

# Safety Alert

**Number: 20-10**

**Published: 20/11/2020**

**Subject: FRC Capsize During Competence Assessment**

## What Happened / Narrative

On Monday the 27th of April 2020 at circa 13:30 in the afternoon an Emergency Response and Recovery mother vessel launched her Fast Rescue Craft (FRC) to perform a competence assessment of one of the crewmembers according to the organisations internal FRC Training program.

A toolbox talk was held on the bridge at 1300hrs, at the time of the toolbox talk the weather conditions were recorded as being 3-4 mHs and wind 26 knots dir. 020.

Shortly after the launch the FRC was sailing up against the sea direction and met one big wave which was overcome, shortly after a second even bigger wave came towards the FRC. The second wave was breaking and caught the FRC in the surf water, at this point the coxswain lost control and the FRC capsized. The two crewmembers fell into the water, one of the crewmembers sustained an injury to the hand which was later diagnosed as a fractured knuckle.

The mother vessel bridge activated the man overboard alarm and readied a secondary FRC for deployment.

The two crew members managed to activate the self-rightening system and the FRC was up righted. They re-entered the FRC, restarted the engine and made radio contact up with the mother vessel. The FRC returned safely to the mother vessel.

## Why Did it Happen / Cause

Due to the high potential for loss, a full investigation was undertaken with the following underlying and root causes were identified:

- FRC coxswain misread the sea state / wave that led to the capsize
- FRC crew launched in weather conditions that exceeded their existing training levels
- The FRC training program and procedures did not go far enough in explaining how the practical abilities were to be achieved

## Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

Improvements to be made to the internal FRC training program:

- Ensuring the theoretical FRC training is learned and assessed before commencing the practical exercises and assessment, on the specific level the employee has reached.
- Footage of actual situations to be used to support the training.
- Personal logbooks to capture individual practical training hours implemented to ensure quantitative progression along with the qualitative training.

In terms of FRC risk management:

- FRC operation specific Toolbox checklist that includes check of compliance between weather and training level as well as other key factors in safe operations of FRC for training purposes.

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## Photographs / Supporting Information

### Sequence of events showing how the FRC was capsized



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