, 5 Miles, 1025, Falling slowly
Valentia	Northeast, 02 Knots, Fine, 21 Miles, 1025, Falling slowly
Belmullet	South, 02 Knots, Fine, 8 Miles, 1025, Steady
Dublin Airport	West, 04 Knots, Fine, 9 Miles, 1025, Falling slowly
Buoy M1 53° 8'N, 11° 12'W	NOT AVAILABLE,
Buoy M2 53° 29'N, 5° 26'W	North, 04 Knots, WAVE HT 00.2 m, 1025, Falling slowly
Buoy M3 51° 13'N, 10° 33'W	East-Northeast, 10 Knots, WAVE HT 01.4 m, 1024, Steady
Buoy M4 55° 0'N 10° 0'W	West-Southwest, 06 Knots, WAVE HT 01.1 m, 1024, Steady
Buoy M5 51° 41'N 6° 42'W	East-Northeast, 08 Knots, WAVE HT 00.7 m, 1025, Falling slowly
Buoy M6 53° 4'N 15° 56'W	Northeast, NOT AVAILABLE Knots, WAVE HT 01.1 m, 1024, Steady

Disclaimer: buoy locations are approximate and are not for navigational purposes

Sea Crossings	State of sea until 0600 Tuesday 25 May 2010
Dublin - Holyhead	Slight
Rosslare - South Wales	Slight
Cork - South Wales	Slight
Rosslare - France	Slight
Cork - France	Slight

**Next update before 1300 Sunday, 23 May 2010**

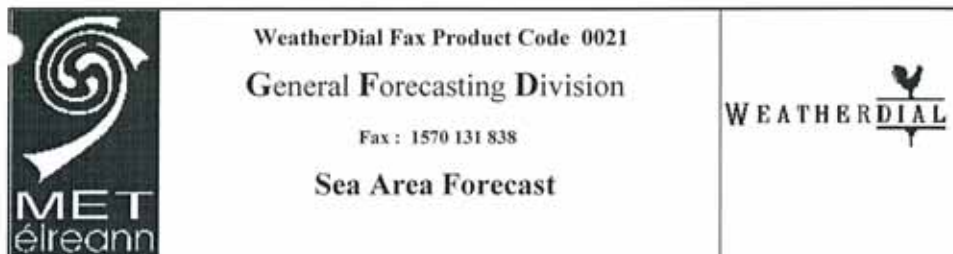
A detailed forecast may be obtained by dialling *Weatherdial* on 1550 123 855.

Calls cost € 0.95 per minute (Incl. VAT).

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Appendix 9.2 Met Eireann Weather report.



**Sea Area Forecast until 1200 Monday 24 May 2010**  
**Issued at 1200 Sunday 23 May 2010**

**1. Gale warning:** NIL

**Small craft warning:** NIL

**2. Meteorological situation at 11am:** An anticyclone of 1027 hPa over Ireland will gradually decline as a weak cold front moves down from the North tonight.

**3. Forecast for coasts from Slyne Head to Malin Head to Carlingford Lough:**

**Wind:** Variable force 2 or 3 but reaching force 4 locally in sea breezes this afternoon, becoming North to Northeast force 3 or 4 tonight.

**Weather:** Fair apart from some mist patches. Patchy drizzle tonight.

**Visibility:** Good locally moderate, becoming moderate or poor tonight.

**Forecast for coasts from Carlingford Lough to Hook Head to Slyne Head and for the Irish Sea:**

**Wind:** Variable force 2 or 3 but reaching force 4 locally in sea breezes this afternoon.

**Weather:** Fair but misty in places especially in the east and south.

**Visibility:** Moderate locally good.

**4. Outlook for a further 24 hours until 1200 Tuesday 25 May 2010:**

Light or moderate Northeasterly winds. Fair, apart from a few showers.

## Appendix 9.2 Met Éireann Weather report.

Varning of heavy Atlantic swell: NIL
--------------------------------------

<b>Text of Gale Warning</b>
-----------------------------

NIL
-----

<b>Text of Small Craft Warning</b>
------------------------------------

NIL
-----

Coastal Reports	at 12 Noon Sunday 23 May 2010
Malin Head Automatic	West-Southwest, 17 Knots, Fair, 7 Miles, 1023, Steady
Buoy M5	East-Southeast, 08 Knots, The visibility at Tuskar Lighthouse is Greater than 10 Miles, 1025, Falling slowly
Roche's Pt (Automatic)	East-Southeast, 08 Knots, Fair, Greater than 10 Miles, 1024, Falling slowly
Valentia	South-Southeast, 04 Knots, Fine, 24 Miles, 1023, Falling slowly
Belmullet	West, 11 Knots, Fine, 21 Miles, 1025, Steady
Dublin Airport	West, 07 Knots, Fair, 16 Miles, 1024, Falling slowly
Buoy M1 53° 8'N, 11° 12'W	NOT AVAILABLE,
Buoy M2 53° 29'N, 5° 26'W	Southwest, 05 Knots, WAVE HT 00.2 m, 1025, Steady
Buoy M3 51° 13'N, 10° 33'W	East-Southeast, 13 Knots, WAVE HT 01.3 m, 1023, Falling slowly
Buoy M4 55° 0'N 10° 0'W	West-Southwest, 09 Knots, WAVE HT 01.0 m, 1025, Rising slowly
Buoy M5 51° 41'N 6° 42'W	East-Southeast, 08 Knots, WAVE HT 00.6 m, 1025, Falling slowly
Buoy M6 53° 4'N 15° 56'W	East-Northeast, NOT AVAILABLE Knots, WAVE HT 01.1 m, 1024, Steady

Disclaimer: buoy locations are approximate and are not for navigational purposes

Sea Crossings	State of sea until 1000 Tuesday 25 May 2010
Dublin - Holyhead	Slight
Rosslare - South Wales	Slight
Cork - South Wales	Slight
Rosslare - France	Slight
Cork - France	Slight

**Next update before 1900 Sunday, 23 May 2010**

A detailed forecast may be obtained by dialling *Weatherdial* on 1550 123 855.

Calls cost € 0.95 per minute (Incl. VAT).

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Appendix 9.2 Met Eireann Weather report.

Appendix

Beaufort Scale of Wind					
Force	Description	Speed*		Specification -sea	Wave height** (metres)
		knots	km/hr		
0	Calm	<1	<1	Sea like mirror	
1	Light air	1-3	1-5	Ripples	0.1 (0.1)
2	Light breeze	4-6	6-11	Small wavelets	0.2 (0.3)
3	Gentle breeze	7-10	12-19	Large wavelets, crests begin to break	0.6 (1)
4	Moderate breeze	11-16	20-28	Small waves becoming longer, frequent white horses	1 (1.5)
5	Fresh breeze	17-21	29-38	Moderate waves, many white horses, chance of spray	2 (2.5)
6	Strong breeze	22-27	39-49	Large waves, white foam crests, probably some spray	3 (4)
7	Near gale	28-33	50-61	Sea heaps up, streaks of white foam	4 (5.5)
8	Gale	34-40	62-74	Moderately high waves of greater length	5.5 (7.5)
9	Strong gale	41-47	75-88	High waves, dense streaks of foam, spray may reduce visibility	7 (10)
10	Storm	48-55	89-102	Very high waves, long overhanging crests, visibility affected	9 (12.5)
11	Violent storm	56-63	103-117	Exceptionally high waves, long white foam patches cover sea	11.5 (16)
12	Hurricane	64+	117 & over	Air filled with foam and spray, sea completely white	14 (-)

\*Speed = mean speed at a standard height of 10 metres.  
 \*\*Wave height is only intended as a guide to what may be expected in the open sea.  
 Bracketed figures indicate the probable maximum wave height.

Wave Heights / State of Sea

The wave height is the vertical distance between the crest and the preceding or following trough. The table below gives a description of the wave system associated with a range of significant wave heights.

Sea State (Descriptive)	Significant Wave height in meters
Calm	0 – 0.1
Wavelets	0.1 – 0.5
Slight	0.5 – 1.25
Moderate	1.25 – 2.5
Rough	2.5 – 4
Very rough	4 – 6
High	6 – 9
Very high	9 – 14
Phenomenal	Over 14

Individual waves in the wave train will have heights in excess of the significant height. The highest wave of all will have a height about twice the significant height.

Visibility

Descriptions of visibility mean the following:

Visibility (Descriptive)	Visibility in nautical miles (kilometres)
Good	More than 5 nm (> 9 km)
Moderate	2 – 5 nm (4 – 9 km)
Poor	0.5 – 2 nm (1 – 4 km)
Fog	Less than 0.5 nm (< 1 km)

Appendix 9.2 Met Eireann Weather report.



## 10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

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



To whom it Concerns,

Ref letter: Finbarr and Geraldine O'Brien.

Draft report of the Investigation  
into fatal incident off helvace  
head Co. Waterford.

Our observation: We are Confused that  
two people in the "Mary O" boat said  
that they saw two people in the water  
Swimming Pat Emond could not swim  
and never did swim. Also to best of  
my knowledge when my son's body  
was recovered, he was still wearing

his shoes, so this would suggest  
he was not in the water swimming  
either.

We do wish to have an  
observation published.

Geraldine O'Brien  
Finbarr O'Brien

**MCIB RESPONSE**

The Board notes the contents of this correspondence and has made the necessary amendments.

## An Garda Síochána

An Leas-Choimisinéara  
(Oibríochtaí)  
An Garda Síochána  
Ceanncheathrú na nGardaí  
Páirc an Fhionn-Uisce  
Baile Atha Cliath 8

Tel. / Teileafón (01) 666 2057/8/9  
Fax. / Facs (01) 666 2060

Please quote the following Ref. No.



Deputy Commissioner  
(Operations)  
An Garda Síochána  
Garda Headquarters  
Phoenix Park  
Dublin 8

Web Site : [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

E-mail : [commissioner\\_ops@garda.ie](mailto:commissioner_ops@garda.ie)

OPS 79.13/10  
P.S. 698/10  
SE 1.269/10

Your Re: MCIB/186

**Ms. Eve Reddin,**  
**Secretariat,**  
**Marine Casualty Investigation Board,**  
**Leeson Lane,**  
**Dublin 2.**



**Re: Draft Report of the Investigation into fatal incident off Helvick Head, Co. Waterford on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2010.**

Dear Ms. Reddin,

I am directed by Deputy Commissioner, Operations to refer to previous correspondence from the Marine Casualty Investigation Board to the Commissioner in above matter, resting with yours of the 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.

I wish to advise that the draft report in relation to this incident has been reviewed by An Garda Síochána and the following observation are made in respect of same:

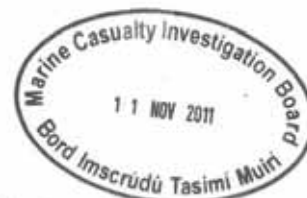
Section 2.1 of the above report advises that *"The boat is steered from a wheel using a mechanical cable linkage to the engine"*

This office has been advised that this statement is not factually correct as while steering and linkages, were on the boat, they were not in use, the engine was "stand alone", and the speed of the boat was controlled at the engine and not from the throttle lever as suggested.

Local Garda Management are satisfied that the remaining facts, as presented, accurately represent the events surrounding the above incident.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Walsh  
Superintendent for  
Deputy Commissioner  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2011



Ráiteas Mísin / Mission Statement :

Ag obair le Pobail chun iad a chosaint agus chun freastal orthu / Working with Communities to Protect and Serve

### MCIB RESPONSE

The Board notes the contents of this correspondence and has made the necessary amendments.

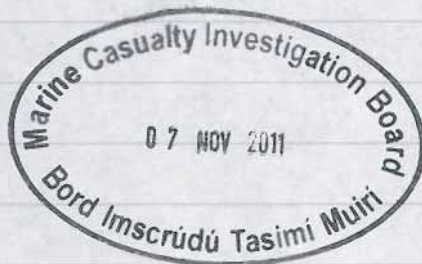


Nov. 04, 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Rosaly Esmonde,  
I had read everything  
about that reports, and  
I am so glad to know  
all the details, but the  
only thing I don't under-  
stand that they are  
stating there that they  
saw the two men swimming,  
but I know Paul, can't swim  
at all.

Yours truly,  
Rosaly Esmonde



**MCIB RESPONSE**

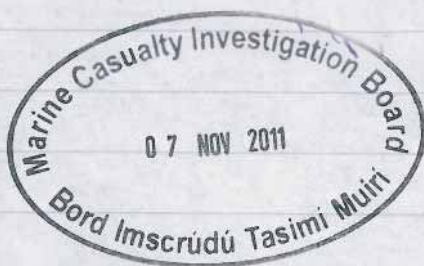
The Board notes the contents of this correspondence and has made the necessary amendments.

4<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2011

To whom it may concern,  
We the parents and  
siblings of Pat Esmonde  
have read and understand  
the report, the only thing  
that we disagree with is  
that it stated that Pat  
could swim. This is not  
the case, Pat could not  
swim and would never go  
unto the water, we would  
like this to be put on the  
report.

Thank you

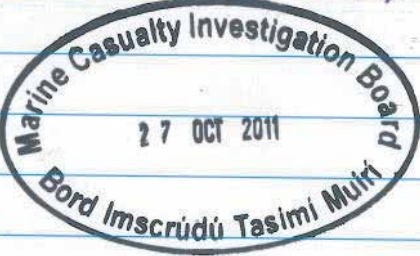
The Esmonde family.



### MCIB RESPONSE

The Board notes the contents of this correspondence and has made the necessary amendments.



DATE  
RE MARY O BOAT  
ANTHONY PALMER  
DEIRDRE PALMER  
  
CO WATERFORD  
  
We anthony and Deirdre  
HAVE NO further comment  
to make on this report  
  
Anthony Palmer  
Deirdre Palmer  
  


**MCIB RESPONSE**

The Board notes the contents of this correspondence.



26 October 2011

Our Ref. 22/52/2

Ms. Eve Reddin  
Secretariat  
Marine Casualty Investigation Board  
Leeson Lane  
Dublin 2.

**Draft Report of the Investigation into Fatal Incident off  
Helvick Head, Co Waterford on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010.**

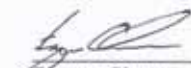
Dear Ms. Reddin,

I wish to advise that the above draft report has been reviewed and the Coast Guard has no observations to make in respect of same.

In relation to recommendations at paragraph 8, I will advise the Marine Safety Working Group (MSWG) of the recommendations. The MSWG is chaired by the Coast Guard and participating within the group are representatives from this Department and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The core rescue and safety organisations within the group are the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG), Maritime Safety Policy Division (MSPD), Irish Water Safety (IWS), Waterways Ireland, Health and Safety Authority (HSA), Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), MET Éireann (MET) and the Irish Sailing Association (ISA). Representatives from marine industries and marine recreational organisations are invited to join the Group when booklets or pamphlets about their particular occupation or sport are being considered.

One of the functions of this group is to co-ordinate marine safety awareness in Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

  
Eugene Clonan  
Chief of Operations



Administration Office, Irish Coast Guard, Department of Transport, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, Ireland.  
Oifig Riaracháin, Garda Cóstá na hÉireann, An Roinn Iompair, Lána Chill Mochargán, Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire.  
Tel: + 353 1 6783455 / 3427, Fax: + 353 1 6783459, email: admin@irishcoastguard.ie

## MCIB RESPONSE

The Board notes the contents of this correspondence.



