

Marine Department Notice No. 18 of 2010

(Marine Industrial Safety)

Safety in Electrical Work

A fatal accident happened on board a locally licensed pleasure vessel in Hong Kong waters. At the time of the accident, the owner of the pleasure vessel had connected a portable electrical submersible water pump to remove seawater from the vessel, which was grounded and partly submerged. The electric power for the pump was supplied from a nearby vessel by means of an extension power cord. The owner of the vessel was electrocuted after switching on the pump.

2. The investigation revealed that the most probable cause of the accident was due to leakage of electric current from the improperly connected electrical joint between the extension power cord and the power supply cable of the pump.

3. Similar fatal accidents had occurred onboard ships before, all involving the use of extension power cords. To avoid recurrence of similar accidents, the attention of masters of vessels are drawn to the lessons learnt from this accident, in addition to those in the Marine Department Notice No. 119 of 2002 and No. 108 of 2006:-

- Whenever portable electrical equipment is to be used onboard ships or local vessels, the electrical power supply to the equipment should be properly connected, including the earth-conductors; and
- Electrical installation and equipment onboard ships and local vessels must be maintained properly at all times to avoid earth-fault and any such fault should be remedied immediately.

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