

# Overview of the Investigation Report

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Fatal accident involving worker of Paul Vigneault's business enterprise (L'Écho des mers I lobster boat)



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## Photo of the L'Écho des mers I lobster boat



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## The fisherman's helper's workstation

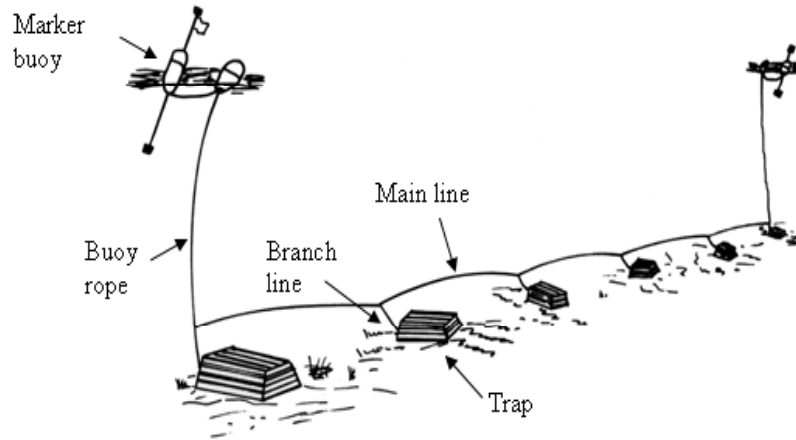


Captain's  
work station  
(wheelhouse)

Sheer strake

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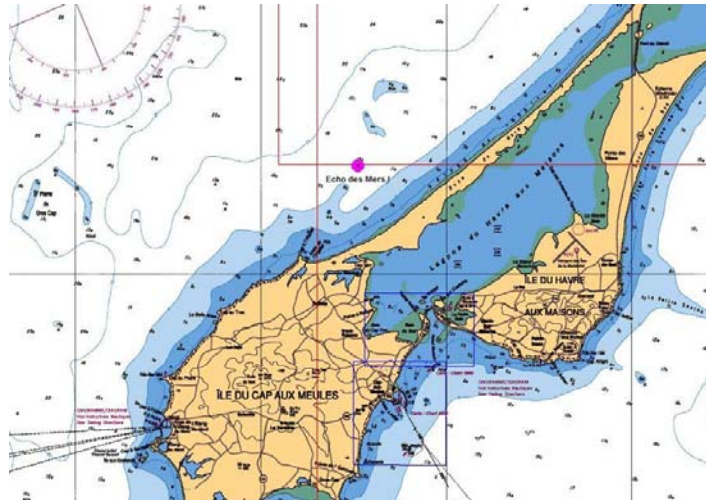
## Lobster trap line



Source: Commercial Fishing Method

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## Location of the accident



Source: Canadian Hydrographic Service

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## Reminder of the events

- Fatal accident occurred on May 21, 2011 approximately 10 nautical miles off the coast of Étang-du-Nord
- A fisherman's helper fell overboard when setting the traps.
- The fisherman's helper died by drowning.

## Circumstances and causes

Three causes were identified:

- The lobster boat, designed to facilitate the release and recovery of the fishing gear, exposed the fisherman's helper to the risk of falling overboard.
- The worker lost his balance and fell overboard.
- Part of the fishing gear pulled the fisherman's helper overboard.

**The lobster boat, designed to facilitate the release and recovery of the fishing gear, exposed the fisherman's helper to the risk of falling overboard**

- Location of the workstation
  - Fishing gear
  - Cluttered and limited work space
- Height of the bulwark
- Cause retained



**The worker lost his balance and fell overboard**

- The wind was blowing at 21 knots with gusts of 27 to 30 knots.
- The estimated height of the waves was between 2 m and 2.5 m.
- The bulwark was not high enough to protect the worker.
- This cause was likely.

## Part of the fishing gear pulled the fisherman's helper overboard

- Some parts of the fishing gear may have shifted with the wave action and moved near the worker.
- The main line may have become entangled around one of the fisherman's helper's legs.
- A trap may have pulled the fisherman's helper overboard.
- The bulwark was not high enough to protect the worker.
- This cause was likely.



## Conclusion

To explain the accident,

- The following cause was retained:
  - The lobster boat, designed to facilitate the release and recovery of the fishing gear, exposed the fisherman's helper to the risk of falling overboard.
- The following causes were deemed likely:
  - The worker lost his balance and fell overboard.
  - Part of the fishing gear pulled the fisherman's helper overboard.



## Decisions rendered during the investigation

- On May 21, 2011, a decision was rendered that prohibited lobster fishing on the Écho des mers I. The employer was ordered to equip the workstation in such a way as to stow the ropes separately from the fisherman's helper's work area. In addition, the fisherman's helper must wear an approved life jacket during operations performed on the bridge.
- On May 22, 2011, the employer was authorized to resume fishing on the following grounds: the employer installed a separate rope stowage compartment along the lobster trap rack, and the employer agreed to henceforth ensure that the fisherman's helper wears an automatic inflation life jacket when he is on the bridge.



## Follow-up to the 1/3 investigation

- The CSST will inform the following partners of the circumstances of this accident:
  - the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSBC)
  - the IRSST
  - the Quebec Region Standing Committee on Fishing Vessel Safety
  - Transport Canada, Marine Safety Directorate
  - captain-owner associations and
  - Québec associations of fisherman's helpers

It will stress the importance of putting into place the necessary means to prevent fishers from falling overboard. In addition, the CSST will remind them that it is essential to be equipped with an effective means of reboarding a man who has fallen overboard.



## Follow-up to the 2/3 investigation

- As part of its partnership with the CSST aimed at integrating occupational health and safety into vocational and technical education, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport will disseminate the investigation report, for information and educational purposes, to educational institutions offering the following study programs:
  - *Professional fishing*
  - *Aquaculture technology*
  - *Marine mechanics*
  - *Marine mechanics engineering technology.*
  - *Aquiculture*
  - *Navigation*



## Follow-up to the 3/3 investigation

- The CSST will continue to collaborate in the research work launched by the IRSST with the aim of preventing overboard falls from Québec lobster boats





## Health and Safety on Fishing Boats

Guide available since 2008



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## Health and Safety on Fishing Boats

CSST publications about the risks of overboard falls

### LE GUIDE

Santé et sécurité à bord  
des bateaux de pêche



### ATTENTION ! DANGER

#### POUR ÉVITER LES CHUTES PAR-DESSUS BORD :

Votre bateau doit être équipé de garde-corps ou rambardes conformes. S'il n'y a pas cette protection, tout membre de l'équipage doit porter un gilet de sauvetage ou un harnais attaché à une ligne de vie.

POUR VOUS PROCURER LE GUIDE :  
1 866 302-CSST (2778) ou [www.csst.qc.ca](http://www.csst.qc.ca)

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## Question period