



South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1
SM14/2/7/1

Date: 09 February 2012

Marine Notice No. 3 of 2012

A review of incidents resulting in death in the South African fishing industry: 2011

TO ALL PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, OWNERS, OPERATORS, MANAGERS SKIPPER'S & SAFETY OFFICER'S OF FISHING VESSELS AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Marine Notice No 1 of 2011 is cancelled

Summary

This notice advises the fishing industry of the incidents that lead to deaths in the domestic fishing industry and compares trends over previous years. Owners, managers, skippers and safety officers are encouraged to review their operations and through the use of risk assessment and identify areas of their operations where steps can be taken to eliminate dangers.

In 2011, 7 fishers lost their lives in 5 separate operational incidents;

- 1 crew members were lost overboard while vessels were steaming not during fishing operations;
- 5 fishers died after the capsizing of 2 dinghies and a small fishing vessel; and
- 1 fisher died when the trawl door was being secured in the gallows swung free knocking the fisher overboard.

SAMSA notes the ongoing reduction in the death rate and applauds industry for making a dangerous working environment safer.

In 2011, 2 fishers died in non-operational instances;

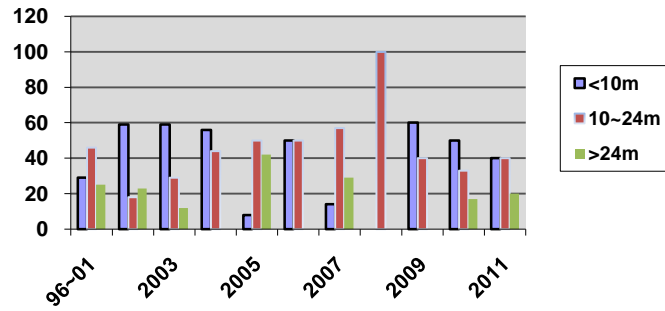
- A crew member was allowed to use the vessels rescue boat to go ashore to but air time. There was a collision with a small vessel and the crew member lost his life; an
- A crew member is suspected to have committed suicide, which may have been a result of the prolonged use of narcotics.

SAMSA offers trauma counselling, assistance with securing UIF, COID and insurance and the facilitation of social grants through the Welfare Office, Mrs N Dubase (021 421 6170 ndubase@samsa.org.za) . In addition community and workplace seminars are offered, at no cost to the industry on HIV/AIDS awareness and alcohol/substance abuse.

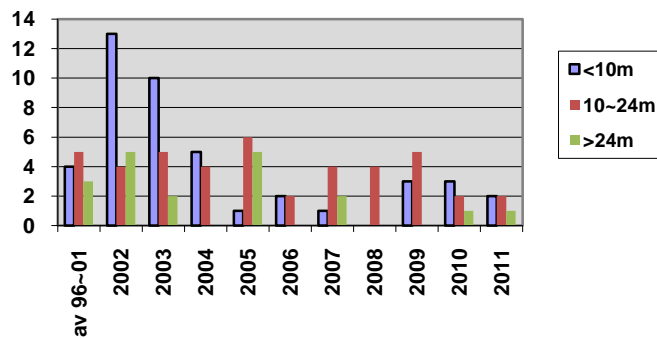
The operational incidents can be categorized as follows;

1. **Number of incidents by vessel size.**

Incidents are shown as a percentage by size category.

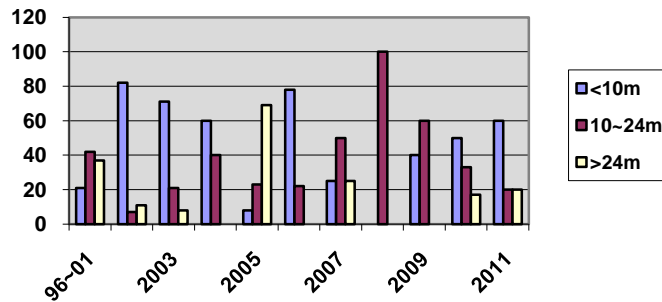


Incidents are shown by number per size category.

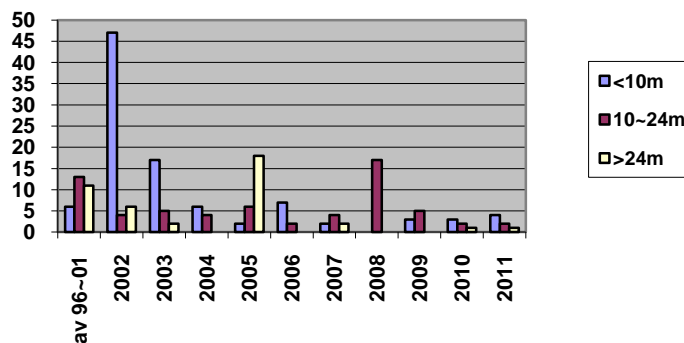


2. **Deaths by size category.**

Deaths are shown as a percentage by size category.



Deaths are shown as numbers per size category.

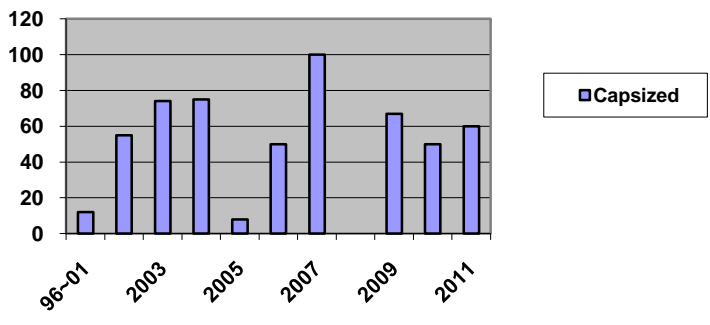


3. **Types of incidents.**

Types of incident are shown as a percentage per size category.

a. **Capsized**

Vessels <10m



Capsize of small vessels is primarily due to 4 reasons:

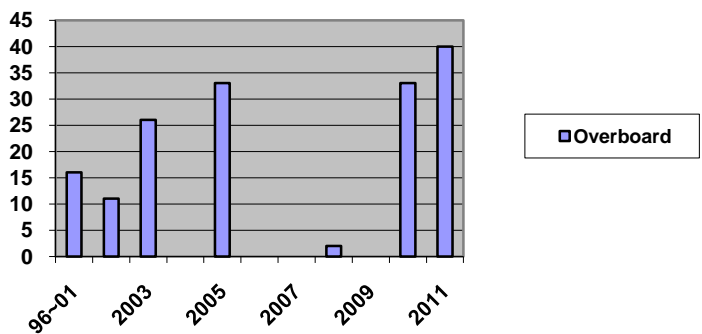
- at sea in unsuitable weather conditions,
- hauling of anchors over the side and not the bow,
- too close to the shore, and
- overloading.

The requirement that flotation aids are worn within the surf zone can only reduce the number of fatalities.

In an incident this year all 4 crew members survived the initial capsize and were sitting in the hull. The skipper decided to dive under the boat to recover the capsize bottle. Two successive waves washed 2 crew members of the hull, which due to the required buoyancy being fitted was afloat. Crew members on an upturned hull should be tied together using the capsize rope.

In another incident the vessel had suffered a power failure and a cellphone fitted with a light was used to illuminate the magnetic compass. The vessel strayed off course into the breakers and capsized. It is suspected that the magnetic field from the cell phone affected the compass.

b. **Overboard.**



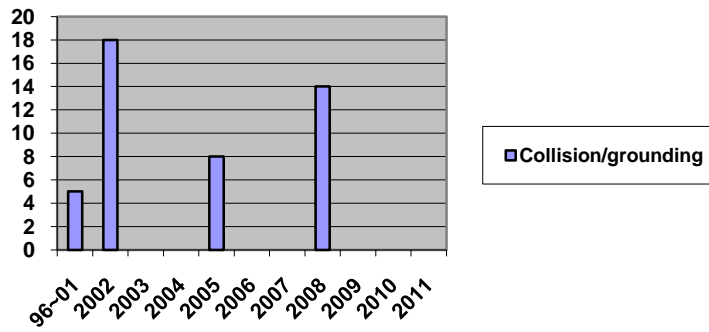
After the capsize of small vessels this is the single largest category leading to death. Crew members lost overboard are either lost:

- while shooting or hauling fishing gear
- at night when the vessel is steaming.

To reduce this reason for death the following steps should be taken onboard:

- flotation aids are worn at all times on deck where the nature of the work can lead to a crew member being knocked overboard,
- crew members that go on deck while there is no fishing operation should never be alone. Skippers are encouraged to introduce a buddy system where there are always 2 crew members together, this is especially important at night; and
- when working near or at the side of the vessel safety harnesses should be worn.

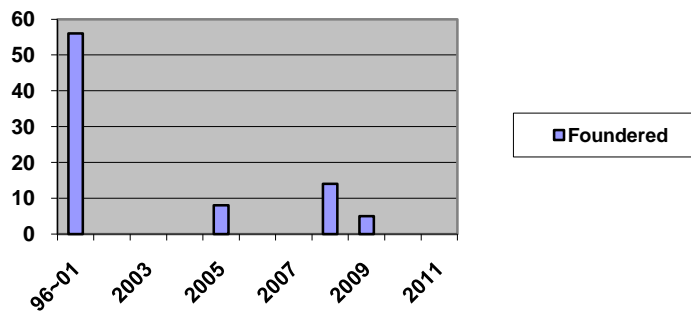
c. **Collision/Grounding.**



Groundings are totally avoidable providing the principles of good seamanship and watch keeping are adhered to.

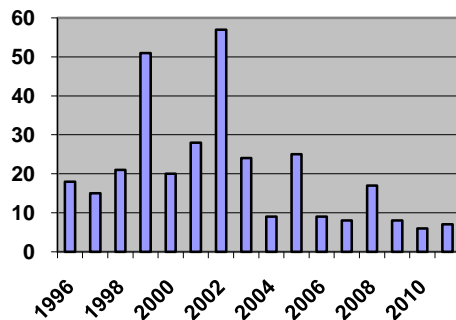
d. **Foundered.**

Loss of a vessel >10m



It is vital that skippers continually monitor all methods of receiving weather reports and consider if the fishing trip is safe in the predicted weather conditions. Early consideration should be given to seeking shelter when the predicted weather may endanger the vessel.

4 Deaths per year



5 Deaths by area

Year	Sald	C.T	M.B	P.E	E.L	Dbn	R.B	Ocean	Total
1996	3		2	12		1			18
1997	6	8	1						15
1998	1	1		1		1		17	21
1999		2	2	45		1	1		51
2000	6	3	6	2		2	1		20
2001	4	7	2	10			5		28
2002	11	17	20	4	3	2			57
2003	16	2	2	2		2			24
2004	5	1	2	1					9
2005	1	3	1	19	1				25
2006	1	5	2	1					9
2007	4	2		2					8
2008		3		14					17
2009	3		5						8
2010	1	1	1	3					6
2011	2	1	2	1	1				7
Total	64	56	48	117	4	9	7	17	323

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