



Incident Report
Close Quarters
MOL Wellington & Chips
7 September 2005
Class C



NARRATIVE

On 7 September 2005, at 1435 hours New Zealand Standard Time (NZST), *MOL Wellington* (See *Photograph 1*) left its berth in Napier and proceeded out of the harbour.



Photograph 1
MOL Wellington alongside Tauranga Container Terminal

At 1455 hours, the Pilot disembarked, informing the master as he did so that there were no inward bound vessels.

On the bridge were the Master, the Second Officer and an Able Seaman, who was steering. Two radars were in use, one on the 6 mile range, the other on the 3 mile range. Conditions were fine and clear.

Soon after the Pilot disembarked, a rowing boat crossed about 300 m ahead of *MOL Wellington*, from starboard to port. The pilot vessel approached the rowing boat to ask it to move out of the channel.

At 1500 hours, *MOL Wellington* was in a position with the north cardinal buoy (39° 25'.8 S 176° 57'.6 E) bearing 072°(T), distant 1.3 miles (See *Figure 1 – Chart Extract*). The engine order full away was given and the vessel's speed began to increase from 12 knots to 19 knots, a process that would take about an hour.

A large white launch was seen ahead. *MOL Wellington* altered course to 065°(T), leaving it to port at a distance of between 1.0 and 1.5 miles. The Master and Second Officer stated that at about that time they saw a fishing boat on the port side of the ship, at least a mile away. They could not recall any details about the fishing boat, except that it was far enough away from them that there was no need to take any action. They reported that they did not remember seeing any other vessels in the vicinity. When the north cardinal buoy was abeam to starboard, *MOL Wellington* altered course to 087°(T).

With the way ahead clear, the Master went into the radio room (immediately abaft the wheelhouse) to transmit his departure report to the company, leaving the Second Officer and Able Seaman on watch. The Master's departure message was transmitted at 1530 hours.

The Able Seaman was steering until the Second officer changed the steering mode to autopilot, after which he stood by the helm to monitor the course and to keep a lookout. Both Second Officer and Able Seaman stated that they did not see any small boats near their ship. From the bridge of **MOL Wellington** there was clear visibility on both sides and of the sea beyond about 300 m ahead of the ship (See *Photograph 2*).

The Skipper of fishing vessel **Chips** reported that at 1540 hours, **MOL Wellington** passed within 50m of his vessel. At that time, **Chips** was about 6.5 miles north east of Napier, trawling at a speed of about 2.8 knots.

At 1600 hours, **MOL Wellington** was in position 39° 24'.3 S 177° 15'.1 E



Photograph 2

View from the wheelhouse of **MOL Wellington**

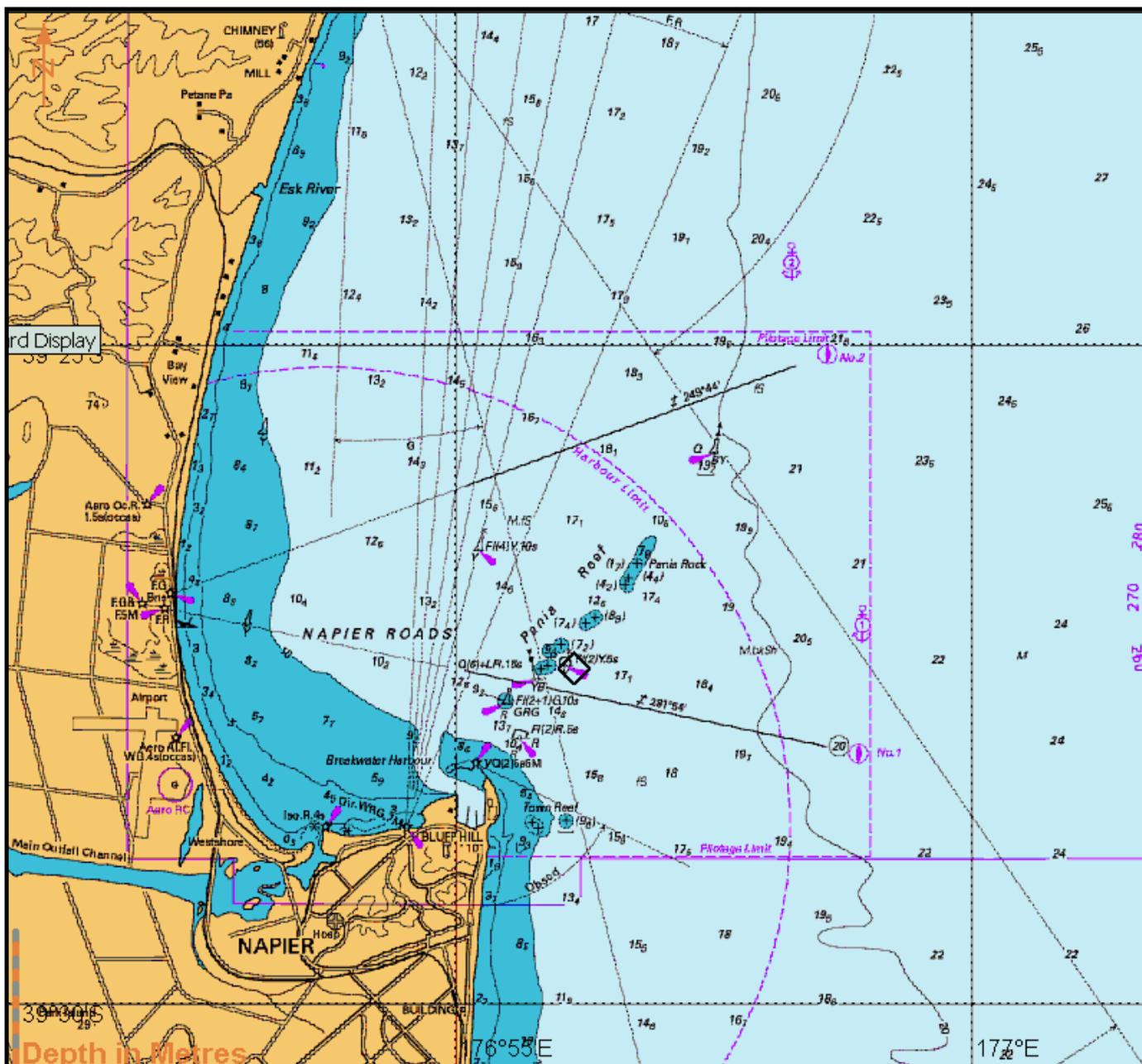


Figure 1
Chart Extract – Approaches to Napier

Vessel Details

MOL Wellington was a container ship with the following particulars:

IMO Number:	7620095
Port of Registry:	Panama
Gross Tonnage:	31 767
Overall Length:	216.3

MOL Wellington had a Safety Management Certificate issued by Nippon Kaiji Kyokai on 30 June 2005 and due to expire on 29 November 2005.

The Master held a Russian Master's Certificate and a Panamanian Licence as Master issued on 26 November 2004 and due to expire on 2 April 2006.

The Second Officer held a Yugoslavian Certificate as First Deck Officer and a Panamanian endorsement issued on 27 June 2005 and due to expire on 24 March 2010.

The Able Seaman held a Deck Rating and Navigational Support Certificate and a Panamanian Seaman's book as Able Seaman.

Vessel Details

Chips was a steel fishing boat with the following particulars:

MSA Number:	100897
Gross Tonnage:	12.9
Overall Length	11.10

Chips had a Safe Ship Management Certificate issued by Survey Nelson on 20 February 2003 and due to expire on 28 January 2008.

The Skipper held a Commercial Launchmaster's Certificate issued on 26 November 1999.



Photograph 3
FV *Chips*

LESSONS LEARNED

The Skipper of *Chips* said that *MOL Wellington* crossed ahead, within 50m of his vessel.

The Master, Second Officer and Able Seaman of *MOL Wellington* stated that during departure from Napier, no vessel was seen closer than a mile away from their ship. There were no other witnesses.

It is recommended that:

1. The Master of *MOL Wellington* instruct his watchkeepers both verbally and in his written standing instructions to be vigilant in keeping a lookout for small vessels by all available means, including radar and VHF, when navigating around the New Zealand coast.
2. The Skipper of *Chips* takes into account the risk to his vessel from ships when planning to trawl in the port approach area. Information about times of arrival and departure of ships are available from the port company.