

HAZARD ALERT

Industry: Fishing

Age: 48 and 49 years

Experience: 25 years

Area: North of Vancouver Island

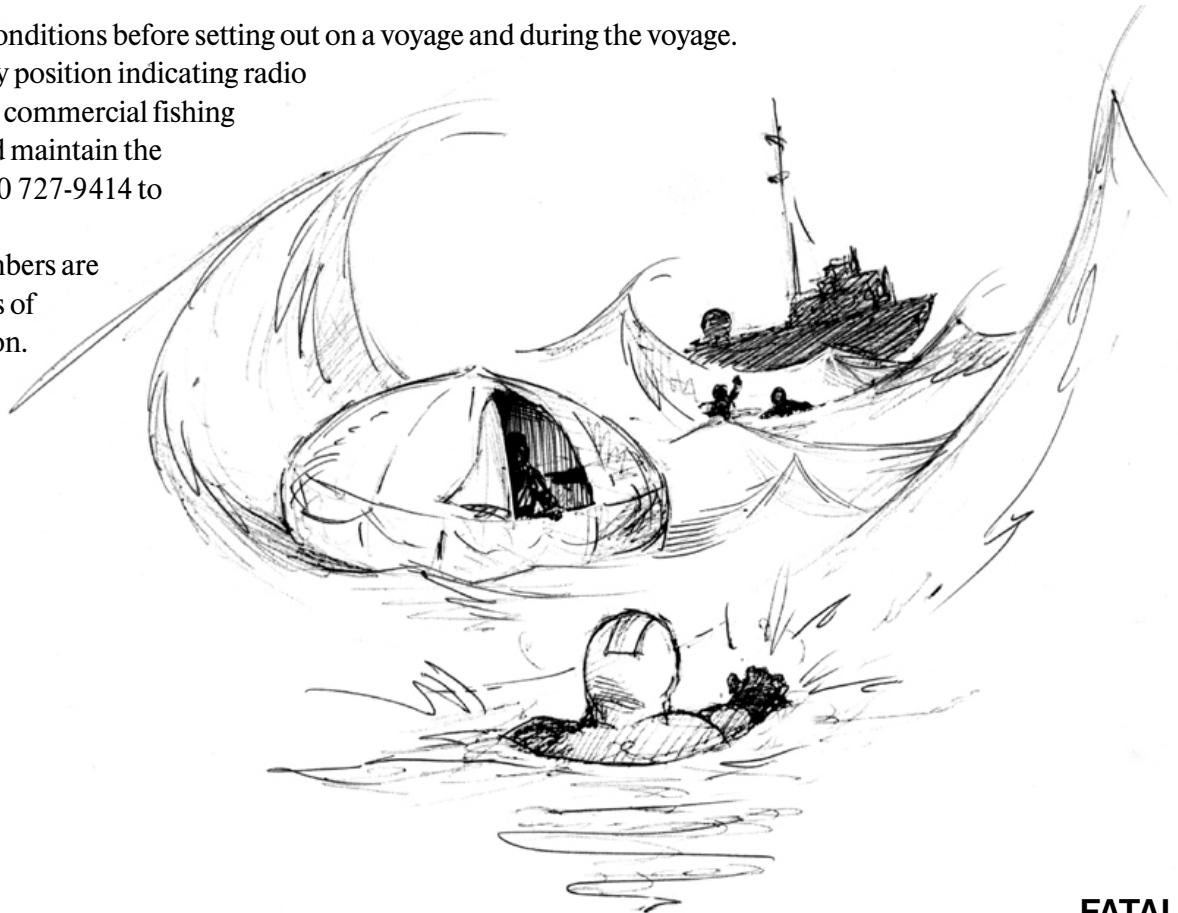
Two crewmembers die after vessel abandoned

As a vessel was returning from the halibut fishery, the weather worsened, with seas of 12 metres and winds of 70–80 knots. When the vessel began taking on water and losing steerage, the master sent a radio mayday. Three of the four crewmembers put on immersion suits. The crew then deployed the life raft and abandoned the vessel. Only one crewmember stayed in the life raft, which frequently flipped over. The others spent the night in the water.

The next day, one crewmember in the water and the one on the life raft were rescued, both suffering from hypothermia. The other two crewmembers had already died.

Safe work practices:

- Practise emergency drills, including abandoning the vessel, to ensure that all crewmembers are familiar with all the procedures involved. Record drills in the logbook.
- Ensure that immersion suits are available for each crewmember, are maintained in good condition, and are worn when abandoning ship.
- Consider weather conditions before setting out on a voyage and during the voyage.
- Install an emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) on commercial fishing vessels. Register and maintain the EPIRB. Phone 1 800 727-9414 to register.
- Ensure all crewmembers are aware of the hazards of cold water immersion.



FATALITY
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