

**REPORT OF THE  
INVESTIGATION INTO THE  
SINKING OF THE MFV  
"CHANTS d'ESPERANCE"  
ON 17TH DECEMBER 1996.**

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

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## 1. SYNOPSIS.

- 1.1 On Tuesday, 17th December 1996 the fishing vessel "Chants d'Esperance" sank approximately 26 miles from the Smalls. The crew were rescued by an RAF Sea King Helicopter. There were no fatalities or injuries and no pollution was observed.

## 2. FACTUAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 Particulars of Vessel

Name:	"Chants d'Esperance"
Fishing Number:	Waterford WD 124
Official Number:	402549
Built & Registered:	France, 1965
Registered in Ireland:	1989
Build of Hull:	Carvel wood
Bulkheads:	3
Gross Tonnage:	41.25
Registered Tonnage:	23.80
Registered Length:	16.64 metres (54.6 feet)
Re-engined:	1982
Builders:	A. Beneteau, St. Gilles, Croix de Vie, France
Fuel Capacity:	5000 litres in 4 tanks, 200 litres in D/S Tank

### 2.2 Description of the Vessel

- 2.2.1 Typical French west coast trawler with a wood carvel built hull. It had oak planking on oak frames. The vessel had a full single deck with planking generally of softwood and an aft deckhouse comprising of wheelhouse and galley.
- 2.2.2 "Chants d'Esperance" was a deep displacement hull, raked stem, round bilge and transom stern.
- 2.2.3 The trawler was rigged for bottom and mid water trawling. It was powered by a Paoyaud naturally aspirated in line diesel engine of approximately 175.33 kW (235.02 bhp) driving a fixed three bladed propeller through a 4:1 reverse / reduction gearbox producing a speed of approximately 8.5 knots. The Engine Room was arranged with the fuel tanks outboard.

### 2.3 Lifesaving Equipment

One inflatable life raft	- service date unknown
Four lifebuoys	- MOB smoke and light signal had expired
12 Parachute rockets	- validity date expired
Approved life jackets for each person	
3 Immersion suits	

### 2.4 Crew

Mr. Malcolm Whelan (Owner and Skipper), Mr. Seamus Crossan (Mechanic), Mr. William Whelan (Deckhand), Mr. Derek Cullen (Deckhand).

### 3. THE EVENTS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT

#### 3.1 Monday 16th December 1996

02.30 Sailed from Dunmore East to an area marked the "Celtic Deep" and to the west of Lundy Island and Saint Gowan Light Vessel. (See Appendices 8.1 and 8.2)

09.30 At the fishing ground, shot away and towed;

14.00 Hauled;

15.00 Shot away and towed;

21.00 Hauled and ceased fishing for the night;  
No prawn fishing during darkness.

#### 3.2 Tuesday 17th December 1996

07.45 Shot away and towed.

#### 4. THE INCIDENT

12.33 Skipper Malcolm Whelan sends out a Mayday. The vessel is taking seas on board and sinking by the stern; Preparing Inflatable Liferaft.

Rosslare Radio intercepts the Mayday and relay; "Chants d'Esperance" Qth 5129.88N00616.19W TAKING WATER. INLIFERAFT ALONGSIDE DTG 171232UTC (See Appendix 8.3).

A large number of other surface craft including IFV "Helga Irene" responded and proceeded towards the position.

12.36 Isle of Man Shell tanker "Acila" and US Navy ship "Prevail" responded and proceeding.

12.40 Milford Haven MRSC requests SAR R169 helicopter (See Appendix 8.4).

12.41 Bombard 6-person inflatable launched and "Chants d'Esperance" abandoned;

12.48 Angle (Milford Haven) lifeboat proceeding.

12.50 Liferaft clear of vessel; Kilmore Quay lifeboat proceeding, Helicopter R169 scrambled.

12.51 Dunmore East lifeboat proceeding.

12.55 Liferaft about 0.25 miles away from sinking vessel.

13.20 "Chants d'Esperance" sinks below the surface.

13.54 R169 on scene and commences searching.

13.58 IFV "Helga Irene" found debris and steaming down the oil slick/sheen followed by R169 Helicopter. "Helga Irene" acted as a homing station for R169 Helicopter.

14.00 Survivors in liferaft spotted.

## 5. EVENTS FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT

- 14.11 All crew recovered by Sea King Helicopter R169 from RAF Chivenor, North Devon and transferred to Hakin rugby football ground at Milford Haven and then by ambulance to Withybush hospital at Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire.
- 15.20 MSO advised of incident. Crew o.k. and proceeding to Withybush Hospital.
- 15.30 MSO Inspector has brief telephone conversation with father of skipper/owner.
- 15.42 - 15.49 Crew admitted to hospital.
- 15.42 - 15.49 MSO Inspector obtains brief telephone conversation with skipper/owner as he checks into Withybush Hospital. All well and no apparent injuries.
- 16.30 Survivors discharged. No fatalities or apparent injuries. Permitted to stay and rest in hospital until ready to leave for ferry.
- 23.00 Survivors depart hospital for Fishguard/Rosslare Ferry to return home.

### 5.1 Units Responding to Mayday

- United States Navy ship "Prevail" eta 14.00
- Isle of Man Tanker "Acila" eta 13.52
- Liberian Refrigerated ship "Crystal Prima Donna" eta 13.53
- UK Tanker "Asperalla" eta 13.54
- RAF, SAR, helicopter R169 eta 13.44  
retrieved 14.14
- EI2992 Fixed wing aircraft eta 13.43
- Air Corp C253 Fixed wing aircraft eta 14.52
- IFV "Helga Irene" eta 13.56  
located 14.00
- Kilmore Quay Lifeboat eta 16.49
- Angle Lifeboat (Milford Haven) eta 14.57
- Dunmore East Lifeboat eta 15.30
- IFV "Bridget Carmel" eta 13.46

All units stood down at 14.19hrs and abandoned liferaft taken on board "Helga Irene" shortly afterwards to be landed at Howth, Co. Dublin at a later date.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

6.1 Weather reports covering the period were given as wind between South East to East South East at 12 to 20 knots with moderate to rough seas. Visibility was 1 to 2 miles with less than 0.5 miles in patchy sea fog (See Appendix 8.5).

Helicopter R169 experienced poor visibility and had to search from 200 to 150 feet off sea level in order to obtain surface visibility.

6.2 The sinking of the vessel in 105 metres (344 feet) of water precluded any structural examination and consequently the precise condition of the hull and deck at the time of the incident cannot be estimated.

6.3 It is clear that the "Chants d'Esperance" had suffered serious leaking in the previous 12 months and more immediately only days before the sinking. It appears that the main leaking occurred in the vicinity of the stern tube as detailed below:

- During fine weather in May 1996 after landing a catch at Kinsale and having sailed from Kinsale a leak developed which flooded the cabin. Leaking was said to have been through the stern gland and the situation was exacerbated by cabin debris, which blocked the bilge gravity drainpipe from the Cabin space into the Engine Room.
- From 22nd to 30th June 1996 "Chants d'Esperance" was on the synchrolift at Dunmore East to carry out repairs including caulking to the timbers.
- On 4th October 1996 the vessel was inspected at the request of the Skipper/Owner, Mr. Malcolm Whelan by a BIM Officer. The purpose of the inspection was to ascertain the principal dimensions of the Fish Hold in order to prepare a storage capacity plan as required by EU Regulation No. 1381/87. During this inspection it was noted that the stanchions and pond (pound) boards were extremely weak and there was evidence of decay on the stanchions at deck and floor level. It was not possible to determine the condition of the deck beams, frames and stringers in the hold as the whole area was insulated with GRP. The owner was advised that "due to the general condition of the fish hold he would be very unwise to engage in this fishery" (Herring).
- During the Bank Holiday weekend of October 1996 the "Chants d'Esperance" received heavy squeezing while moored in Dunmore East. It is possible that this squeezing had an adverse effect on timbers and loosening of the caulking.
- On Thursday 12th December 1996 "Chants d'Esperance" was fishing off Helvick Head and returned to Dunmore East, Co. Wexford late that night. The vessel had suffered flooding in the Engine Room, Cabin and Hold.

# CONCLUSIONS

CONTD.

- The 30-year-old wooden fishing vessel was also known to take the bottom frequently when sheltering from weather at the homeport of Duncannon. The pounding which is inevitable, during certain stages of the tide, from weather running into the small harbour probably resulted in leaking problems that occurred in the vicinity of the stern gland thereby accounting for the history of leaks and flooding to this vessel.
- 6.4 The loss of the vessel was a result of uncontrolled and heavy water ingress. The eventual sinking of the vessel by the stern was brought about through the aft draught increasing due to the progressive flooding (i.e. the stern getting lower in the water) which was exacerbated by seas being shipped over the starboard quarter of the vessel resulting in further down flooding through the aft cabin portholes and area where the gallows support passed through the deck.
- 6.5 There were no freeing ports fitted to the aft third of the vessel. The freeing ports, which were fitted, were of guillotine type and it is established that they were closed (See Appendix 8.6).
- 6.6 There is no audible high level bilge alarm fitted to any compartment. A flashing light was said to come up on the wheelhouse panel when water in the Engine Room rose to a level just below the propeller shaft.
- 6.7 The fitted bilge pumps were unable to cope with the quantity of water, which entered the vessel from the stern gland, and the waisted areas of the main deck. There was a portable petrol driven pump aboard which the crew could not start. It would also appear that water was collecting in the below deck cabin compartment and rising swiftly. The vessel was taking a list to starboard with a trim by the stern.
- 6.8 The skipper/owner was aware of the vessel's condition and the history of serious leaks. He was also aware of the lack of capacity of the fitted bilge pumps to deal with any excess water leakage.
- 6.9 It is clear that the vessel was in very poor condition and was not seaworthy.
- 6.10 "Chants d'Esperance" was not equipped with an Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB).
- 6.11 The crewmembers experienced a number of difficulties in attempting to launch the liferaft, which had to be taken over the wheelhouse top onto the foredeck.
- 6.12 The liferaft, a Bombard 6-person liferaft, was inflated on the foredeck because the crew felt it would float away from the vessel if thrown over the side and the panter pulled to inflate or that it might not inflate at all. This lack of confidence was due to the fact that there was no record of when the liferaft was last serviced.
- 6.13 Nets, which were floating on or below the sea surface, got caught in the CO2 bottle fitted to the underside of the liferaft and had to be cut free.

- 6.14 The liferaft pyrotechnics were not used because the Skipper and crew felt that they might explode on detonation, as they were very much out of date.
- 6.15 It is clear that the liferaft and pyrotechnics had not been serviced for some considerable time thus increasing the vulnerability of the crew to the weather.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS.

### 7.1 Appropriate Marine Notices should be issued regarding:

- Stowage, positioning, launching and maintenance of inflatable liferafts including a recommendation to fit Hydrostatic Release Units.
- The danger of using Pyrotechnics that are out of date and the need to dispose of expired flares.
- Maintenance of bilge pumping arrangements, the use of high level alarms and the removal of debris from below deck compartments.
- Advice regarding older and poorly maintained wooden fishing vessels, which can be subject to excessive leaking.

### 7.2 Statutory Regulations setting out the requirements for Irish registered fishing vessels should be put in place and enforced.

These regulations should cover:

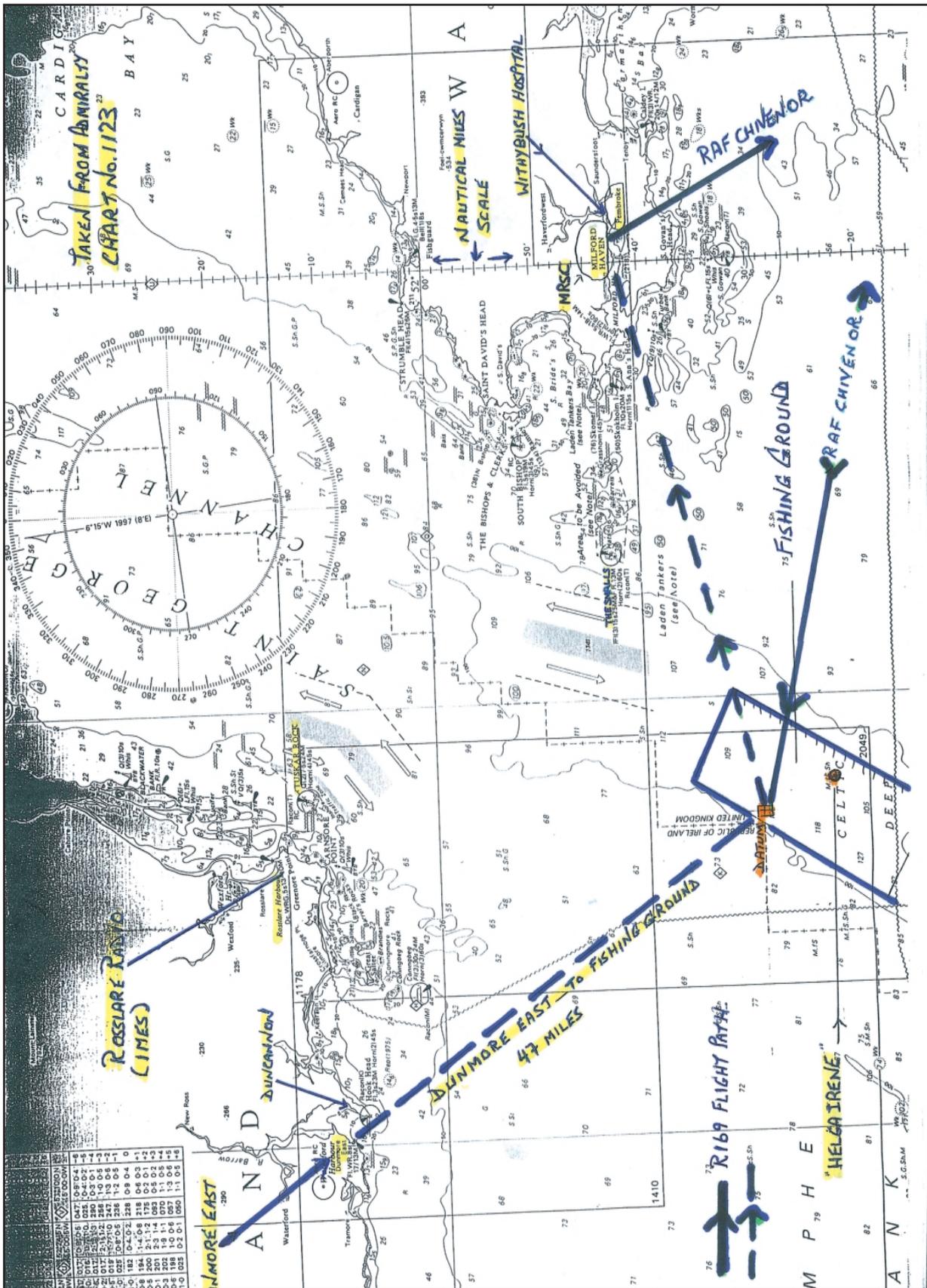
- Hull Construction
- Structural Fire Protection and Fire Detection
- Water Tight Integrity and Machinery, Pumping Arrangements
- Crew Protection

**8. APPENDICES**

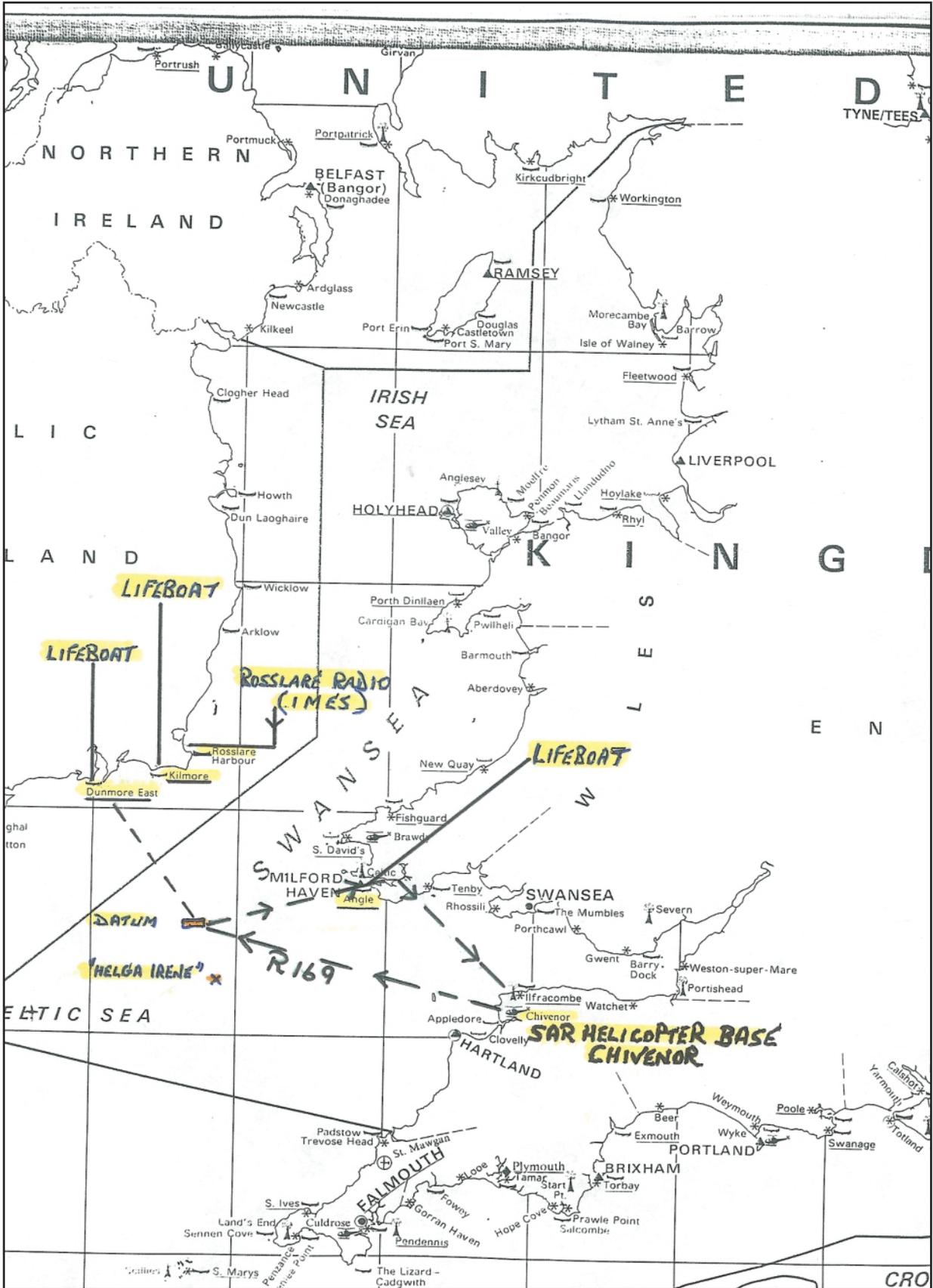
- 8.1 Abstract from Admiralty Chart No. 1123
- 8.2 Abstract from SAR Chart Q6356
- 8.3 IMES SITREP
- 8.4 UK RAF Mission Control Centre Report 17/12/96
- 8.5 Weather Report from Met Eireann 17/12/96
- 8.6 Photographs showing the freeing ports.
- 8.7 Photographs relating to "Chants d'Esperance"

# APPENDIX 8.1

8.1 Abstract from Admiralty Chart No. 1123



8.2 Abstract from SAR Chart Q6356



## APPENDIX 8.3

### 8.3 IMES SITREP

17-12-96 TUE 15:44 FAX 353 1 SITREP 6620795 MRCC Dub 353 1 WVEYORS 001

SITREP  
-----

TRANSMISSION PRIORITY URGENT 17/12/96

DTG 171540UTC

INCIDENT NAME ASSIST UK

FROM MRCC

TO IMES  
MSO

SITREP NUMBER ONE

- A. F/V CHANTS D'ESPERANCE
- B. 5129.88N 0061619W
- C. VESSEL SINKING
- D. 4
- E. SAR
- F. MILFORD HAVEN C.G.
- G. 16.64 MTR FRENCH BUILT F/V  
RED HULL, WHITE STERN AND BLUE WHEELHOUSE
- H. SSE 12KTS MOD SEA VIS A HALF MILE
- I. TASKED KILMORE QUAY AND DUNMORE EAST LBT'S  
MAYDAY RELAY BROADCAST ON ROSSLARE RDO.
- J. VICINITY OF 5129.88N 00616.19W
- K. COMMS VIA ROSSLARE RDO.
- L. N/A
- M. 1233 MAYDAY CALL FROM CHANTS D'ESPERANCE.  
SWANSEA/MILFORD HAVEN CG ADVISED.  
SAR UNITS LAUNCHED.  
1414 SURVIVORS RECOVERED BY SEAKING R169 AND  
TRANSFERRED TO HAVERFORDWEST HOSPITAL  
SAR UNITS STOOD DOWN

17/12 '96 TUE 15:44 FAX 353 1

8620795 MRCC Dub

353 1 VEYORS 002

Data & Control Equipment FAXBOX 0646 692176 > 353 1

IMMEDIATE

171308 UTC DEC

FROM MRSC MILFORD HAVEN

TO	MRCC SWANSEA	TELEX
	MSA MILFORD HAVEN	FAX
	MAIB	TELEX
	MRCC DUBLIN	FAX
	ARCC PLYMOUTH	TELEX
INFO	DYPED POWYS POLICE HQ	FAX

SARSITREP NO.1

A - F/V CANTS DESPIANCE - IRISH - WD124

B - 5129.88N 00616.19W

C - AT 1235UTC ROSSLARE RADIO INTERCEPTED MAYDAY CALL  
FROM F/V STATING TAKING WATER CREW TAKING TO LIFERAFT

D - 4

E - DUNMORE EAST RNLI LIFEBOAT REQUESTED

F - MRSC MILFORDH HAVEN CG/IMES DUBLIN

G - 56 FT FRENCH BUILD F/V RED/WHITE HULL WITH BLUE WHEEL HOUSE

H - WIND SOUTHEAST 5 - SEA MODERATE/ROUGH - VIS POOR

J - IMES DUBLIN CONTACTED AND REQUESTED ROSSLARE RADIO

CONDUCT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

DUNMORE EAST AND ANGLE RNLI LIFEBOATS REQUESTED IMMEDIATE

LAUNCH

US NAVAL VESSEL PREVAIL ETA 1.25 HRS. MV ACHILLA PROCEEDING

ETA 1 HOURS.

RESCUE HELO RESCUE 169 PROCEEDING ETA 1325UTC

N - N/A

NNNN

LAST page, 1 page in total

# APPENDIX 8.3

CONTD.

Data & Control Equipment FAXBOX 0646 692176 > 353 1

PRIORITY

171439 UTC DEC

FROM MRSC MILFORD HAVEN

TO	MRCC SWANSEA	TELEX
	MSA MILFORD HAVEN	FAX
	MAIB	TELEX
	MRCC DUBLIN	FAX
	ARCC PLYMOUTH	TELEX
	TRINITY HOUSE OPERATIONS	FAX
	MPCU SOUTHAMPTON	TELEX
	HYDROGRAPHER NAVWARN	TELEX
	AMBULANCE; PEMBROKESHIRE	FAX
INFO	DYFED POWYS POLICE HQ	FAX

SARSITREP NO.2

A - F/V CHANTS DESPANCE - IRISH - WD124

B - 5129.88N 00616.19W

N - RESCUE HELICOPTER R169 LOCATED AND RESCUED ALL 4 CREW FROM LIFERAFT AND AIRLIFTING THEM DIRECT TO RUGBY GROUND HAKIN MILFORD HAVEN, AND INTEND TAKING THEM TO WITBYBUSH HOSPITAL HAVERFORDWEST (TEL: 01437 764545).

R169 ETA NOW 1445UTC.

ALL EMERGENCY SERVICES REQUESTED TO PROCEED TO RUGBY GROUND

HAKIN MILFORD HAVEN

WRECKAGE AND OIL SLICK LOCATED IN POSN 5131.33N 00617.0W

ON SCENE COMMUNICATION CH ZERO C/S MILFORD OSCAR

NNNN

Last page, 1 page in total

Data Control Equipment FAXBOX 0646 692176 x 353 1

ROUTINE

171523 UTC DEC

FROM MRSC MILFORD HAVEN

TO	MRCC SWANSEA	TELEX
	MSA MILFORD HAVEN	FAX
	MAIB	TELEX
	MRCC DUBLIN	FAX
	ARCC PLYMOUTH	TELEX
	TRINITY HOUSE OPERATIONS	FAX
	MPCU SOUTHAMPTON	TELEX
	HYDROGRAPHER NAVWARN	TELEX
	AMBULANCE; PEMBROKESHIRE	FAX
	RNLI HQ	FAX
INFO	DYFED POWYS POLICE HQ	FAX

SARSITREP NO. 3 AND FINAL

A - F/V CHANTS D'ESPERANCE - IRISH - REGISTERED NO. WD124

B - 5129.88N 00616.0W

N - 4 CREWMEN NOW PROCEEDING TO WITBYBUSH HOSPITAL HAVERFORDWEST  
IN AMBULANCE.

IMES DUBLIN CONFIRM F/V SUNK AND OIL & WRECKAGE LOCATED  
IN POSN 5131.33N 00617.0W

DESC. 56FT LOA WOODEN HULL TRAWLER, BUILT FRANCE 1965  
MAYDAY RELAY BROADCAST CANCELLED AND ALL RESCUED UNITS  
THANKED AND STOOD DOWN.

SAROPS TERMINATED AT 1516UTC

NNNN

Last page, 1 page in total



MARINE SURVEYORS OFFICE  
26/27 EDEN QUAY  
DUBLIN 1  
IRELAND.

Please find extracts from the controller's log the radio log and the report from the crew involved in this incident.

I hope this meets your needs.

*AV Wyatt*  
AVUWAT  
24 DEC 96

ARCC PLYMOUTH EXTRACT FROM LOG CONCERNING SUNKEN  
FISHING VESSEL CANTSDESPIANCE 17 DEC 96

1240 From Milford Haven Coastguard - Request Helicopter to Fishing Vessel Sinking, 4 Persons in liferaft position 5129.9N 00616.2W. Probably Spanish Fishing Vessel some English spoken.

1243 To Chivenor - Informed of above.

1402 From R 169 - Casualty located and now winching.

HF Radio Messages between Plymouth Rescue and Rescue 169

1354 From R169 - On scene at this time.  
Carrying out search for casualty.  
Ship on scene also searching.

1401 From R169 - Found Liferaft, 4 Persons on board, starting to winch.

1422 From R169 - Position 45 miles South West Haverford West.  
Heading for Hospital ETA 1445. 4 casualties.  
Please inform Haverford West Hospital.

1433 To R169 - Request your intentions!!  
From R169 - Dropping casualties off at Milford Haven Rugby Ground.  
ETA 15 minutes.

1503 From R 169 - Airborne from Milford Haven 5 persons on board.  
For Chivenor ETA 1540.

1531 From R169 - Landing Chivenor 5 minutes, closing down.

  
AVWYATT  
SQN LDR

# APPENDIX 8.4

CONTD.

UNCLASSIFIED

R 639

PLY  
LIVE 22 SQNDET CHIVENOR  
MESSAGE at 171802Z DEC 96

ACTION copy 1 for RAMSAY DM  
PLY RCC  
PLY 26 RCC

-----  
Prec Act ROUTINE Info: ROUTINE  
DTG 171802Z DEC 96  
From 22 SQNDET CHIVENOR  
To AIG 1391  
RAF ST MAWGAN  
SKOCU ST MAWGAN  
22 SQN ST MAWGAN  
22 SQNDET CHIVENOR  
STCs ICJ KPJ  
-----

- A. ARCCP FORM R639/22A SEAKING CHIVENOR/17 DEC 96
- B. MILFORDHAVEN CG 1240Z/RCCP 1243Z/CHIVENOR 1250Z
- C. CIV/MARITIME/FV/CANTSDESPIANCE/IRISH/5129.9N 00616.2W/85NMS/1340Z
- D. 8-100/300M DAY/SEA FOG/180-15/SEA 4
- E. TALKED ON BY NEARBY FISHING VESSEL 1NM 1358Z/EYES 300MTRS 1400Z
- F. RESCUE/VOB 4/4 FISHERMAN UNINJ
- G. 5130.24N 00617.6W 1415Z/MILFORDHAVEN RUGBY PITCH 1455Z/CHIVENOR 1540Z/2HRS 50MINS DAY
- H. DENNIS SLATTER TEAGUE HAMILTON. MILFORDHAVEN CG NO CAS435. R169 SCRAMBLED TO REPORT OF A SUNK SPANISH FISHING BOAT WITH THE CREW IN LIFERAFTS. EN ROUTE 169 INFORMED IT WAS IRISH REGISTERED BOAT WITH SPANISH CREW, THE VESSEL WAS STILL AFLOAT BUT TAKING ON WATER WITH THE CREW ALONG SIDE IN THE LIFERAFT. VARIOUS FVS MVS AND THE USS PREVAIL WERE ALSO ENROUTE. ON ARRIVAL FULL AFCS LETDOWN TO THE CONTACT NEAREST THE DATUM CARRIED OUT. CONTACT BECAME VISUAL AT ABOUT 300MTRS BUT WAS NOT THE CAS. SEVERAL OTHER CONTACTS INVESTIGATED WITH NO JOY. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE CAS MUST HAVE SUNK AND THE SEARCH SWITCHED TO LOOKING FOR THE LIFERAFT. CLOVER LEAF SEARCH PATTERN BEGUN FROM DATUM. 169 INFORMED BY AN ON SCENE FV THAT HE HAD DISCOVERED AN OIL SLICK AND DEBRIS. 169 HOMED ON CHANNEL 16 TO THAT LOCATION AND SOON AFTER THE FV TALKED R169 ONTO THE LIFERAFT. 4 CAS WERE SITTING IN A MS 5 ONE STILL SMOKING. ALL 4 WINCHED TO AC VIA HI-LINE AND RECOVERED TO MILFORD HAVEN VIA FCS LETDOWN DUE TO POOR WEATHER. COMMS VERY BUSY BUT GOOD. DAY RESCUE
- J. RCCP FORMR 639 COMPLETE

-----  
Action Distribution

Addressee	Code	Action-Officer	Retrieval
ARCC PLYMOUTH	ICJ	PLY RCC	
	KPJ	PLY RCC	

-----  
Information Distribution

-----  
Information Distributees Excluded from Delivery

171916DEC96

PAGE 1  
UNCLASSIFIED

PLY0114.3397\*1/LAST PAGE

8.5 Weather Report from Met Éireann 17/12/96



**MET ÉIREANN**  
*The Irish Meteorological Service*

Glasnevin Hill,  
Dublin 9, Ireland.

Cnoc Ghlas Naíon,  
Baile Átha Cliath 9, Éire.

Tel: +353-1-806 4200  
Fax: +353-1-806 4247

18/12/96



Dear Capt.

I enclose the weather report as requested,  
for the 17th of December 1996. I also  
enclose the sea area forecasts that were in  
operation at the time.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Evelyn Murphy'.

Evelyn Murphy  
Marine Unit

Weather Report for 17th December 1996  
8 to 18 hours  
for the sea area near 51.5N 6.25 W

## General Situation

A deep low almost stationary in mid-Atlantic pushed a strong southerly airflow over the area. Frontal troughs moved northwards over the area during the day.

## Details:-

17/12/96

8 to 12 hours

Winds: South-East to East becoming South-East to South  
Force 5 to 6.

Weather: Rain, drizzle and fog,

Visibility: Moderate to poor.

12 to 18 hours

Winds: South-East to South Force 4 to 6.

Weather: Rain, drizzle and fog.

Visibility: Moderate to poor.

	<p>WeatherDial Product Code 0021</p> <p>Central Analysis and Forecasting Office</p> <p>Fax : (01) 8064275      Tel : (01) 8064255</p> <p><b>Sea Area Forecast</b></p>	

**Sea Area Forecast until 2400 hours Tuesday, 17-Dec-96**  
**Issued at 2400 hours Monday, 16-Dec-96**

**1. Gale warning:** NIL

**2. Meteorological Situation :** A South to Southeast airflow over Ireland will continue to strengthen as frontal troughs approach from the Southwest.

**3. Forecast for coasts from Carnsore Point to Loop Head to Rossan Point**

**Wind :** Southeast force 4 or 5 increasing Southeast to East force 6 or 7.

**Weather :** Mainly fair at first, rain drizzle and fog spreading from the South.

**Visibility :** Good becoming moderate or poor.

**Forecast for coasts from Rossan Point to Belfast Lough to Carnsore Point and the Irish Sea.**

**Wind :** South to Southeast force 3 or 4 increasing Southeast to East force 5 or 6.

**Weather :** Fair at first apart from patches of mist or drizzle, more widespread rain drizzle and fog tomorrow.

**Visibility :** Good becoming moderate or poor.

**4. Outlook for a further 24-hours until 2400 hours Wednesday, 18-Dec-96:** Strong possibly Galeforce Southeast to East winds, veering Southwest and decreasing light or moderate. Occasional rain drizzle and fog, clearing from the Southwest later.

# APPENDIX 8.5

CONTD.

**Warning of heavy Atlantic swell : NIL**

**Text of Gale warning**

**NIL**

<b>Coastal Reports</b>	<b>at 11 p.m. on 16-Dec-96</b>
<b>Malin Head</b>	South Southeast 09 kts, fine, 31 miles, 1006, steady.
<b>Rosslare</b>	South Southeast 11 kts, fair, 25 miles, 1006, falling slowly.
<b>Roches Pt (Automatic)</b>	Southeast 15 kts, greater than 10 miles, 1003, falling slowly
<b>Valentia</b>	East 17 kts, gust 34 kts, fair, 15 miles, 1000, falling slowly
<b>Belmullet</b>	Southeast 09 kts, fair, 18 miles, 1003, falling slowly
<b>Dublin Airport</b>	Southeast 04 bkts, light drizzle, 7 miles, 1007, falling slowly.

<b>Sea Crossings</b>	<b>State of sea for the next 48 hours</b>
<b>Dublin - Holyhead</b>	Slight increasing moderate to rough
<b>Rosslare - South Wales</b>	Moderate increasing moderate to rough
<b>Cork - South Wales</b>	Moderate increasing moderate to rough
<b>Rosslare - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough
<b>Cork - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough

**Next update before 0700 hours**

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	<p style="text-align: center;">WeatherDial Product Code 0021  <b>Central Analysis and Forecasting Office</b>                  Fax : (01) 8064275      Tel : (01) 8064255  <b>Sea Area Forecast</b></p>	
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**Sea Area Forecast until : 0600 hours Wednesday, 18-Dec-96**  
**Issued at 0600 hours Tuesday, 17-Dec-96**

**1. Gale warning:** NIL

**2. Meteorological Situation :** A strengthening Southeasterly airflow covers the area. A warm front will move Northeastwards today followed by a cold front tonight.

**3. Forecast for coasts from Hook Head to Loop Head to Rossan Point :**

**Wind :** Southeast to East force 5 or 6, increasing force 6, occasionally force 7, veering South to Southwest tonight and decreasing force 3 to 5.

**Weather :** Occasional rain, drizzle and fog. Heavier and thundery rain tonight, clearing later.

**Visibility :** Decreasing moderate or poor. Later mostly good.

**Forecast for coasts from Rossan Point to Belfast Lough to Hook Head and for the Irish Sea :**

**Wind :** Southeast to East force 4, increasing force 5 or 6.

**Weather :** Mainly fair. Rain, drizzle and fog spreading Northeastwards.

**Visibility :** Good becoming moderate or poor.

**3a. Warning of Heavy Swell :** Nil.

**4. Outlook for a further 24-hours until 0600 hours Thursday, 19-Dec-96:** Moderate occasionally fresh South to Southwest winds, later backing Southeasterly. Rain, drizzle and fog clearing Northeastwards. More rain in the South later.

# APPENDIX 8.5

CONTD.

**Warning of heavy Atlantic swell : NIL**

**Text of Gale warning**

**NIL**

<b>Coastal Reports</b>	<b>at 6 am</b>
<b>Malin Head</b>	Southeast 11 Kts, Fine , 12 Miles, 1004, Falling Slowly
<b>Rosslare</b>	East Southeast 13 Kts, Gust 26 Kts, Fair , 15 Miles, 1004, Falling Slowly
<b>Roches Pt. Automatic</b>	East Southeast 16 Kts, Gust 26 Kts, 02 Miles, 1000, Falling Slowly
<b>Valentia</b>	East Southeast 20 Kts, Gust 38 Kts, Cloudy , 15 Miles, 996, Falling Slowly
<b>Belmullet</b>	Southeast 15 Kts, Fine , 18 Miles, 1000, Falling Slowly
<b>Dublin Airport</b>	Southeast 14 Kts, Cloudy , 15 Miles, 1004, Falling Slowly

<b>Sea Crossings</b>	<b>State of sea for the next 48 hours</b>
<b>Dublin - Holyhead</b>	Slight, increasing moderate.
<b>Rosslare - South Wales</b>	Moderate , occasionally rough later.
<b>Cork - South Wales</b>	Moderate, increasing moderate to rough.
<b>Rosslare - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough.
<b>Cork - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough.

**Next update before 1300 hours**

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	WeatherDial Product Code 0021	
	Central Analysis and Forecasting Office	
	Fax : (01) 8064275      Tel : (01) 8064255	
<b>Sea Area Forecast</b>		

**Sea Area Forecast until : 1200 hours Wednesday, 18-Dec-96**  
**Issued at 1200 hours Tuesday, 17-Dec-96**

**1. Gale warning:** NIL

**2. Meteorological Situation at 0900 hours :** A weak warm front is moving Northwards in a freshening Southeast to South airflow. A more active cold front will approach the Southwest early tonight.

**3. Forecast for coasts from Carnsore Point to Valentia to Erris Head :**

**Wind :** Southeast force 5 or 6, occasionally force 7, veering South to Southwest overnight and decreasing force 4 or 5.

**Weather :** Rain and drizzle; Fog in the South; Occasional showers later.

**Visibility :** Moderate to poor becoming moderate to good overnight.

**Forecast for coasts from Erris Head to Belfast Lough to Carnsore Point and for the Irish Sea :**

**Wind :** Southeast force 5 or 6, increasing force 7 at times later today and overnight; Veering South to Southwest force 3 to 5 later.

**Weather :** Rain and drizzle extending North ; Fog patches developing in the East.

**Visibility :** Good to moderate, becoming moderate to poor.

**4. Outlook for a further 24-hours until 1200 hours Thursday, 19-Dec-96:**

Moderate to fresh South to Southwest winds backing Southeast to East and later increasing strong in the South. Rain clearing to scattered showers.

# APPENDIX 8.5

CONTD.

**Warning of heavy Atlantic swell : NIL**

**Text of Gale warning**

**NIL**

<b>Coastal Reports</b>	<b>at midday</b>
<b>Malin Head</b>	Southeast 19 Kts, Gust 34 Kts, Fair , 12 Miles, 1003, Falling Slowly
<b>Rosslare</b>	South Southeast 15 Kts, Gust 26 Kts, Recent Rain , 3 Miles, 1002, Falling Slowly
<b>Roches Pt. Automatic</b>	East Southeast 09 Kts, 1/4 miles, 999, Steady
<b>Valentia</b>	South Southeast 12 Kts, Gust 23 Kts, Lt. Rain , 12 Miles, 996, Falling Slowly
<b>Belmullet</b>	East Southeast 17 Kts, Gust 31 Kts, Cloudy , 11 Miles, 997, Falling Slowly
<b>Dublin Airport</b>	Southeast 13 Kts, Gust 23 Kts, Lt.Drizzle , 4 Miles, 1003, Falling Slowly

<b>Sea Crossings</b>	<b>State of sea for the next 48 hours</b>
<b>Dublin - Holyhead</b>	Slight increasing moderate.
<b>Rosslare - South Wales</b>	Moderate occasionally rough.
<b>Cork - South Wales</b>	Moderate occasionally rough.
<b>Rosslare - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough.
<b>Cork - France</b>	Moderate increasing rough.

**Next update before 1900 hours**

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- 8.6 Photographs showing the freeing ports.  
Guillotine type freeing ports which were dropped in the closed position (top).  
"Chants d'Esperance" under repairs in late '93 / early '94 at Co.Cork.  
Note there are no freeing ports aft of waist (bottom).



## APPENDIX 8.7

CONTD.

- 8.7 Photographs relating to "Chants d'Esperance"  
"Havre de Vie" Sister ship of "Chants d'Esperance" (top).  
Another view. "Chants d'Esperance" had the fishing winches fitted  
athwartships instead of fore and aft (bottom).



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*Irish Coast Guard*  
GARDA CÓSTA na hÉIREANN



Mr Dick Heron  
Secretary  
Marine Casualty Investigation Board  
Department of Communications,  
Marine & Natural Resources  
Leeson Lane  
Dublin 2.

26<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2003.

Re MCIB 14 Draft Report on sinking of IFV CHANTS d'ESPERANCE.

Dear Mr Heron,

The Irish Coast Guard has not comment or observations to make concerning this report.

Yours sincerely,

  
Eamon Torpav  
IRCG HQ

Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, Ireland.  
An Roinn Cumarsáide, Mara agus Acmhainní Nádurtha, Lána Chill Mochargán, Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire.  
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