

Fire on Board Fishing Trawler

Casualty Circular No. 5 of 2006

NO: 9-NT(17)/2006

Dated: 30th Aug, 2006

FIRE ON BOARD FISHING TRAWLER

Background :

A fire occurred on board a fishing trawler while she was in the vicinity of Visakhapatnam Port. As a result of the fire, four persons sustained serious injuries and two persons were reported missing. A search operation carried out by the Coast Guard Ship in the vicinity of the anchorage did not bear any results in locating the missing crew personnel. The investigation into the fire revealed that the crew members were reportedly cooking food on a kerosene stove that ignited the fire and a spare container containing 20 liters of kerosene in the trawler further aggravated and spread the fire.

Narrative :

A fishing trawler while engaged in fishing was reported to have caught fire. A motor tanker anchored in the vicinity sighted the occurrence and reported to the Port Signal Station. The Port Signal Station informed the Coast Guard and the DG Communication Centre. The identity of the vessel was confirmed and the port informed the two persons were reported to have been missing and four others had sustained serious fire burns and that they were admitted in the local hospital. One of the crew member suffered 100% burn whereas the others 40% to 30%. No statements could be recorded due to their state of health. The Coast Guard was informed and they carried out search operation for almost 6 hours in a 15 NM area with no sighting of missing personnel. It appears that the cause of the fire was the Kerosene stove that was being used to cook food on board the fishing vessel. The stowage of kerosene in the vicinity of the stove further aggravated the fire.

Lessons learnt :

1. Equipment and fuel used for the purposes of cooking on board fishing vessels and trawlers should be an approved type.
2. Periodical inspection of fishing trawlers / vessels is imperative.
3. Storage of kerosene and similar flammable materials should be restricted with immediate effect.
4. Registering authorities of fishing vessels and trawlers should also ensure monitoring of safety equipments and periodical inspections of such crafts.

Sd/-

(Capt. R.K. Awasthi)

Nautical Surveyor-cum-DDG (Tech.)