

Fishing Vessel Chun I No.6 Major Marine Occurrence

Executive Summary

At approximately 0015 hours (Taiwan time) on July 15, 2023, the Taiwan-flagged fishing vessel Chun I No. 6 (hereinafter referred to as “the vessel”), vessel registration No CT8-0150 and gross tonnage 1250, with one Taiwanese master and 63 crew members on board, was concluding fishing operations on the high seas approximately 720 nautical miles northeast of Kushiro Port, Hokkaido, Japan, when a Filipino crew member, who was not wearing a lifejacket, fell overboard. The vessel immediately initiated search and rescue operations in coordination with two other Taiwanese fishing vessels; however, after 72 hours of searching, the missing crew member remained unaccounted for.

In accordance with the Transportation Occurrence Investigation Act, Taiwan, and the definition of major transportation occurrences specified therein, the Taiwan Transportation Safety Board was the independent agency in charge of investigating the marine accident. The organizations and agencies invited to participate in the investigation included the Maritime and Port Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, the Fisheries Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, and Tching Ye Fishery Co., Ltd.

After comprehensive investigation and analysis of the factual data, a total of 2 findings and 1 safety recommendation were obtained.

The finding related to probable causes is as follows:

1. Based on the factual information obtained, the crew member involved in the occurrence was not wearing a lifejacket at the time of falling overboard. Despite search efforts exceeding 72 hours, the crew member was not located. The investigation team was unable to determine the cause of the crew member’s fall overboard and disappearance; therefore, this occurrence was classified as a Class III marine casualty.

The finding related to risk is as follows:

1. Since its establishment, the TTSB has investigated multiple fatal man-overboard occurrences involving fishing vessels and fishing rafts in which appropriate preventive measures were not implemented during operations at sea. Accordingly, the TTSB has consolidated the safety recommendations derived from similar occurrences and recommended that the competent authorities formulate relevant regulations requiring crews of fishing vessels to adopt appropriate preventive measures or wear lifejackets while conducting onboard operations at sea, with the aim of preventing the recurrence of similar occurrences.

Safety Recommendation

To the Fisheries Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture

1. Strengthen safety promotion and awareness for Taiwanese fishing vessels and fishing rafts regarding onboard deck operations at sea, emphasizing that crew members should adopt appropriate preventive measures or wear lifejackets in order to prevent fatalities or disappearances resulting from man-overboard occurrences. (This safety recommendation has been previously issued, and the relevant implementation action items remain under continuing follow-up. This is the eighth issuance of the recommendation. Please refer to Safety Recommendation No. TTSB-MSR-22-11-008 for consolidated handling.)

Note: The final report of this occurrence investigation is published in Chinese. To facilitate understanding for non-Chinese readers, the Executive Summary has been translated into English. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, discrepancies may occur. In the event of any inconsistency, the Chinese version shall prevail.