

**REPORT OF THE
INVESTIGATION INTO THE
RESCUE OF THE RIB "VIKING
RAIDER" OFF LAMBAY ISLAND
ON 18TH APRIL 2003**

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board was established on the 5th, June 2002 under The Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000

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1. SYNOPSIS.

- 1.1 The RIB "Viking Raider" is 6.5 metres in Length Overall fitted with five buoyant chambers, constructed in 2000 by Red Bay Boats Co. Antrim. "Viking Sub Aqua Club", Coolmine, Dublin 15 (owner of this vessel).
- 1.2 The RIB sailed from Malahide Marina on the morning of Friday 18th April 2003 for a dive site on the North side of Lambay Island with fourteen people on board.
- 1.3 When the RIB was about 100 metres off the South side of Lambay Island a swell developed. They decided to turn back and slowed the vessel in order to turn when a wave came over the bow and the engine cut out. The engine could not be restarted. The vessel became swamped. The Pony auxiliary engine could not be started. A May Day was issued and some flares were set off. A yacht in the area put a tow on board to keep the RIB off the rocks.
- 1.4 The May Day call was received by Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) at 09.53hrs local time. At 09.54hrs the Coast Guard helicopter at Dublin Airport was tasked and at 09.55hrs the R.N.L.I. lifeboat at Howth was tasked. At 10.16hrs the helicopter was at the scene and decided to lift a nine-year-old boy off the vessel.
- 1.5 Howth's R.N.L.I. lifeboat was at the scene at 10.30hrs. All remaining persons were removed from the RIB to the lifeboat. The RIB was placed in tow by the lifeboat and arrived at Howth at 11.40hrs local time. There were no injuries.

2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

2.1 The RIB "Viking Raider" is 6.5 metres in Length Overall. Constructed in 2000 by Red Bay Boats, Red Bay, Co. Antrim. Model of vessel, "Red Bay Stormforce".

Length overall,	6.5metres.
Breadth	2.4metres.
Diameter of tubes	0.46metres.
Number of buoyant chambers	5.
Seats	1.
Hand grips	6
Engine	Yamaha, 6 cylinder, 250 H.P.(186.5kW)
Standby engine	Pony, 15HP.

Other equipment on board;

Radio, hand held VHF type Icom ICM401 EURO Anchor, 4 parachute and 2 hand held distress signals, first Aid kit. Pump for chambers. Racks for holding diving equipment and one oxygen cylinder.

Details of maker's plate attached to transom.

Red Bay Boats
 Red Bay Stormforce
 10 persons 750kg total 850kg
 CE EBR33 179kW

2.2 The "Viking Sub Aqua Club", Coolmine, Co. Dublin, are the owners of the vessel.

3. EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

- 3.1 The Viking Sub Aqua Club is in existence for many years. The Equipment Officer Mr. Aidan Dunne organised this trip and was the diving officer.
- 3.2 The trip was organised during the club meeting on Wednesday 16th April 2003. On Friday 18th April 2003 a briefing session was held in Malahide Marina. On Thursday 17th April 2003 Mr. Aidan Dunne and Mr. Paul Morrison checked the RIB as is the usual practice. Dublin Radio was contacted informing them of the trip, the type and size of craft and the number of people on board before the RIB left Malahide Marina.

Fourteen people were on board, consisting of nine male adults, four female adults and one nine year old boy. All were equipped with personal floatation devices.

4. THE INCIDENT

- 4.1 The party set off for the dive site on the North side of Lambay Island. When the RIB was about 100 metres off the South side of Lambay Island a swell developed. They decided to turn back, the vessel was slowed to turn; a wave came over the bow and the engine cut out. The engine could not be restarted. The RIB became swamped. The Pony auxiliary engine could not be started. Paul Morrison sent out a May Day and three distress signals were set off. Two parachute flares and one smoke flare was used, one parachute flare failed to operate. The flares were in date.
- 4.2 The May Day was received by MRCC at 09.53hrs local time. At 09.54 hours the Coast Guard helicopter at Dublin Airport was tasked and at 09.55hrs the R.N.L.I. lifeboat at Howth was tasked. The vessel was drifting towards the island and some rocks. A yacht "Aquarius" that was close by came to assist and placed the RIB in tow.
- 4.3 Helicopter R116 arrived at the scene at 10.16 hrs. It assessed the situation and elected to lower a winch man on to the vessel and remove the nine year old male boy from the vessel. The pilot further assessed the situation and decided to standby while Howth's RNLi lifeboat which had arrived at 10.30 hours took the remaining survivors from the RIB and took the RIB in tow.
- 4.4 There seems to have been some misunderstanding between the helicopter and the lifeboat. The lifeboat Coxswain was of the opinion that the helicopter intended to lift all survivors from the RIB to the aircraft.
(See extract from MRCC at Appendix 8.1)
- 4.5 The lifeboat came alongside the vessel and those remaining were taken on board the lifeboat. A crewmember from the lifeboat was put on board the vessel. A towline was attached and the RIB towed to Howth Harbour. The swell was about 1.5 metres high. The lifeboat and RIB were alongside the boathouse at 11.40hrs.

5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

- 5.1 As one of the survivors was unwell the RNLI doctor attended and decided to call an ambulance to take him to Beaumont Hospital. He was discharged from hospital a short time later.
- 5.2 The helicopter departed the scene at 10.45hrs and arrived back at base at 10.54hrs. The boys' mother collected him some time later.
- 5.3 On completion of the rescue the lifeboat crew assisted the club members in flushing out the engine and restarting it. The RIB went to Malahide under its own power.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

- 6.1 The RIB was well maintained and in good condition. It was constructed for the carriage of a maximum of ten people i.e. 750kg. in weight. The manufacturers recommend that the maximum weight carried should not exceed 850kg.
- 6.2 At the time of the incident the RIB had fourteen people and diving equipment onboard. The weight of one persons diving equipment is approximately 25kg. A spare air cylinder weighs about 12kg. The total weight on board that day was in the region of 1400kg.
- 6.3 The RIB was grossly overloaded: This was the main reason why the RIB became swamped and lost engine power.
- 6.4 The RIB had no sea anchor or drogue on board.
- 6.5 The misunderstanding referred to in paragraph 4.4 should not occur in this type of situation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 RIB/ Boat users should ensure that the Maximum weight recommended by the manufacturers of such vessels should not be exceeded.
- 7.2 This type of vessel should carry a sea anchor or drogue and the crew should be familiar with its use.
- 7.3 An inshore flare pack should be carried on a RIB of this size i.e. 4 parachute flares, 4 hand held flares and 2 smoke floats. (Similar to passenger boats)
- 7.4 A Marine Notice or Information Leaflet pointing out these matters should be published and distributed to the appropriate sectors.

8. APPENDICES

8.1: Extract from MRCC records.

APPENDIX 8.1

8.1: Extract from MRCC records.

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EXTRACT          MRCC DUBLIN LOG FOR          18/04/2003 Incident L
=====
08:53           UNKNOWN          DN          16
  B
  STATION CALLING MAYDAY WHAT NAME/TYPE ANS POSITON OFF VESSEL.///
  RRR 6 MTRS RIB 14 POB OFF LAYBAY HEAD ./// RRR

08:54           MRCC              EJM          PH
  S
  ADV RE MAYDAY /// RRR - YOU TASK HOWTH LB AND WE WILL TASK R116 ///
  SAYS RRR

08:55           R116              MRCC          P
  S
  TASKED TO 6M RIB OFF LAMBAY /// SAYS RRR

08:56           ATC              MRCC          TEL
  A
  ADVSD TASKING R116 TO INCIDENT LAMBAY ISLAND

08:56           MRCC              RUPERT JEFFARES 16
  S
  UPDATED RE QTH
```

08:57 MAYDAY RELAY DN 16
 B
 MAYDAY RELAY INFO NR 1 MAYDAY RELAY BEGINS VIKING INVADER 6MTRS RIB
 WITH 14 POB SINKING NEED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE DTG180855UTC.
 MET SHANNON RQ F/C DN A/P TO LAMBAY ISLAND FAX TO CHC DN AND MRCC DN
 ./// RRR

08:58 EJM MRCC PH
 S
 HAVE YOU COMMS WITH VIKING INVADER /// SAYS STBI
 QTH 50FT NE LAMBAY IS - DRIFTING TO ISLAND /// RRR - ASK HIM IF HAS
 DROGUE OR ANYTHING TO SLOW HIM /// SAYS RRR

09:00 MRCC SKERRIES LB TEL
 A
 AVAILABLE IF REQUIRED///WILL ADVISE IF REQUIRED///TNX

09:02 EJM MRCC 16
 S
 REF STENA EXP - CAN LET HIM PROCEED ON ROUTE /// SAYS RRR

09:08 EJM MRCC PH
 S
 PLS KEEP HELIO GOING UNTIL LB ESTAB THAT NOT REQD /// SAYS RRR

09:17 DN R116 16
 B
 ON SCENE WILL ACCESS SITUATION.

09:17 MRCC RUPERT JEFFARES PH

APPENDIX 8.1

S RQ WHY RIB SINKING /// NO INDICATION /// RQ UIN /// SUPPLIED

09:18 DN HOWTH L/B 16
B

HAVE VISUAL ON CASUALTY ETA 3 MINS./// RRR

09:19 DN R116 83
B

COMMENCING WINCHING OPS./// RRR DN RAD ONE CHILD ON BOARD./// RRR

09:23 MRCC EJM 16
S

DISCUSSIONS ON CH16 ON WHAT TO BE DONE /// RRR - PLS APPOINT R116 OSC
AS HE HAS BEST VIEW OF SITU /// SAYS RRR

09:28 RUPERT JEFFARES MRCC PH
S

PLS QSO WITH LB - A LOT OF QUIBBLING GOING ON ON CH16 /// SAYS RRR
WILL QSO ON PRIVATE CH

09:31 MRCC MR KELLY - LAMBAY IS. PH
S

RE EXE - HELICOPTER DISTURBING ANIMALS /// NOT EXERCISE - BOAT WITH
16 PERSONS SINKING /// SAYS RRR

09:32 EJM MRCC PH
S

UPDATED

09:36 VDC MRCC PH
S
ADV RE VIKING INVADER AND QUIBBLING ON CH16 /// SAYS RRR

09:45 MRCC H/S HOWTH LB TEL
A
AVSD LB QRL WITH TOW WILL INTERVIEW CREW LATER RE COMMS ONSCENE
DURING INCIDENT

09:50 DN R116 16
B
RETURNED TO DN A/P CLS DOWN

09:54 EJM MRCC PH
S
RQ UPDATE /// SAYS CHILD TAKEN TO A/P BY R116 AND 13POB LB (+7CREW)
- TOW HAS PARTED - RECONNECT TOW ANT ETA HOWTH 45MINS /// RRR - PLS
QTA MAYDAY /// SAYS RRR

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RNLI Lifeboats Ireland



**Royal National
Lifeboat Institution**
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Supported entirely by voluntary contributions

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Mr Dick Heron
Secretary
Marine Casualty Investigation Board
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 4

2 December 2003

Dear Mr Heron,

Re MCIB 74 : Incident involving RIB Viking Raider off Lambay island 18 April 2003

Thank you for affording the Royal National Lifeboat Institution the opportunity to comment upon the Draft Report upon MCIB 74.

The nomenclature "RNLI Lifeboat Howth" used in Paras 1.5 and 4.3 should be correctly described as "Howth's RNLI Lifeboat". (The radio callsign used in voice transmissions is "Howth Lifeboat")

For your information the matter referred to in Recommendation 7.5 was discussed post incident between the Howth Lifeboat Station and the Coast Guard Helicopter base. The two units have operated and trained together on a number of occasions since April 2003 without difficulty.

It is our opinion that the outcome of this incident was not unduly affected by the reported communication difficulty between the Howth Lifeboat and the Rescue Helicopter.

We would agree that clear communication should ideally occur during an incident with regard to intention. A lifeboat will always stand clear of a casualty vessel when a helicopter is operating in close vicinity to the vessel. The Rescue helicopter crew had indicated their intention to winch off all of the survivors from "Viking Raider" and this was queried by the Howth Lifeboat Coxswain as it was considered that a faster evacuation would be effected by the lifeboat. The remaining survivors were then evacuated by the Howth Lifeboat and were transferred to Howth harbour as detailed in the report.

Additionally it should be noted from a practical aspect that radio communication with a surface craft is difficult when a helicopter is in close proximity due to the rotor noise

Yours sincerely


Colin Williams
Inspector of Lifeboats (Ireland)

MCIB Response

MCIB RESPONSE TO THE LETTER FROM RNLI LIFEBOATS IRELAND OF 2ND DECEMBER 2003

The MCIB notes the contents of this letter and has amended the Report accordingly. With regard to your specific reference to "draft" recommendation 7.5, which has now been deleted, the MCIB are happy to note that this now occurs.

Mr. Robin Mackie (crewmember)

ROBIN MACKIE ARCHITECT

BA(HONS) DIP ARCH RIBA MRIAI

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Mr Dick Herron, Secretary,
Marine Casualty Investigation Board,
Leeson Lane,
Dublin 2.



22 December 2003.

Dear Mr Herron,

Your ref MCIB 74.

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO
THE RESCUE OF THE RIB "VIKING RAIDER"
OFF LAMBAY ISLAND ON 18th APRIL 2003**

I am in receipt of the above draft report.

I apologise for not responding before 19th December as required, but I did receive my copy until the 17th December.

I comment as follows:

1. The Lifeboat was tasked at 09:55 and arrived at the scene at 10:30; however the return journey by the lifeboat with Raider in tow took only 10 minutes as the Lifeboat and RIB were alongside the boathouse at 10:40. From memory the return journey took longer than 10 minutes and there would appear to be some discrepancy with times here.
2. I was under the impression that the helicopter, after lifting the child on board, was waiting to take the father of the child, as soon as the lifeboat reached calmer waters. As the sea swell did not improve, the father remained on board and helicopter returned to base.

Should anything require clarification, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Robin Mackie RIBA MRIAI.

MCIB Response

MCIB RESPONSE TO THE LETTER FROM MR. ROBIN MACKIE OF 22ND DECEMBER, 2003

The MCIB notes the contents of this letter and has amended the Report where appropriate. The SITREP report is in Universal Time i.e. 1 hour before local time, all times in the Report have been corrected to local time.