



Marine Notice No. 31 of 2022

*Notice to all Shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Shipmasters, Skippers, Fishers,
Yachtsmen and Seafarers*

Importance of Voyage Planning for Fishing Vessels in Adverse Weather and Sea Conditions

The Department of Transport wishes to highlight a report published by the Marine Casualty Investigation Board (MCIB) in relation to the fatal incident involving the 'FV Myia' in Galway Bay on 2nd November 2020. The full report may be obtained from the MCIB's website at www.mcib.ie.

In response to the Marine Casualty Investigation Board (MCIB) recommendations, the Department wishes to highlight to all concerned in the fishing industry, the importance of ensuring **all navigation is planned** in detail from berth to berth, with contingency plans in place. Owners and relevant crew members need to familiarize themselves with the vessel, including its **anchoring arrangements** and any limitations of the anchoring equipment. Owners and masters are reminded that an efficient **navigational watch** shall be maintained throughout the voyage in line with the Basic Principles to be observed in keeping a Navigational Watch on Board Fishing Vessels as set out IMO Resolution A.484 (XII). **Situational awareness** with regard to navigation shall be maintained at all times. All voyages must be planned using the most up to date **nautical publications** and approved admiralty charts and / or ECDIS. It is essential to carry out regular **weather forecast** checks during coastal, offshore and ocean voyages.

Shipowners, Masters, Skippers and Fishers should particularly consider the following points when planning on going to sea:

- **Weather:** Prior to proceeding to sea, weather forecasts shall be assessed and Ensure that the means to obtain weather forecast updates are available. The prevailing weather shall be monitored at all times. Where weather conditions are deteriorating and the safety of the vessel or crew is in question, operators should seek shelter or return to port.
- **Tides:** The state of the tide and current should be determined for the planned voyage, task or activity. Masters and skippers shall ensure that the vessel or craft can be safely operated in the states of expected tide or current.
- **Limitations of the vessel:** Ensure the vessel is suitable for the planned voyage, task or activity, that all systems are available and in good operational condition, including all appropriate safety systems and equipment which shall, at all times, be ready for immediate use.

➤ **Crew:** Take into account the experience and physical ability of the crew. Crews suffering from cold, tiredness and seasickness won't be able to do their job properly and this could result in an overburdened skipper. Prior to proceeding to sea, crew members should be well rested, fit and physically capable for any task that they may be required to perform whilst onboard. Masters and skippers should be aware of dangers of, and be able to recognise, fatigue and its impact on the safety of the vessel or craft.

➤ **Communications:** VHF Radio should be available onboard which is capable of operating on marine band Channel 16 to raise a distress and/or seek assistance. Skippers should not rely on mobile phones as signal availability can be reduced or lost due to range from shore and environmental conditions. Skippers should, prior to departure, advise the port authority or a designated person ashore of planned area of operation and expected time of return.

Note: Marine Notices are issued purely for maritime safety and navigation reasons and should not be construed as conferring rights or granting permissions.

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