FATALITY ALERT
– PRELIMINARY INFORMATION –

BCFSC #2023-10-23

On October 23rd, a tugboat used in log salvage operations capsized during rough conditions near Vancouver. The boat operator made a distress call but was not able to be rescued before the boat capsized. There was a high wind warning issued for the area at the time of this incident and the RCMP described conditions as having "exceptionally strong winds and turbulent waters." The boat operator was found in the water and was not able to be resuscitated.

The Transportation Safety Board, WorkSafeBC and the Coroners Service are investigating this incident.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of the deceased and our sympathies to all those affected by this incident.

Contributing factors to the incident are unavailable at this time as this incident is under investigation and details are still to be determined.

Consider the following points on marine safety:

1. Wear an appropriate personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket when on deck. [Part 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#) outlines the buoyancy standards that must be met.

2. An immersion or survival suit is designed to protect boat operators if they are forced to enter the water after abandoning ship. Without one of these suits, cold water drowning can take place within a few minutes from the shock of entering cold water.

3. Knowledge of the weather and ocean conditions is critical safety information for marine operations. Marine weather forecasts are available and should be consulted often as conditions can change rapidly.

4. All boat operators should be familiar with how to call for help. Make the call before conditions become too extreme so responders have enough time to assess the situation and make a safe and effective rescue.

5. Conduct emergency drills often. Drills should include practicing for the following emergencies: flooding of the vessel, fire on board, crew member overboard, abandoning ship and calling for help.