



Accident Report

Grounding

Venture

18 April 2006

Class B



NARRATIVE



Photograph 1
Venture aground

Venture is a 14.17 metre wooden fishing boat built in 1957. She has a gross tonnage of 25.00 and her certified operating limit is “offshore”.

The Skipper has many years experience in small boats and has seven years experience commercial fishing; three as Mate and four as Master. He obtained a LLO Certificate in September 2002 and an ILM Certificate in April 2003. He has owned **Venture** for about five years.

Venture, with a Skipper and one crew member on board, had been fishing north of New Plymouth. The owner decided to cease fishing for the season and lay **Venture** up for winter in her home port of Oamaru. En route he decided to call into Picton to pick up his nephew to give him the experience of a coastal voyage.

The vessel had Chart NZ 46, Cook Strait, on board but none of the Sounds charts. The vessel had a GPS plotter with Sounds charts loaded and this was used for navigation. Neither the Skipper nor the Deckhand had sailed into Picton before.

Venture entered Tory Channel eastern entrance at about 1525 hours on 18 April 2006. The Skipper had the con and the Deckhand was in and about the wheelhouse. The VHF was switched on and the Skipper believed that it was guarding channel 16. The VHF does not have a multiple channel watch facility.

Neither the Skipper nor the Deckhand was aware of the requirement to give 10 minutes notice prior to entering the Tory Channel Controlled Navigation Zone. There is a note reminding mariners of the requirement on chart NZ 46 but neither the Skipper nor the Deckhand had read the note.

Venture entered the eastern entrance to Tory Channel on the leads and when approximately abeam of West Head observed **Arahura** outward bound. **Venture** moved towards the northern shore to give **Arahura** a clear passage on the leads. Neither person on board realised they had caused any concern to **Arahura** and waved in a friendly manner as the vessel passed.

The Master of **Arahura** agreed that **Venture** had kept clear and had not impeded her passage, but the Master was concerned that the presence of **Venture** had surprised him due to the lack of a 10 minute call.

Venture proceeded into Picton and tied up to the fisherman's wharf. She took on fresh water whilst waiting some two and a half hours for the Skipper's nephew to arrive. The Skipper and crew had a hamburger ashore followed by a cup of tea back on board. No alcohol was consumed.

Venture sailed at approximately 2130 hours, shortly after the Skipper's nephew arrived on board, and proceeded outwards through Tory Channel at her cruising speed of 5 knots. The Skipper had the con and his nephew was also in the wheelhouse. The Deckhand was turned in and was going to take over the watch when the vessel cleared Tory Channel. The Skipper was steering by auto pilot and was sitting in a comfortable chair. At about midnight the Skipper's nephew turned in on the wheelhouse settee. Shortly afterwards the Skipper fell asleep in his chair, which resulted in **Venture** running aground on the north eastern side of Te Rua Bay, immediately to the east of Clay (Te Uira-Karapa) Point, Tory Channel.

The vessel grounded on sand and the force of the grounding was such that neither the Deckhand nor the Skipper's nephew woke up.

The Skipper had about 10 hours broken rest per day for the previous three days. He had not consumed alcohol for the previous eight days and there was no alcohol on board. The weather was calm and clear at the time of the grounding and the moon (four days after full) was up and the landform of the Sound could be clearly seen. The wheelhouse door was open but a heater was on in the wheelhouse.

After grounding the Skipper woke his nephew and crew member. He shut off the fuel supply to the engine and checked the engine room for any leaks. The fuel breather pipes were blocked off.

As the vessel lay over on the falling tide some water entered the after hatch. The space was pumped out several times to keep it dry. The hull remained watertight. The bow was caught on a sandbank but the stern was in deep water.

At about 0700 hours the following morning the Skipper contacted McManaways and ordered a tug to assist with refloating on the mid day tide. The vessel was refloated at 1130 hours with the assistance of wash from a passing ferry. The hull remained watertight and the Skipper took **Venture** into Picton. The slip was not available and the Skipper employed his son, a commercial diver, to check the hull. The only damage discovered was some minor scratching to paintwork.

FINDINGS

When **Venture** entered Tory Channel the Skipper failed to give a 10 minute call as required by **Marlborough District Council Navigation Bylaws 2002 3.3(iii)**. The requirement is also noted on chart NZ46 that was in use on **Venture**. There is no infringement fine for failing to observe this Bylaw.

Venture did not impede the progress of **Arahura**.

Venture had been at sea for eight days fishing with a two-man crew. In such circumstances a degree of fatigue is inevitable. The Skipper stated that, with the benefit of hindsight, it would have been better to be standing and hand steering the vessel on the outward-bound passage, and that in future he would not use the seat in pilotage waters.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Skipper of **Venture** be censured for failing to observe **Marlborough District Council Navigation Bylaws 2002 3.3 (iii)**.
2. The Skipper of **Venture** establish procedures for managing fatigue on board his vessel as required by **Maritime Rules Part 31C.15**. These procedures should be presented to the Safe Ship Management Company for approval within 2 months of the release of this report.