

otsi

THE OFFICE OF
TRANSPORT
SAFETY
INVESTIGATION

safe and reliable transport services for new south wales



Ferry Safety Investigation

20 February 2004

**Lady Herron collision with no.5 wharf
Circular Quay**

Interim Factual Statement

LADY HERRON COLLISION WITH NO.5 WHARF CIRCULAR QUAY on 20 February 2004

Factual information

The Sydney Ferries vessel Lady Herron was operating a scheduled service from Taronga Zoo wharf departing at 0930 to Circular Quay number four wharf, with five crew and approximately 15 passengers on board. An experienced master was undergoing Lady Class type recertification and was in control of the vessel under the direct supervision of the vessel's regular master.

Prior to arriving at Circular Quay the two masters decided, as part of the type rating assessment to berth the vessel using emergency engine room control. The engineer was informed of this plan and approximately 500 m off the berth, engine control was successfully passed to the engine room where the engineer was standing-by. The recertifying master, who was in control of the vessel, then ordered an ahead movement to bring the vessel to the berth.

At 0942, as Lady Herron approached the berth, the recertifying master ordered 'half astern' to slow the vessel and then 'stop' which brought Lady Herron to a standstill adjacent to the pontoon at the end of number four wharf, but approximately 1.5 metres from the correct berthing position. The time was 0942:30.

The recertifying master attempted to correct the situation by turning the helm fully to starboard and signalling ahead-full on the telegraph. This action was intended to direct the stern of the vessel toward the wharf so the crew could pass a mooring line ashore.

There was some confusion over the commands subsequently given on the telegraph by the recertifying master and those acted on by the engineer.

The vessel accelerated toward the dead-end while turning to starboard. Having reached a speed estimated to be 6 knots, the bow glanced off the backboard then collided with the side of wharf 5.

After checking on the welfare of the engineer and passengers, the regular master assumed control and manoeuvred the vessel alongside wharf 4 where the passengers were disembarked.

The two masters and engineer returned negative readings for alcohol when breath tested by the Sydney Water Police.

Injuries, loss and damage

There were no reported injuries to passengers, crew or persons on shore.

The Lady Herron received damage to the shell plate and frames on the port side.

The wharf 5 canopy was significantly damaged with two stanchions destroyed. Glass panels at the front of the wharf were also destroyed.

Interim Safety actions

The Waterways Authority issued a direction to Sydney Ferries on the day of the accident to discontinue conducting propulsion or steering drills with passengers embarked at dead end wharfs.

The investigation is continuing

The report of the completed investigation will be tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Transport Services as required by Section 46D of the *Passenger Transport Act 1990*.