

Report 00.221

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Report to Environment Committee
from Mike Pryce, Manager, Harbours

Collision between *Atlantic Elizabeth* and Steeple Rock Beacon

1. Purpose

To advise the Committee of the findings of the Maritime Safety Authority investigation into the collision of the fishing vessel *Atlantic Elizabeth* with Steeple Rock light beacon on 18 May 1999.

2. Background

In the early hours of 18 May 1999, the outward-bound 41-metre steel-hulled fishing vessel *Atlantic Elizabeth* came into collision with the concrete structure of Steeple Rock light beacon (on the north-western side of the entrance channel). The concrete structure of the light was badly damaged, and a hole of 6 metres length and 2.5 metres width was torn in the port bow of the ship.

3. Findings

The cause of the collision was stated to be “the failure of the skipper to monitor continually the position and progress of the vessel during the transit of Wellington Harbour. He did not utilise the extensive array of navigational equipment at his disposal. A proper lookout, visually or by radar, was not maintained by either the skipper or the Mate.”

The skipper was subsequently prosecuted, convicted and fined by the Maritime Safety Authority under the Maritime Transport Act 1994.

4. **M.S.A. Recommendations Affecting Council**

The skippers' pilotage exemption was suspended, by the Wellington Harbourmaster immediately after this accident.

The Maritime Safety Authority report recommended (Recommendation 5.4):

“Wellington Regional Council to re-examine the Skipper for a pilotage exemption certificate before the suspension of said certificate is lifted.”

This is the procedure that will be used before the pilotage exemption certificate is revalidated.

5. **Recommendation**

That the report be received and information noted.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

MIKE PRYCE
Manager, Harbours

JANE BRADBURY
Divisional Manager, Environment