

# CHIRP MARITIME FEEDBACK

Issue No: 29

2/2011 - Summer

## EDITORIAL

### THE FUTURE

We are disappointed that the Department for Transport decided, as part of the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, to withdraw funding of the CHIRP Maritime Programme from the end of March 2011. (This decision does not affect the CHIRP Aviation Programme, which will continue to be funded by the Civil Aviation Authority.) However, we are very pleased that a number of organisations have generously agreed to sponsor the Maritime Programme, thus allowing it to continue.

### ABOUT OUR SPONSORS

#### TRINITY HOUSE

The safety of shipping, and the well being of seafarers, have been the primary concerns of Trinity House ever since it was granted a Royal Charter in 1514. Today it has three distinct functions:

1. The Lighthouse Service provides Aids to Navigation around the coasts of England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar.
2. Deep Sea Pilotage in Northern Europe.
3. A charitable organisation dedicated to the safety, welfare and training of mariners. The work of CHIRP is consistent with these objectives.

#### THE LLOYD'S REGISTER EDUCATIONAL TRUST

The Constitution of the Lloyd's Register Group requires it to enhance the safety of life and property at sea, on land and in the air. Further, it requires the organisation to support public education within the transportation industries, engineering and technological disciplines. In 2004, the Group decided to bring a sharper focus to its charitable work and set up The Lloyd's Register Educational Trust (The LRET), as an independent charity operating throughout the world, to fund advances in transportation, science, engineering and technology education, training, and research worldwide for the benefit of all. The LRET also supports schemes that aim to protect human life.

#### THE BRITANNIA STEAM SHIP INSURANCE ASSOCIATION LTD

The Britannia is a mutual liability insurance association of shipowners throughout the world. The insurance cover provided by the Association has developed to meet the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) needs of different types of ships and to respond to the impact of new legislation and regulations around the world. The managers of Britannia are Tindall Riley (Britannia) Ltd.

### THE STANDARD P&I CLUB

The Standard P&I Club is a mutual insurance association owned by its shipowner members worldwide. It insures shipowners, operators and charterers for their liabilities to third parties arising out of ship operations. Management and administration is carried out by the Charles Taylor Consulting Group of companies.

Both The Britannia and The Standard keenly promote initiatives to improve maritime safety, hence their sponsorship of CHIRP.

We are very grateful to all our sponsors.

### VIEWS FROM THE CROWS-NEST

**A comment from your editor, the Director (Maritime) of CHIRP:**

Decades ago, there was a prevalent view that seafaring was inherently dangerous and therefore accidents were inevitable. Since then, enlightened managers and mariners have recognised that accidents are preventable. Companies adopting this philosophy and implementing enhanced safety management have achieved major improvements in safety.

A key factor in achieving further improvement is for individuals of whatever rank or position to intervene if they see an unsafe situation, and to report hazardous incidents so that the lessons can be shared with others.

The future success of the Programme will depend on receiving reports from mariners. Please play your part in watching out for hazardous incidents and reporting them.

Chris Rowsell

**... and a comment from Peter Tait, Chief Executive of The CHIRP Charitable Trust:**

I have been closely involved with military, commercial and general aviation since 1960, including flying the Vulcan B Mk2 as an RAF pilot and later a wide range of aircraft as a military and commercial aircraft development test pilot.

During my career in aviation and more latterly as Chief Executive of CHIRP, the aviation industry has demonstrated the valuable contribution that the confidential reporting of near-miss incidents has made to a continuous improvement in aviation safety that has been a benchmark for other industries. Experience in the aviation industry has shown that it takes time for this to become embedded as part of the safety culture. I am sure that with the support and assistance of the maritime industry there is scope for the CHIRP Maritime Programme to develop and I am therefore very grateful

[www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk)

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to each of our new sponsors who are enabling it to continue.

**... and, finally, a comment from Captain Nigel Palmer OBE, a Trustee of CHIRP and Chairman of the Maritime Advisory Board:**

This has been a difficult few months for CHIRP as we dealt with the cutting off of Government funding at relatively short notice. The Trustees took the view that the Maritime Programme was too valuable to lose and could demonstrate where it had made a positive contribution to maritime safety. We were heartened by Michael Grey's thoughtful article in Lloyd's List encouraging the industry to support CHIRP and so sought sponsors. Those that are listed here have enabled the Programme to survive in the short term and we are grateful to them for reacting so promptly – however we do need more to put the Programme on a long-term sustainable path and will be continuing our efforts to seek others.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the role of those who continue to give their time freely as members of the Maritime Advisory Board – without them the Programme would not have the body of expertise to properly review reports.

**CHIRP receives reports on a range of hazardous incidents that have occurred within the commercial, fishing and leisure sectors of the maritime community. Here are a number of reports which will be of wider interest, together with the "lessons learned" as described by the reporter. The CHIRP comments have been reviewed by the CHIRP Maritime Advisory Board which has members from a wide range of maritime organisations. Full details of the membership can be found on our website - [www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk).**

## COMMERCIAL SECTOR REPORTS

### INAPPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS FROM GUARD SHIP

**Report Text:** My vessel was approaching a salvage operation. Due to a concentration of north-bound vessels to the west with which I was slowly converging and overtaking, I elected to pass to the east of the salvage works whilst maintaining a minimum passing distance of 1 nautical mile.

I was contacted by the guard vessel and informed about the location of the salvage operations and the recommended safe passing distance. This I acknowledged. When I was approximately 2.5 miles from the salvage operations with a passing CPA from the salvage operations of 1.4 miles, the guard ship contacted me again on Channel 16 and proceeded to give us instructions to 'alter course to port'. After two attempts I was able to get the VHF operator on the guard ship to go to a working channel.

When I questioned his reasoning for this instruction, he pointed out a vessel on my starboard quarter at a range of approximately 3 miles stating that there wasn't enough room for both vessels to the east. I pointed out to him that the other vessel's CPA was 0.9 miles and in

my opinion this was sufficient room for both vessels to take this route. He disagreed with me and repeated his instruction to alter to port. I reminded him that his role was to ensure that vessels did not pass within the safety zone surrounding the salvage operations and this it did not extend to operating a VTS service.

I re-stated my intention to pass to the east of the salvage operations at which point he said he would be making a report of my actions. My vessel safely transited east of the salvage operations whilst maintaining a minimum distance of 1.1 miles and a minimum CPA off the other ship of 1 mile.

**Lessons Learned:** I fully appreciate that the operator thought he was acting in the best interests of the safety of navigation, however a full appreciation of the navigational situation can only be undertaken by the vessels concerned and I doubt the guard ship has the equipment necessary to be able to fully assess the risk of collision between other vessels.

Vessels whose officers are unfamiliar with the area may interpret these instructions as having come from a body with the authority to direct shipping. This was particularly pertinent in this case as blindly following the instructions from the guard ship to alter to port would have put me into conflict with at least two vessels transiting to the west of the salvage operations.

**CHIRP Comment:** We contacted the Operations Manager of the salvage company who has responded as follows:

*The guard ship is contracted by our company. The vessel is deployed in compliance with the terms of an agreement entered into with Government Authorities (non-UK) to remove the wreck.*

*At the time of signing the wreck removal agreement we expressed serious misgivings about the use of VTS officers in this way but were unable to convince the Authorities that a different approach would be safer and more suitable.*

*Because of our concern, which is almost exactly confirmed by the incident you report, we issued detailed instructions to the sub-contracted VTS officers before the work commenced.*

*Following receipt of your incident report we have again emphasised to the VTS officers the rules of engagement for this operation which specifically do not include giving instructions to the watch keeping officers of passing ships.*

**We thank the reporter for the report and the Operations Manager for his follow-up and response. It is fortunate that the reporter is an experienced mariner who was able to see the risk in the "instructions" being issued by the guard-ship, which went beyond the Terms of Reference of the VTS officers.**

### HEAVY ROLLING OF CONTAINER SHIP

**Report Text:** The container ship on which I am serving had been in heavy weather for several days. We were proceeding at full speed. During the watch I called the Master as the vessel's roll was synchronising with the waves, initially to 20 degrees. The ship then rolled to 40 degrees and the engine stopped. Subsequently the synchronisation ceased and the roll angle reduced.

The vessel suffered damage including flooding of forward compartments with damage to electrical equipment, and shifting of containers.

Lessons learned: We had received weather forecasts of the severe conditions. We should have reduced speed earlier.

**CHIRP Comment:** It is fortunate that this incident did not lead to fatalities or loss of the vessel. In the absence of more comprehensive information, we are not in a position to comment on the specifics of this report. However the dangers of heavy rolling are illustrated by an accident on the container vessel CMS Chicago Express in 2008 in which the vessel rolled violently to over 40 degrees during a typhoon. The bridge team members were thrown across the wide expanse of the bridge. Tragically an AB died and the Master was severely injured.

This fatal accident was investigated by the German Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigations. Their report can be found on [www.bsu-bund.de](http://www.bsu-bund.de) and also on [www.emsa.europa.eu](http://www.emsa.europa.eu). It made a number of recommendations, including the following related to operating in heavy swells:

- *Drifting abeam would have led to a significant portion of energy from the swell being converted into a drift motion rather than a rolling motion. Consideration must be given to the sea-room available and to the possibility that the stern will turn against the sea and then be exposed to extreme slamming pressures on the flat aft section.*
- *Decreasing the speed below a critical value may result in a dangerous deterioration of the dynamic roll damping. Conversely, in that regard it is also necessary to be aware of the risks to the vessel and cargo associated with excessively high speed.*

CHIRP will welcome correspondence on this subject.

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## WOULD THIS HAPPEN IN AVIATION?

**Report Text:** I am a marine Pilot. I was allocated to board a coaster at the Pilot Station at 0200 hours. The weather conditions were excellent for this time of year, partly cloudy, very clear visibility and just a light breeze.

From the pilot launch, we could see the ship silhouetted and I thought straight away that something was not quite right. She had no navigation lights on.

On reaching the bridge I introduced myself to the Master and had the Pilot/Master exchange after which I just asked him if he would check his navigation lights. He gave me a 'funny look' and went over to the port side of the bridge consol. I then heard a muffled curse and the sound of switches being activated. Nothing more was said and we carried on with an uneventful pilotage but it got me thinking ...

The navigation light panel was quite large and each individual switch lit up when activated. The ship appeared to be in extremely good condition with a North European Master and general mix of other nationalities as crew. Just shows on a supposedly well found ship fundamental errors can occur.

**CHIRP Comment:** readers may perhaps be not too surprised to read that errors and omissions in routine

tasks do sometimes happen on ships. However, we would be horrified (or worse) if this were to happen on a plane on which we are travelling. So what's the difference between the two industries? We observe, for example, that the disciplined use of check-lists is ingrained into cockpit procedures. In contrast, there appears to be a reluctance to use check-lists consistently in the shipping industry, despite the obvious benefits as demonstrated by this report. We would welcome your comments.



The pilots of the Red Arrows and Vulcan undoubtedly paid close attention to their pre-flight checks.

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As previously advised, reports of primary interest to the leisure sector will be published in the full edition of MARITIME FEEDBACK; this is available on our website: [www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk), but not in the hard copy distributed to ships.

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Maritime & Coastguard Agency 24hr Info No:  
**0870 6006505**  
(Hazardous incidents may be reported to your  
local Coastguard Station)

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# CHIRP

## MARITIME REPORT FORM

**CHIRP** is totally independent of the MCA and any organisation in the maritime sector

Name:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post Code:	Tel:
e-mail:	<input type="checkbox"/> Indicates Mandatory Fields

1. Your personal details are required only to enable us to contact you for further details about any part of your report. Please do not submit anonymous reports.

2. On closing, this Report Form will be returned to you.  
**NO RECORD OF YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS WILL BE KEPT**

3. **CHIRP** is a reporting programme for safety-related issues. We regret we are unable to accept reports that relate to industrial relations issues.

If your report relates to non-compliance by another vessel with regulations, **CHIRP** generally endeavours, to follow this up with the owner or manager of that vessel, unless you advise otherwise. The identity of the reporter is never disclosed.

No. You do not have my permission to contact a third party

If your report relates to safety issues that may apply generally to seafarers, it may be considered for publication in **MARITIME FEEDBACK** unless you advise otherwise. Reports may be summarised. The name of the reporter, the names of vessels and/or other identifying information are not disclosed.

No. Please do not publish in **MARITIME FEEDBACK**.

### PLEASE COMPLETE RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT/SITUATION

YOUR POSITION ONBOARD OR IN ORGANISATION		THE INCIDENT		THE WEATHER	
MASTER/SKIPPER	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHIEF ENGINEER	<input type="checkbox"/>	DATE OF INCIDENT	
DECK	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGINE/ETO	<input type="checkbox"/>	TIME	LOCAL/GMT
CATERING	<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/>	VESSEL LOCATION	
MANAGER	<input type="checkbox"/>	RATING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>YOUR VESSEL</b>	
OTHER:		<b>TYPE OF OPERATION</b>		NAME:	
		COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT	<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFSHORE	<input type="checkbox"/>
		FISHING	<input type="checkbox"/>	LEISURE	<input type="checkbox"/>
				TYPE:	(TANKER, BULK CARRIER, FISHING, YACHT, ETC)
				FLAG:	

### DESCRIPTION OF EVENT - PHOTOGRAPHS, DIAGRAMS AND/OR ELECTRONIC PLOTS ON A CD ARE WELCOME:

Your narrative will be reviewed by a member of the **CHIRP** staff who will remove all information such as dates/locations/names that might identify you. Bear in mind the following topics when preparing your narrative:

Chain of events • Communication • Decision Making • Equipment • Situational Awareness • Weather • Task Allocation • Teamwork • Training • Sleep Patterns

continue on a separate piece of paper, if necessary



PLEASE PLACE THE COMPLETED REPORT FORM, WITH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF REQUIRED, IN A SEALED ENVELOPE TO:

**FREEPOST RSKS-KSCA-SSAT • The CHIRP Charitable Trust • 26 Hercules Way • Farnborough • GU14 6UU • UK** (no stamp required if posted in the UK)

Confidential Tel (24 hrs): +44 (0) 1252 378947 or **Freephone** (UK only) 0808 100 3237

Report forms are also available on the **CHIRP** website: [www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk)

## LEISURE SECTOR REPORTS

### ELECTRICAL INTERFERENCE NEAR WIND FARM

**Report Text:** My yacht was in the vicinity of a wind farm when all our electrics cut out. The equipment eventually responded to pressing of ON switch.

Five other vessels in the area had similar experiences. Electro magnetism? Too much of a coincidence. On return journeys none of us had a problem.

**CHIRP Comment:** We passed this report (disidentified) to the appropriate manager of the MCA. He contacted the wind farm developers who advised that they have no equipment that could cause such failure.

We would be interested to hear of any similar experiences.

### AIS

**Report Text:** We have recently completed an extensive voyage in our yacht, sailing in British waters.

We found the plotter combined with an AIS "engine" gave us a very valuable picture of traffic especially in fog at night.

There are a few points that came out of its use. Firstly there were some commercial vessels which were not sending a signal. Secondly, we were off the South Coast of Cornwall and found ourselves in the middle of a naval exercise in very bad visibility. Some of the warships were sending AIS and some were not.

We met a few yachts who sent AIS and thought that was uncalled for, how would it be if every yacht in the Solent for example, sent a signal- chaos!!

**CHIRP Comment:** There is not generally any reason why a commercial vessel navigating around the UK would elect not to transmit her AIS signal. Indeed failure to do so would be a breach of regulation. Although there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. piracy risk, in which a Master may decide not to transmit AIS, these would not normally apply around the UK.

It is possible that a vessel may have a technical problem with its AIS transmitter. However, this is usually considered to be a reliable piece of equipment, although there are sometimes issues regarding the accuracy of the data transmitted. Generally, it is more probable, if a vessel's AIS signal is not showing on a yacht's AIS receiver, that the problem is with the reception of the signal. This can be affected by weather conditions and/or the efficiency of the aerial.

Naval vessels can elect not to transmit AIS. Military exercises are often conducted with a high degree of realism, so we are not surprised that some of the warships encountered by this yachtsman may not have been transmitting AIS.

Whilst we can understand the anxiety of a yachtsman at being in the middle of an exercise in bad visibility, there are a number of mitigating factors regarding the safety of such exercises:

1. Warning of the exercises is broadcast by the Coast Guard.

2. The naval vessels operate with a high degree of surveillance and should therefore be aware of the presence of a yacht.
3. One of the warships has a specific responsibility to act as Guard Ship for the exercise area.
4. If a yachtsman finds himself in a situation where he is concerned for his safety, he can contact the Coast Guard for advice, initially on Channel 16.

In general, AIS receivers provide useful additional information for use in assessing a traffic situation. However, do not assume that all vessels will be detected or that the data transmitted can be taken as absolutely reliable. Furthermore, do not rely on a single source of information in making navigational decisions.

### ENCOUNTER WITH PASSENGER SHIP

**Report Text:** Our yacht was sailing in the Channel. We had just come through heavy seas and in easing but still confused conditions (in otherwise good visibility). We had tacked onto an easterly course.

I requested my crew to keep a good lookout on a passenger ship travelling north towards us on our starboard beam approximately 2nm distant.

Less than 3 minutes later I instructed the second crew member, who had been navigating at the chart table, to radio the ship on channel 16 identifying our position and his aspect in relation to ours and request "his intentions". There was no answer and I instructed the message to be sent again. Again there was no response. The message was sent at least 4 and maybe 6 times in very quick succession with no response.

I then immediately instructed the message to be sent "Passenger ship in position.....take immediate avoiding action, say again immediate avoiding action". After a brief second or so a response came back "Hold your course and speed" and the ship turned hard to starboard passing ahead of us by no more than 20 metres or two of our boat lengths.

I then asked for the handheld VHF and on channel 16 said "Ship xxxx, this is the sailing vessel that you have just narrowly avoided, you took action too late, I say again too late". An immediate response was heard to say "Yes, I am sorry". I then instructed a note to be put in our ship's log.

Lessons Learned: We were the stand on vessel and had we changed course we could have put ourselves into a collision position if the ship had taken different avoiding action. It is essential in close quarters, even when you are a much smaller vessel to stick strictly to the IRPCS. Lessons learnt is that ships do not always keep a good visual lookout and in heavy seas may have turned the declutter up on their radar and can not identify a small sailing vessel in confused seas, it is therefore essential to contact them by VHF and identify their position clearly and continue repeatedly to contact them until some contact or action is taken - which we did. There is growing pressure on smaller vessels to sail "defensively" but nothing could have been done by us in this situation to sail "defensively". Had we tacked onto our original course we would have presented a smaller visual target. Had we borne away from the wind and run down

parallel, trying to pass port to port with the ship, we would have been under far less control and again presented a less visual image. Gybing in the prevailing conditions would have been dangerous.

**CHIRP Comment:** We sent the disidentified report to the manager of the ship. He promptly followed it up with the Master and responded as follows:

*Our ship did pass a yacht in the reported area on the reported date and time. The sea was heavy (wind N/NE 5) and the officer of the watch did not detect the yacht on the radar. The officer and the watchman did not make a visual sighting either in the rough sea even though there was good visibility.*

*As soon as he realised that he had been called, the officer accurately assessed the situation and asked the yacht to keep its course and speed and he himself steered the vessel wide to the right to avoid a close situation. After that, the officer acknowledged over the VHF radio to have been a little late.*

*In his defence, our radar had not detected this yacht. Perhaps because its reflector had not been well positioned or was faulty?*

*The officer of the watch had indicated to me the approaching situation and had reported to me that he acknowledged that he had reacted late.*

*I therefore offer my apologies to the crew of this yacht for any inconvenience caused by this situation.*

We relayed this to the yachtsman who has responded as follows:

*I am pleased with the spirit of the response and the apology and am happy for you to include the incident in a future issue of MARITIME FEEDBACK to aid education of and learning from maritime incidents*

*In response to an issue raised by the captain of the ship, we have a permanently erected radar reflector at the mast head, a "visiball" double hemisphere (an array of 2 multi dielectric lenses mounted back to back), that was I believe initially developed in conjunction with the Royal Navy.*

CHIRP thanks the reporter, the ship's manager, Master and staff for the constructive approach taken with this report. We emphasise the benefit of defensive sailing and the importance of taking early action to avoid collision.

## CORRESPONDENCE

CHIRP welcomes correspondence about the reports we publish. We reserve the right to summarise letters received. We apply the same rules as for reports, i.e. although you must provide your name, we do not disclose it.

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