



## SAFETY ALERT - TECHNICAL No.5

### FIRE ON SAILING YACHT

It has recently been brought to our attention that a sailing yacht, operating under the Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Sailing Vessels, had a small fire in the forward compartment housing the electric motor of the bow thrust unit.

It is suspected that the overriding reason for the fire was the result of loose combustible material being pushed into the compartment, displacing the electric motor's brush gear cover. In turn the metal cover made contact with a terminal and resulted in a short circuit which caused arcing, culminating in the ignition of materials stowed around the motor.

**NEVER** stow any combustible material or gear in, or close to, the machinery or electric motor compartment (e.g paint, oil, rags, paper, cardboard, etc)

**ALWAYS** make sure that the engine or electric motor space is kept clean and clear of oily waste and combustible materials at all times.

**ALWAYS** carry out regular inspections of compartments housing engines or electric motors to make sure no materials have been stowed there, and to check that electric terminals are in good condition and secure.

**ALWAYS** check the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and its suitability to deal with electric and / or oil fuel fires.

For more information, please follow the link

For further information please contact

Shipping Safety Branch,

Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Tel: +44 (0)23 8032 9417

Issued: November 2005