

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT TO CHIEF INSPECTOR OF MARINE ACCIDENTS

1 Legislation

The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Regulations, 2009 requires production of a summary annual report to the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents.

2 Reportable Incidents/Accidents 2014

1/2014 – BRECQHOU CHIEF – 2 February 2014

A rocket line throwing apparatus inadvertently activated in its stowage when on passage between Brecqhou and St Peter Port on 21st February 2014. It caused superficial damage to the cabin area as well as smoke damage. The Master also suffered minor discomfort from the force of the explosion although no one was actually struck by the rocket. The safety pin remained in place at all times and therefore this would appear to be a malfunction.

The operator was recommended to notify the manufacturer of the apparatus of this incident so that they can warn other users of the equipment of the potential risk, which may be related to a particular batch or model. There were no substantive grounds for further investigation.

2/2014 – GU33 LADY HELEN – S 17 June 2014

On the morning of 17 June 2014, a junior crew member was tasked with cleaning the engine room as instructed by the skipper the previous day.

On arriving back at the vessel with the intention of moving the boat to load bait and fuel up, the skipper noticed that the crew member was washing down the engine room with CarPlan Brake Cleaner. He immediately told him to stop what he was doing and to come up top with the intention of cleaning down with soapy water, after loading bait.

The engine room hatch was closed causing insufficient ventilation/gas freeing of the space. Due to residual vapour from the Brake Cleaner in the engine room space, an explosion occurred when the main engine was started due to a spark being generated in the contactor solenoid or motor brushes. Fortunately no liquid was left in the space to cause conflagration to accompany the explosion.

The explosion lifted the wheelhouse and accommodation floors, blew out the back of the wheelhouse and some of the windows, blew out a bulkhead hatch and blew the vivier hatch off its hatchway.

All of the crew managed to escape without serious injury, but all were shocked and left with their ears ringing. One crew member was taken to hospital with bruising after a hatch cover hit him in the chest.

An investigation was conducted by Jersey Harbours as the vessel was in St Helier at the time of the incident. There were no substantive grounds for further investigation. A Safety Flyer was issued to all Guernsey commercial vessels advising them of the accident and safety lessons.

3/2014 - COMMODORE CLIPPER – 14 July 2014

COMMODORE CLIPPER grounded on approach to St Peter Port on 14th July 2014, at approximately 1515 local time. The vessel struck a previously uncharted 4.5m head, close north north east of a 5.2m sounding in the vicinity of Roustel Beacon, Little Russel, Guernsey east coast.

The vessel sustained significant damage to the flat bottom of the vessel. The vessel retained full manoeuvrability and subsequently berthed normally in St Peter Port where, following an underwater inspection, she was withdrawn from service and passengers were transferred to other sailings.

Although damage sustained was significant, no pollution was caused and the vessel remained fully manoeuvrable. The potential consequences are significant pollution and damage to the environment as well as damage to manoeuvring systems and ultimately loss of the vessel.

The UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) of the Department of Transport are investigating the accident on behalf of the the States of Guernsey. The investigation remains ongoing.

4/2014 - TRIDENT V – 24 August 2014

TRIDENT V approached the Cambridge Steps to berth alongside, port side to. The Master engaged astern propulsion at the port engine controls to slow the vessel. As he applied more revolutions, there was no response. TRIDENT V was too close to the south east knuckle of the Cambridge berth for abortive action and the vessel made contact with the structure.

It is understood that at the time of the collision, many passengers were standing and had moved to the forward section of the passenger cabin in anticipation of disembarkation. The contact caused many of them to stumble and/or fall. A number of passengers sustained minor injuries.

Damage to the forward athwartships deck and belting was sustained at the port bow area.

Trident V can be operated from either a port or starboard engine control position. The accident investigation found that the port engine control was mistakenly set in “troll” mode, which had the effect of limiting the level of control that the Master had over the vessel. The “troll” setting is designed for use at very low speeds and prevents increased engine revolutions if the lever setting is increased.

Following the incident, the operator introduced a procedure prohibiting the use of troll mode, and a procedure for the Engineer to cross-check the engine control settings on both the port and starboard controls prior to the vessel entering harbours or areas with restricted sea-room.

Operational changes at Guernsey Harbours have also restricted the use of the Cambridge Steps for passenger operations. This removes the requirement to routinely manoeuvre the vessel from the port side controls, and therefore reduces the need to change control positions on the bridge.

Further advice on lessons learned were discussed between Guernsey Harbours and the operator and the full report is available on the Guernsey Harbours website.

3 Reporting and Communication

The Guernsey Harbours website includes a section on Marine Accident Investigation. This site includes a retrospective synopsis of each reportable incident and the recommendations made.

A pro-forma reporting document is also downloadable from the website.

Year	Reports received
2010	4
2011	2
2012	2
2013	1
2014	4

4 Incidents investigated by other Authorities.

See 3/2014 above.



Chad Murray
Harbour Master

12 April 2015