

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**TLB035**

**(Question Serial No. 1870)**

Head: (100) Marine Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Port Services  
(3) Local Services  
(4) Services to Ships

Controlling Officer: Director of Marine (Mr S.F. WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

Regarding law enforcement relating to marine traffic accidents, will the Government advise this Committee of:

- (1) the numbers of local marine traffic accidents and casualties in each of the past 5 years, with a breakdown by cause of accident;
- (2) the following information on the enforcement manpower of the Marine Department responsible for handling local marine traffic accidents in each of the past 5 years: (i) the establishment, (ii) the strength, (iii) the wastage of staff (including wastage figures, wastage rates and causes of wastage); and (iv) the recruitment situation (including expenditures on recruitment exercises, number of applicants and number of appointees), with a breakdown by grade; and
- (3) the number of convictions in each of the past 5 years for offences involving endangering the safety of others at sea under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) and the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance (Cap. 313), as well as the average penalty for each offence.

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- (1) The Marine Department (MD) conducts investigations into marine accidents occurred in the waters of Hong Kong and classifies them into collision, contact, stranding/grounding, foundering/sinking, fire/explosion, capsized/listing and others, etc., by making reference to the Code of the International Standards and Recommended Practices for a Safety Investigation into a Marine Casualty or Marine Incident (the Code) issued by the International Maritime Organization. For accidents that are classified as serious and very serious according to the Code, the investigation reports together with

the lessons learned will be uploaded to the website of MD for public reference, with a view to preventing the re-occurrence of similar accidents in the future by publishing the investigation results. In the past 5 years, the numbers of marine accidents in the waters of Hong Kong ranged from 265 to 338 every year, and the numbers of casualties involved ranged from 14 to 34 (refer to Table (1) to Table (5)). Among them, there were 22 serious and very serious accidents in total (including the 3 cases occurred in the second half of last year that are still under investigation). The causes of the accidents are shown in Table (6) (each accident listed in the table may involve one or more causes).

Table (1)

<b>Statistics on Marine Accidents by Accident Type (within Hong Kong Waters) in 2023</b>						
Type of Accident	No. of Cases	Persons Killed	Persons Injured	Persons Missing	Serious and Very Serious Accidents	
					No. of Cases	Investigation Completed
Collision	32	2	8	0	2	1
Contact	66	0	4	0	0	0
Stranding/Grounding	30	0	0	0	0	0
Foundering/Sinking	71	1	5	0	1	1
Fire/Explosion	20	3	3	0	3	1
Capsized/Listing	30	0	4	0	0	0
Others	89	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

Table (2)

<b>Statistics on Marine Accidents by Accident Type (within Hong Kong Waters) in 2022</b>						
Type of Accident	No. of Cases	Persons Killed	Persons Injured	Persons Missing	Serious and Very Serious Accidents	
					No. of Cases	Investigation Completed
Collision	83	0	7	0	0	0
Contact	19	0	5	0	0	0
Stranding/Grounding	27	0	0	0	0	0
Foundering/Sinking	46	0	0	0	0	0
Fire/Explosion	25	0	0	0	0	0
Capsized/Listing	11	0	0	0	0	0
Others	54	0	2	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Table (3)

<b>Statistics on Marine Accidents by Accident Type (within Hong Kong Waters) in 2021</b>						
Type of Accident	No. of Cases	Persons Killed	Persons Injured	Persons Missing	Serious and Very Serious Accidents	
					No. of Cases	Investigation Completed
Collision	77	1	12	0	1	1
Contact	25	0	15	0	0	0
Stranding/Grounding	27	0	0	0	0	0
Foundering/Sinking	38	0	0	0	1	1
Fire/Explosion	23	0	2	0	2	2
Capsized/Listing	20	1	1	0	1	1
Others	59	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

Table (4)

<b>Statistics on Marine Accidents by Accident Type (within Hong Kong Waters) in 2020</b>						
Type of Accident	No. of Cases	Persons Killed	Persons Injured	Persons Missing	Serious and Very Serious Accidents	
					No. of Cases	Investigation Completed
Collision	104	3	12	0	1	1
Contact	22	0	0	0	0	0
Stranding/Grounding	29	0	2	0	0	0
Foundering/Sinking	42	1	0	0	1	1
Fire/Explosion	20	1	3	0	1	1
Capsized/Listing	20	2	3	0	1	1
Others	44	2	2	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

Table (5)

<b>Statistics on Marine Accidents by Accident Type (within Hong Kong Waters) in 2019</b>						
Type of Accident	No. of Cases	Persons Killed	Persons Injured	Persons Missing	Serious and Very Serious Accidents	
					No. of Cases	Investigation Completed
Collision	124	1	5	0	1	1
Contact	66	0	13	0	0	0
Stranding/Grounding	18	0	0	0	0	0
Foundering/Sinking	35	0	3	0	0	0
Fire/Explosion	19	3	3	0	1	1
Capsized/Listing	12	2	3	0	1	1
Others	47	0	1	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Table (6)

<b>Causes of Serious and Very Serious Accidents from 2019 to 2023</b>						
Cause of Accident <sup>1</sup>	Collision	Foundering/ Sinking	Fire/ Explosion	Capsized/ Listing	Others	<b>Total</b>
Non-compliance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea	3	0	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
Weather conditions	0	0	0	2	0	<b>2</b>
Non-compliance with the requirements of relevant legislations, codes of practices, licence conditions, etc.	1	2	3	1	1	<b>8</b>
Human factors (including officers' incompetency, negligence, lack of safety awareness, etc.)	0	3	2	2	2	<b>9</b>
Lack of maintenance of machinery and mechanical failure of vessels (failure of main engines, windlasses, steering gears, etc.)	0	1	2	0	1	<b>4</b>
Failure to hold a valid local Certificate of Competency as a vessel operator or comply with the requirements of the Certificate	2	1	0	0	2	<b>5</b>
Non-compliance with the shipboard Safety Management System	0	0	2	0	1	<b>3</b>
Others	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup>Each accident may involve one or more causes

- (2) Maintaining marine traffic order in Hong Kong and handling marine traffic accidents are the normal duties of officers under the Harbour Patrol Section of MD, and are undertaken with existing resources. The establishment of the Harbour Patrol Section for undertaking relevant duties in the past 5 years is as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Figures as at 31 December</u>				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Marine Officer	8	8	8	8	8
Assistant Marine Controller	-	-	-	-	1
Assistant Shipping Master	9	9	9	10	10
Marine Inspector	97	97	97	99	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>118</b>

MD conducts recruitment exercises for various grades every year based on the overall

operational needs and manpower situation of the department. MD would, based on the establishment of relevant grades, deploy appropriate manpower to the Harbour Patrol Section to perform duties. MD does not maintain statistics on the breakdown of staff wastage and recruitment situation of individual sections.

- (3) The number of offences and penalties against offences related to endangering the safety of others at sea under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) and the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance (Cap. 313) as recorded by MD from 2019 to 2023 are as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Section 32 - Endangering the safety of others under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548)	2 (a fine of \$10,000 for each offence)	1 (community service order of 100 hours)	0	0	0
Section 72 - Endangering the safety of others under the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance (Cap. 313)	0	0	0	0	0

[Note: The above information is from MD only and does not include figures from the Hong Kong Police Force.]

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