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### Casualty Circular No. 03 of 2012

File No. 9-NT(19)/2011

Date: 19.07.2012

Subject: **Sinking of mechanized Sailing Vessel.**

#### **1. What happened?**

A mechanized sailing vessel (MSV) of 346 GT, built in 1995, had sailed from Tuticorin port towards Male. During the voyage, the vessel encountered very rough weather conditions which forced the vessel to divert to Kanyakumari to take shelter. While the vessel was proceeding towards Kanyakumari, she encountered a merchant vessel and in order to avoid collision, both vessels altered courses. Sudden alteration of the course in heavy weather caused damage to the rudder of MSV and the vessel was left uncontrolled to the mercy of the weather. The crew abandoned the vessel to avoid loss of life. The crew were rescued by a passing vessel. No loss of life occurred. However, the MSV sank.

#### **2. How it happened?**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011, one MSV sailed from Tuticorin port towards Male, Maldives, with 11 crew members on board. After about 39 hours of sailing on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2011, in position about 195 NM off Male, the vessel encountered heavy seas and swell and winds gushing upto 80 miles hour. The vessel was diverted towards Kanyakumar since it could not hold her course in the adverse weather conditions. On voyage towards Kanyakumari on 26.11.2011, a merchant ship was encountered on reciprocal course. In order to avoid collision, both vessels altered their courses. Sudden and large alteration of course made by the MSV in prevailing adverse weather conditions caused damage to the vessel's rudder which resulted in the vessel being not under command and to the mercy of weather.

The crew abandoned the vessel and were rescued by a passing vessel. Subsequently, the progressive flooding took place and the MSV Sank.

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### 3. Why it happened?

Sudden and large rudder movement in heavy weather conditions caused the vessel to roll heavily, thereby resulting into heavy thrust on the rudder which caused damage and failure. Subsequently vessel took in water due to uncontrolled rolling and flooding resulting in sinking.

### 4. Lessons to be learnt?

- 1) Plying of MSVs should be restricted during the foul weather seasons.
- 2) All vessels should atleast carry weather prognosis report for one week and preferably also be fitted with Navtex to receive weather reports.
- 3) Adequate communication equipment must be operational on all ships proceeding to sea.
- 4) Crew must undergo personal safety training.
- 5) All MSVs should carry life rafts fitted with HRU.



(Capt. H. Khatri)

Dy. Director General of Shipping (Tech)