



**REPORT OF THE
INVESTIGATION INTO THE
SINKING OF THE IRISH FISHING
VESSEL "TAMARISK" OFF
DURSEY ISLAND, CO. CORK ON
29 APRIL 2000.**

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board was established on the 5th, June 2002 under The Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000

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SYNOPSIS

1. SYNOPSIS.

On April 29th 2000 at about 0700 hours, the Fishing Vessel "Tamarisk" sailed from Garnish, Co. Cork. Whilst hauling lobster pots close to the North side of Dursey Island the "Tamarisk" went aground on rocks. There were no injuries or fatalities.

2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

Description of the vessel "Tamarisk"

- 2.1 Built: 1980
Owner: Mr. Tim Murphy
Derrymihin West
Castletownbere
Co. Cork
- Purchased: March 2000
- Registered Length: 8.69 metres
Registered Breadth: 2.90 metres
Registered Depth: 1.22 metres
Gross Tonnage: 4.87 tons
Net Tonnage: 4.87 tons
Port of Registry: The vessel was in the process of being de-registered at the time of the incident.
- Machinery: One Leyland Thornycroft 2.5 engine.
Engine Power 37.30 kw.
- Description of Vessel: Carvel built, wooden fishing vessel with a raked stem, round bilge and transform stern. The vessel was half decked with a forward wheelhouse and forward cabin. It had no watertight bulkheads fitted. The vessel was being used in pot fishing for crab and lobster around the SW Cork Coast.
- Lifesaving Appliances available on board.
Lifejackets: Two with whistles.
Lifebuoys: Two – one with line attached.
Pyrotechnics: Six red star distress signals.

Navigational aids provided on board.

- One magnetic Compass.
- One Foruno Echosounder.
- One Foruno GPS Navigator.
- One ICOM VHF installation.

The crew of the "Tamarisk" on 29 April 2000 consisted of the following persons.

Mr. Tim Murphy aged 42 years of Derrymihin West, Castletownbere, Co. Cork. He was the skipper of the vessel. Mr. Murphy has completed a Basic Sea Survival Course.

Mr. Michael O'Sullivan aged 22 years of Castletownbere, Co. Cork.
Mr. O'Sullivan is not known to hold any formal sea going qualifications.

EVENTS PRIOR

3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

- 3.1 The vessel, manned and equipped as stated in section 1 of this report, sailed from Garnish, Co. Cork, where it was based, at about 0700 hours on 29 April 2000.
- 3.2 Initially the two crew hauled and laid pots off Garnish and then in Dursey Sound. There were about 20 or 25 pots in each line.
- 3.3 The vessel then went around the north side of Dursey Island and commenced hauling pots there.

4. THE INCIDENT

- 4.1 At about 0915 hours the two crewmembers were hauling a line of lobster pots close to the shore when the boat grounded. They had about 6 pots on a line hauled when they felt a bang and discovered that they were on top of a rock. See position in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 Mr. Tim Murphy was operating the hauler, which was on the starboard side of the wheelhouse. Michael O'Sullivan was baiting the pots and stacking them at the after end. The vessel was drifting while hauling the pots.
- 4.3 The weather conditions at the time were variable winds force 1 to 3 with good visibility. The sea state was moderate mainly due to a south-westerly swell. See Met Eireann weather report in Appendix 2.

EVENTS FOLLOWING

5. EVENTS FOLLOWING INCIDENT

- 5.1 The crew tried to refloat the boat using the engine but to no avail. Mr. Murphy immediately called Valentia Radio on Channel 16 with a Mayday message and he also gave them the phone number of a person in Garnish who had a small boat.
- 5.2 Both crewmembers put on the lifejackets immediately. There were two lifejackets on the "Tamarisk".
- 5.3 Mr. Murphy called Valentia Radio on Channel 16 again and they told him that there was no reply to the number in Garnish.
- 5.4 In the meantime, a local man Mr. Frank Sheehan heard the conversation on the V.H.F. and he went to Garnish and got a small boat and proceeded out to where the "Tamarisk" had grounded.
- 5.5 The "Tamarisk" started taking water and went down by the stern.
- 5.6 The two crewmembers left from the bow.
- 5.7 They were in the water for approximately 45 minutes before they were picked up by Mr. Sheehan. Mr. Murphy does not recall any events from here on. Both crewmembers were subsequently transferred by helicopter from the small boat to Cork University Hospital at about 1050 hours.
- 5.8 Mr. Michael O'Sullivan was discharged from hospital later that day (Saturday). Mr. Tim Murphy was discharged on Tuesday 2nd May 2000 at 1830 hours.
- 5.9 The boat was lifted onto a barge on Sunday 30th April 2000 and brought to Castletownbere.

6. FINDINGS

- 6.1 The "Tamarisk" was badly damaged. It was holed on both sides of the bottom in the midship area. See photographs in Appendix 3.
- 6.2 The rudder was dislodged and bent. There was general flooding damage.
- 6.3 Mr. Murphy stated that the wind was light from the SE and from his experience this would tend to push the vessel towards the shore. Also he stated that the tide, which was low, was also tending to set the vessel onto the shore.
- 6.4 All aids to navigation in the vicinity were functioning correctly at the time of the incident.
- 6.5 There were two lifejackets on board the vessel at the time of the grounding. This is in compliance with the Merchant Shipping (Life - Saving Appliances) (Amendment) Rules, 1999, which came into operation on the 1st April 2000. It is clear that neither crewmember would have survived this incident had they not been wearing lifejackets.

CONCLUSIONS

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The vessel drifted onto the rocks due to the fact that the crew were not constantly monitoring the vessel's position. The temptation to leave the wheelhouse unattended for " just a few minutes" to lend a hand on deck is great. It is manifestly dangerous. In this instance the consequences were serious but the crew were most fortunate that there was not also loss of life.
- 7.2 No matter how well the crew of a vessel know a particular area and its currents and tidal streams, it is imperative that a constant check is kept on the vessels position, even when stopped.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

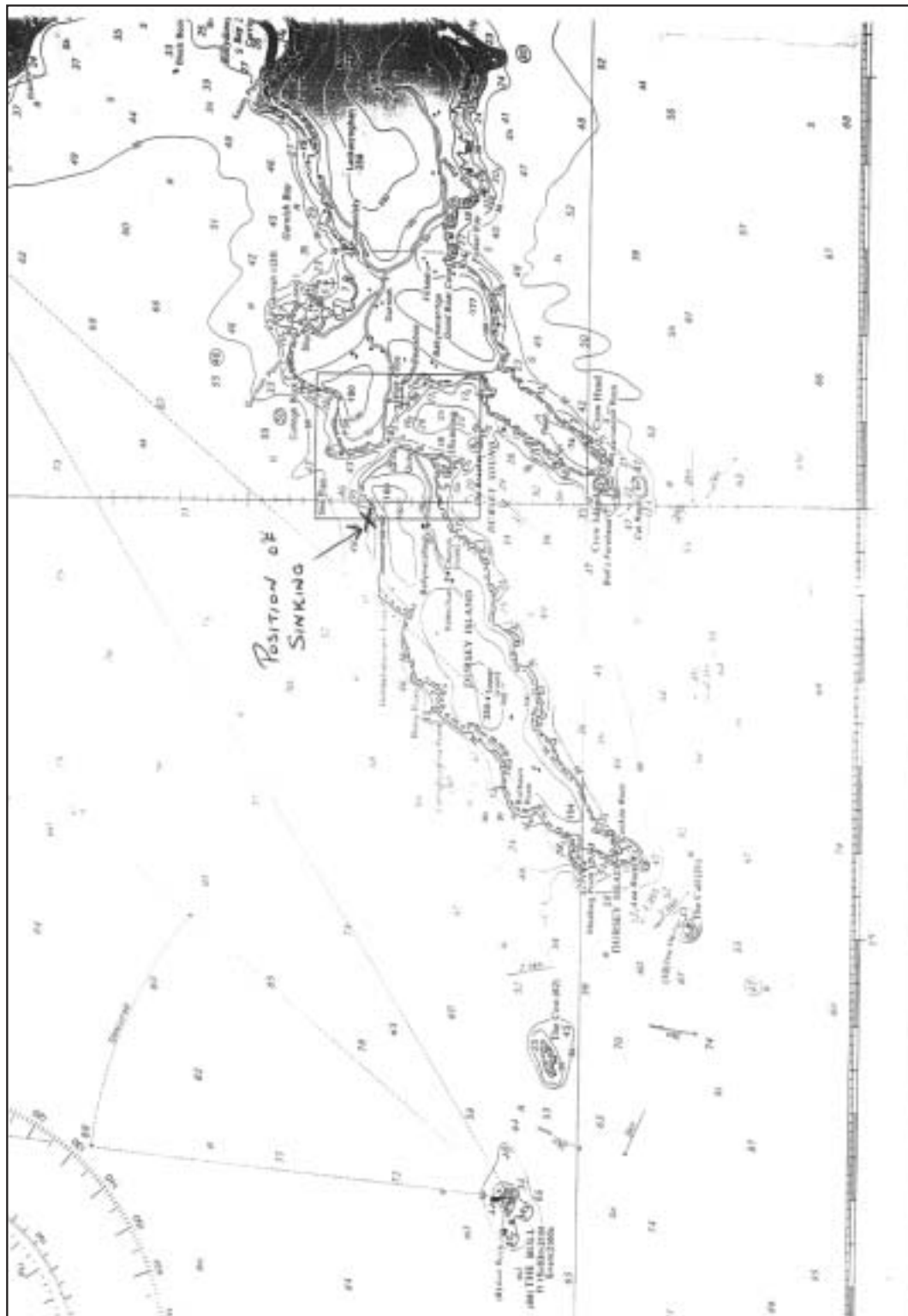
- 8.1 All fishing vessels should at all times keep a navigational watch on board. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has adopted Resolution A. 484 (XII) "Basic Principles to be observed in keeping a Navigational Watch on board Fishing Vessels " relating to the principles to be observed in order to ensure that a safe navigational watch is maintained. The basic principles have been reproduced in the Annex to Marine Notice No. 39 of 1999 and should be observed by all concerned. (See Appendix 4). Marine Notice No. 39 of 1999 should be reproduced and circulated.
- 8.2 Fishing vessels of less than 40 feet in length should carry a liferaft equipped with a hydrostatic release unit. Although this vessel was operating very close to the shore, there can be little doubt but that the availability of a properly inflated liferaft would have been of great assistance to the crew. Marine Notice No. 11 of 1986, recommended that a liferaft should be carried on fishing vessels of less than 40 feet in length.
An updated version of this notice is set out in draft form at Appendix Number 5 and should be published and circulated.

APPENDICES

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Chart extract showing position of sinking.
- 8.2 Weather Report from Met Eireann.
- 8.3 Photographs showing damage sustained by "Tamarisk"
- 8.4 Copy of Marine Notice No. 09 of 2002, dealing with the basic principles to be observed in keeping a Navigational Watch on board Fishing Vessels.
- 8.5 Proposed new Marine Notice, dealing with the recommendation that fishing vessels of less than 40 feet in length should carry a liferaft.

8.1 Chart extract showing position of sinking.



APPENDIX 8.2

8.2 Weather Report from Met Eireann.

**Weather Report for the sea area 51° 37'N 10° 11'W
on the 29th April 2000
0 - 12 hours**

General Situation

A depression to the south-west of Ireland caused a slack south-easterly airflow over the area.

Details

29/4/00

00 - 06 hours

Winds: south-east to east. Force 1 to 3

Weather: dry and clear

Visibility: good.

06 - 12 hours

Winds: variable. Force 1 to 3

Weather: bright spells, mostly dry

Visibility: good

The seastate was Moderate, mainly due to a south-westerly swell.

Note : there were no observations in the area therefore this report was compiled using the routine charts drawn up by this office.

8.3 Photographs showing damage sustained by "Tamarisk"




APPENDIX 8.3

CONTD.



- 8.4 Copy of Marine Notice No. 09 of 2002, dealing with the basic principles to be observed in keeping a Navigational Watch on board Fishing Vessels.



Department of the Marine
and Natural Resources

Roinn na Mara agus Acmhainní Náidúrtha

MARINE NOTICE No. 9 Of 2002

**NOTICE TO ALL OWNERS, OPERATORS, SKIPPERS, SECOND HANDS
AND CREWS OF FISHING VESSELS, AND TO NAUTICAL SCHOOLS**

Keeping A Safe Navigational Watch On Board Fishing Vessels

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has adopted Resolution A.484 (XII) "Basic Principles to be Observed in Keeping a Navigational Watch on board Fishing Vessels" relating to the principles to be observed in order to ensure that a safe navigational watch is maintained.

These principles were in effect reviewed and updated by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel 1995.

The basic principles are reproduced in the Annex to this Notice and should be observed by all concerned.

Candidates for all fishing certificates of competency will be expected to have a thorough knowledge of the content and application of the basic principles.

Marine Notice 39 of 1999 is hereby withdrawn as this Notice supersedes it.

Secretary-General
Department of the Marine and
Natural Resources
Dublin 2

12th May 2002

Any enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Maritime Safety Division
Tel: 01-6199358 Fax: 01-6620774 email: marine.notices@marine.gov.ie

**BASIC PRINCIPLES TO BE OBSERVED IN KEEPING A
NAVIGATIONAL WATCH ON BOARD FISHING VESSELS**

- 1** These basic principles are to be observed by skippers and watchkeeping personnel to ensure that a safe navigational watch is maintained at all times.
 - 2** The skipper of every fishing vessel is bound to ensure that watchkeeping arrangements are adequate for maintaining a safe navigational watch. Under the skipper's general direction, the officers of the watch are responsible for navigating the vessel safely during their periods of duty when they will be particularly concerned with avoiding collision and stranding.
 - 3** The basic principles, including but not limited to the following, should be taken into account on all fishing vessels. However, very small fishing vessels may be excluded from fully observing the basic principles. References to the wheelhouse should, in such vessels, be construed as meaning the position from which the navigation of the ship is controlled.
 - 4** En route to or from fishing grounds
- 4.1 Arrangements of the navigational watch**
- 4.1.1** The composition of the watch should at all times be adequate and appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions and should take into account the need for maintaining a proper look-out.
 - 4.1.2** When deciding the composition of the watch the following factors, inter alia, should be taken into account:
 - (i) at no time should the wheelhouse be left unattended;
 - (ii) weather conditions, visibility and whether there is daylight or darkness;
 - (iii) proximity of navigational hazards which may make it necessary for the officer in charge of the watch to carry out additional navigational duties;
 - (iv) use and operational condition of navigational aids such as radar or electronic position-indicating devices and any other equipment affecting the safe navigation of the vessel;
 - (v) whether the vessel is fitted with automatic steering;
 - (vi) any unusual demands on the navigational watch that may arise as a result of special operational circumstances.

4.2 Fitness for duty

- 4.2.1 The watch system should be such that the efficiency of watchkeeping personnel is not impaired by fatigue. Duties should be so organised that the first watch at the commencement of a voyage and the subsequent relieving watches are sufficiently rested and otherwise fit for duty.

4.3 Navigation

- 4.3.1 The intended voyage should, as far as practicable, be planned in advance taking into consideration all pertinent information and any course laid down should be checked before the voyage commences.
- 4.3.2 During the watch the course steered, position and speed should be checked at sufficiently frequent intervals, using any available navigational aids necessary, to ensure that the vessel follows the planned course.
- 4.3.3 The officer in charge of the watch should have full knowledge of the location and operation of all safety and navigational equipment on board the vessel and should be aware and take account of the operating limitations of such equipment.
- 4.3.4 The officer in charge of a navigational watch should not be assigned or undertake any duties which would interfere with the safe navigation of the vessel.

4.4 Navigational equipment

- 4.4.1 The officer in charge of the watch should make the most effective use of all navigational equipment at his disposal.
- 4.4.2 When using radar the officer in charge of the watch should bear in mind the necessity to comply at all times with the provisions on the use of radar contained in the applicable regulations for preventing collisions at sea.
- 4.4.3 In cases of need the officer of the watch should not hesitate to use the helm, engines and sound signalling apparatus.

4.5 Navigational duties and responsibilities

- 4.5.1 The officer in charge of the watch should:
- (i) keep his watch in the wheelhouse;
 - (ii) which he should in no circumstances leave until properly

relieved;

- (iii) continue to be responsible for the safe navigation of the vessel
- (iv) despite the presence of the skipper in the wheelhouse until the skipper informs him specifically that he has assumed that responsibility and this is mutually understood;
- (iv) notify the skipper when in any doubt as to what action to take in the interest of safety;
- (v) not hand over the watch to a relieving officer if he has reason to believe that the latter is obviously not capable of carrying out his duties effectively, in which case he should notify the skipper accordingly.

4.5.2 On taking over the watch the relieving officer should satisfy himself as to the vessel's estimated or true position and confirm its intended track, course and speed and should note any dangers to navigation expected to be encountered during his watch.

4.5.3 Whenever practicable a proper record should be kept of the movements and activities during the watch relating to the navigation of the vessel.

4.6 Look-out

4.6.1 A proper look-out shall be maintained in compliance with Rule 5 of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972. It shall serve the purpose of:

- (i) maintaining a continuous state of vigilance by sight and hearing as well as by all other available means, with regard to any significant changes in the operating environment;
- (ii) fully appraising the situation and the risk of collision, stranding and other dangers to navigation, and;
- (iii) detecting ships or aircraft in distress, shipwrecked persons, wrecks and debris;

The look-out must be able to give full attention to the keeping of a proper look-out and no other duties shall be undertaken or assigned which could interfere with that task.

4.6.2 In determining that the composition of the navigational watch is adequate to ensure that a proper look-out can continuously be maintained, the skipper shall take into account all relevant factors, including those described under paragraph 4.1, as well as the following factors:

- (i) visibility, state of weather and sea;
- (ii) traffic density and other activities occurring in the area in which the vessel is operating;
- (iii) the attention necessary when navigating in or near traffic separation schemes and other routing measures;
- (iv) the additional workload caused by the nature of the vessel's functions, immediate operating requirements and anticipated manoeuvres;
- (v) rudder and propeller control and vessel manoeuvring characteristics;
- (vi) the fitness for duty of any crewmembers on call who may be assigned as members of the watch;
- (vii) knowledge of and confidence in the professional competence of the vessel's officers and crew;
- (viii) the experience of the officer of the navigational watch and the familiarity of that officer with the vessel's equipment, procedures and manoeuvring capability;
- (ix) activities taking place on board the vessel at any particular time and the availability of assistance to be summoned immediately to the wheelhouse when necessary;
- (x) the operational status of instrumentation in the wheelhouse and controls, including alarm systems;
- (xi) the size of the vessel and the field of vision available from the conning position;
- (xii) the configuration of the wheelhouse, to the extent such configuration might inhibit a member of the watch from detecting by sight or hearing any external developments.

4.7 Protection of the marine environment

- 4.7.1** The skipper and the officer in charge of the watch should be aware of the serious effects of operational or accidental pollution of the marine environment and should take all possible precautions to prevent such pollution particularly within the framework of relevant international and port regulations.

4.8 Weather conditions

- 4.8.1** The officer in charge of the watch should take relevant measures and notify the skipper when adverse changes in weather could affect the

4.8.2 Safety of the vessel, including conditions leading to ice accretion.

5.1 Navigation with pilot embarked

5.1.1 The presence of a Pilot on board does not relieve the skipper or officer in charge of the watch from their duties and obligations for the safety of the vessel. The skipper and the pilot should exchange information regarding navigation procedures, local conditions and the vessel's characteristics. The skipper and the officer of the watch should co-operate closely with the pilot and maintain an accurate check of the vessel's position and movement.

6.1 Vessels engaged in fishing or searching for fish

6.1.1 In addition to the principles enumerated in paragraph 4, the following factors should be considered and properly acted upon by the officer in charge of the watch:

- (i) other vessels engaged in fishing and their gear, own vessel's manoeuvring characteristics, particularly in stopping distance and the diameter of turning circle at sailing speed and with the fishing gear overboard;
- (ii) safety of the crew on deck;
- (iii) adverse effects on the safety of the vessel and its crew through reduction of stability and freeboard caused by exceptional forces resulting from fishing operations, catch handling and stowage, and unusual sea and weather conditions;
- (iv) the proximity of offshore structures, with special regard to the safety zones; and
- (v) wrecks and other underwater obstacles which could be hazardous for fishing gear.

6.2 When stowing the catch, attention should be given to the essential requirements for adequate freeboard and adequate stability and watertight integrity at all times during the voyage to the landing port taking into consideration consumption of fuel and stores, risk of adverse weather conditions and, especially in winter, risk of ice accretion on or above exposed decks in areas where ice accretion is likely to occur.

7.1 Anchor watch

7.1.1 The skipper should ensure, with a view to the safety of the vessel and crew, that a proper watch is maintained at all times from the wheelhouse or deck on fishing vessels at anchor.

8.1 Radio watchkeeping

- 8.1.1** The skipper should ensure that an adequate radio watch is maintained while the vessel is at sea, on appropriate frequencies, taking into account the requirements of the Radio Regulations.

APPENDIX 8.5

- 8.5 Proposed new Marine Notice, dealing with the recommendation that fishing vessels of less than 40 feet in length should carry a liferaft.

DEPARTMENT OF THE MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Draft Marine Notice

Re: Carriage of Liferaft on small Fishing Vessels

To all owners, skippers, designers and builders of fishing vessels under 40 feet registered length.

1. Fishing vessels of less than 40 feet in length are required to carry the life-saving equipment prescribed by Rule 17 (10) of the Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) Rule 1967, as amended, namely lifebuoys at least equal in number to half the total number of persons on board: provided that in no case shall less than two lifebuoys be carried (one with a buoyant line attached) and a lifejacket for every person on board and, in addition, six red star distress signals.
2. The scale of equipment listed in Paragraph 1 was related to the custom that such vessels were mainly engaged in inshore fishing. In recent years however, a number of fishing vessels of this size have been designed to participate in various types of fishing activity entailing long trips out to sea, very often unaccompanied.
3. Recognised that inflatable liferafts have been effective in providing essential out of water support in a cold climate for crews in the event of a casualty, the Department strongly recommends that all fishing vessels under 40 feet in length which go to sea should carry an approved type liferaft capable of accommodating all persons on board. The following brands of liferafts have approved models: Beaufort, Dunlop, RFD and Viking.
4. The liferaft will be additional to the equipment required to be carried under the Rules outlined in paragraph 1 and should be stowed, if practicable, in such a position that it can be easily and quickly launched on either side of the vessel.
5. The liferaft should be fitted with a Hydrostatic Release Unit.
6. The liferaft should be serviced at an approved servicing station at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

Marine Notice No. 11 of 1986 is hereby withdrawn as it is superseded by this notice.