



July 15, 2007

USCGD17 SAFETY ALERT: PV002-2007

Juneau, AK

Background: The Seventeenth Coast Guard District Small Passenger Vessel Safety Alert program was developed to provide timely safety related information to mariners of “lessons learned” from marine casualties. This program is part of an ongoing effort to apply Prevention through People (PTP) principles to improve safety.

Incident Summary: On July 12, 2007, a 32 ft un-inspected passenger vessel (UPV) with five passengers and two crew on board started taking on water shortly after pulling anchor near Kachemak Bay, Alaska. Attempts by the crew to keep ahead of the incoming water failed. A nearby Good Samaritan vessel picked up the seven people before the vessel sank. Sea conditions on scene were described as calm with flat seas. The cause of the incident is under investigation by the Coast Guard, but the owner suspects it may have been related to the exhaust system.

This is the second vessel to sink in the region this year. In both incidents, near-by Good Samaritan vessels recovered passengers and crew, and no injuries resulted. Vessels have not been recovered. Although both incidents are under investigation, failure of through hull fittings or hoses is believed to be a major contributing factor. It is interesting to note that some UPV operators at our pre-season safety meetings this spring noted an increase in hose deterioration and the need for earlier than normal replacement.

Recommended Action and Procedures: The Coast Guard strongly recommends that UPV operators:

- Thoroughly exam the material condition of all through hull fittings, hoses, and out drive bellows for deterioration. Replace as required.
- Double clamp all hoses.
- Routinely practice your emergency procedures for fire, flooding, man-over board, and basic damage control. Carry a damage control kit on board and know how to use it. Charter associations should contact USCG Sector Command to request training using the USCG portable, hands-on damage control simulator.
- Install high water alarm in bilge to provide early detection of a problem.
- Install sufficient high capacity bilge pump(s) to meet your worst case situation.
- Travel and operate in pairs. This provides an increase measure of safety if an incident occurs. If operating alone or in remote areas, a life raft or survival craft, EBIRB, and portable means of communication are highly recommended.
- Contact your local Coast Guard Auxiliary or Sector Command to request a free dockside UPV examination. If you meet all qualifications, you will be issued a UPV Safety Equipment decal. For information on the program, go to <http://www.mxak.org/fivestar/5star.htm>.

Call for Assistance: All vessels in distress are reminded to notify USCG immediately via cell phone (*CG), VHF CH16, DMGSS or other available means. This will ensure SAR agencies and resources are rapidly alerted and dispatched as required by the incident.