Port of London - River Thames



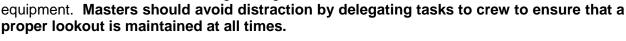
SAFETY BULLETIN No.3 of 2013

FAILURE TO KEEP A PROPER LOOKOUT

Over the past year, there have been a number of totally avoidable incidents, which have been caused by a failure to keep a proper look-out.

In a recent incident, a vessel collided with a narrow boat after re-entering the navigational channel at the Coin Street Moorings. The impact damaged the narrow boat's stern and disabled her steering. The Master admitted not seeing the narrow boat at all. Where visibility is restricted or small craft maybe encountered, Masters should consider whether they require someone else to assist to maintain a proper lookout.

In another incident, a vessel collided with a mooring buoy in clear visibility while the Master had been distracted re-booting navigational





A further incident involved a vessel contacting a mooring buoy at night. The crew knew that the buoy was in the vicinity, but did not see it. When navigating at night in close proximity to known or suspected hazards; Masters should take extra care, ease speed and use a search light to confirm their location.

Earlier this year, a passenger vessel operating a commuter service collided with Westminster Embankment wall at 7 knots in clear conditions and without any

mechanical failure. This incident would not have occurred if the Master had been fully aware of his surroundings and maintaining a proper lookout.

In all of these incidents, the cause was identified as a failure to keep a proper look out by all available means, which is not only a fundamental requirement of the International Collision Regulations, but also the ordinary practice of good seamanship. It is vital that the master and crew work together to maintain a proper look out at all times, none of these incidents would have occurred if they had done so.

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Port of London Authority London River House Royal Pier Road Gravesend, Kent DA12 2BG

DAVID PHILLIPS CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER





