



# **UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

**REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATION  
INTO THE  
UNINSPECTED FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O.  
N. 616504) MASTER LOSS OF LIFE WEST SIDE  
OF TURTLE COVE ON AUGUST 14, 2022**



**MISLE ACTIVITY NUMBER: 7533131**

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commandant  
United States Coast Guard

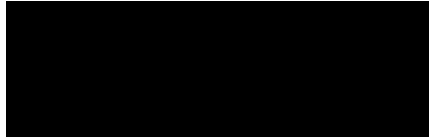
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16732/IIA #7533131  
01 July 2025

**FALL OVERBOARD AND SUBSEQUENT LOSS OF ONE LIFE FROM  
THE COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O.N. 616504) IN  
TURTLE COVE NEAR PALACIOS, TEXAS ON AUGUST 14, 2022**

**ACTION BY THE COMMANDANT**

The record and the report of investigation completed for this marine casualty have been reviewed by the Office of Investigations & Casualty Analysis. The record and the report, including the findings of fact, analyses, and conclusions are approved. This marine casualty investigation is closed.



E. B. SAMMS  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Chief, Office of Investigations & Casualty Analysis (CG-INV)



16732  
**JUN 11 2025**

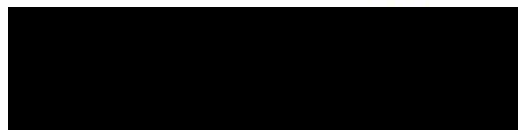
**UNINSPECTED FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O.N. 616504) MASTER LOSS OF  
LIFE WEST SIDE OF TURTLE COVE ON AUGUST 14, 2022**

**ENDORSEMENT BY THE COMMANDER,  
EIGHTH COAST GUARD DISTRICT**

The record and the report of the investigation convened for the subject casualty have been reviewed. The record and the report, including the findings of fact, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations are approved. It is recommended that this marine casualty investigation be closed.

**COMMENTS ON THE REPORT**

1. The loss of the operator was a tragic and preventable accident. I offer my sincere condolences to the family and friends of the mariner who lost his life.
2. The investigation and report contain valuable information which can be used to address the factors that contributed to this marine casualty and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.



**J. E. FOTHERGILL**

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard  
Chief of Prevention  
Eighth Coast Guard District  
By Direction



16732  
29 July 2024

**UNINSPECTED FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O. N. 616504) MASTER LOSS OF  
LIFE WEST SIDE OF TURTLE COVE ON AUGUST 14, 2022**

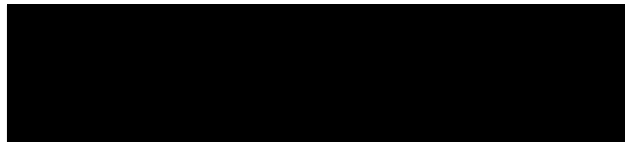
**ENDORSEMENT BY THE OFFICER IN CHARGE, MARINE INSPECTION**

The record and the report of the investigation convened for the subject casualty have been reviewed. The record and the report, including the findings of fact, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations are approved subject to the following comments. It is recommended that this marine casualty investigation be closed.

**ENDORSEMENT/ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Administrative Recommendation 1:** Recommend this investigation be closed.

**Endorsement:** Concur. This investigation should be closed.



T. H. Bertheau  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection

Enclosures: (1) Executive Summary  
(2) Investigating Officer's Report





16732  
26 July 2024

## **UNINSPECTED FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O. N. 616504) MASTER LOSS OF LIFE WEST SIDE OF TURTLE COVE ON AUGUST 14, 2022**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On August 13, 2022, at approximately 1600 CST, the Master got underway by himself on the fishing vessel SEA TIGER (O. N. 616504) to conduct scouting operations for the upcoming Texas shrimping season. On August 14, 2022, at approximately 0458 CST, the Master spoke to his son on the phone about returning home after conducting his scouting operations. Shortly after speaking with his son, the Master of fishing vessel SEA TIGER entered the water based on the vessel's GPS trackline. At approximately 0630, the son found the boat grounded on the west side of Turtle Cove with engines still engaged and no sign of the Master on board. The son contacted Texas Parks and Wildlife and a search and rescue operation was conducted. The body of the Master was later discovered and recovered by a good samaritan and transferred to Texas Parks and Wildlife. An autopsy revealed the cause of death as drowning.

The Coast Guard determined the initiating event for this casualty was the Master entering the water. The subsequent events were the vessel running aground on the west side of Turtle Cove, followed by the Master's death. The causal factors that contributed to this casualty include (1) failure to wear life jacket or personal floatation device and (2) unknown cause of entering the water.

As a result of its investigation, the Coast Guard determined that the initiating event for this casualty was when the master fell into the water. Which lead to the vessel to run aground on the west side of Turtle Cove. Followed by the master's death. The causal factors that contributed to this casualty include: (1) Failure to wear life jacket or personal floatation device and (2) Unknown cause of falling into the water.



16732  
26 July 2024

## **UNINSPECTED FISHING VESSEL SEA TIGER (O. N. 616504) MASTER LOSS OF LIFE WEST SIDE OF TURTLE COVE ON AUGUST 14, 2022**

### **INVESTIGATING OFFICER'S REPORT**

#### **1. Preliminary Statement**

1.1. This marine casualty investigation was conducted, and this report was submitted in accordance with Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subpart 4.07, and under the authority of Title 46, United States Code (USC) Chapter 63.

1.2. No individuals, organizations, or parties either requested or were designated a party-in-interest in this investigation in accordance with 46 CFR Subparts 4.03-10.

1.3. The United States Coast Guard (USCG) was the lead agency for all evidence collection activities involving this investigation. Texas Parks and Wildlife assisted USCG investigators with the recovery of the vessel and the body of the Master. The Coast Guard Investigative Service (CGIS) was notified and agreed to provide technical assistance as required. No other persons or organizations assisted in this investigation.

1.4. All times listed in this report are in Central Standard Time using a 24-hour format and are approximate.

#### **2. Vessel Involved in the Incident**

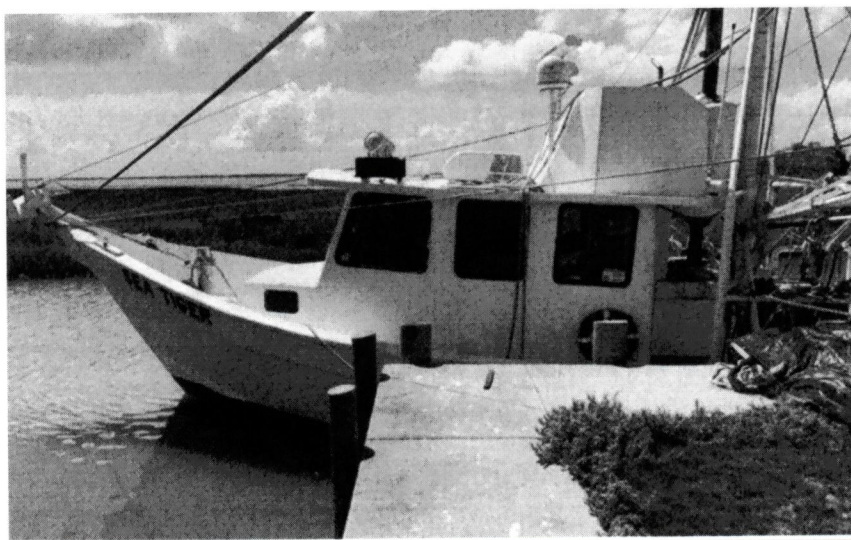



Figure 1. Photograph of F/V SEA TIGER taken on September 12, 2022.

Official Name:	SEA TIGER
Identification Number:	Official Number: 616504
Flag:	United States
Vessel Class/Type/Sub-Type	Fishing Vessel/Fish Catching Vessel/Shrimper
Build Year:	1979
Gross Tonnage:	23 GT
Length:	45.8 ft
Beam/Width:	14.1 ft
Draft/Depth:	4.7 ft
Main/Primary Propulsion: (Configuration/System Type, Ahead Horsepower)	Gasoline inboard/365 ahead horsepower
Owner:	Mosier Marine Inc., TX 300 E Elizabeth Palacios, Texas 77465 United States
Operator:	

### 3. Deceased, Missing, and/or Injured Persons

Relationship to Vessel	Sex	Age	Status
Master	Male	66	Deceased

### 4. Findings of Fact

#### 4.1. The Incident:

4.1.1. On August 13, 2022, at 0100, the weather forecast for Turtle Bay was partially sunny, no sea state, and clear visibility.

4.1.2. At 1600, the Master got underway by himself on SEA TIGER in Palacios, TX to conduct scouting operations for the upcoming Texas shrimp season.

4.1.3. On August 14, 2022, at 0458, the Master spoke to his son about returning home after conducting scouting operations for upcoming shrimp season.

4.1.4. At 0515, the Master went into the water based on track line in Figure 2.

4.1.5. At 0520, based on GPS, vessel throttles were still engaged and vessel adrift without an operator (Fig. 2).



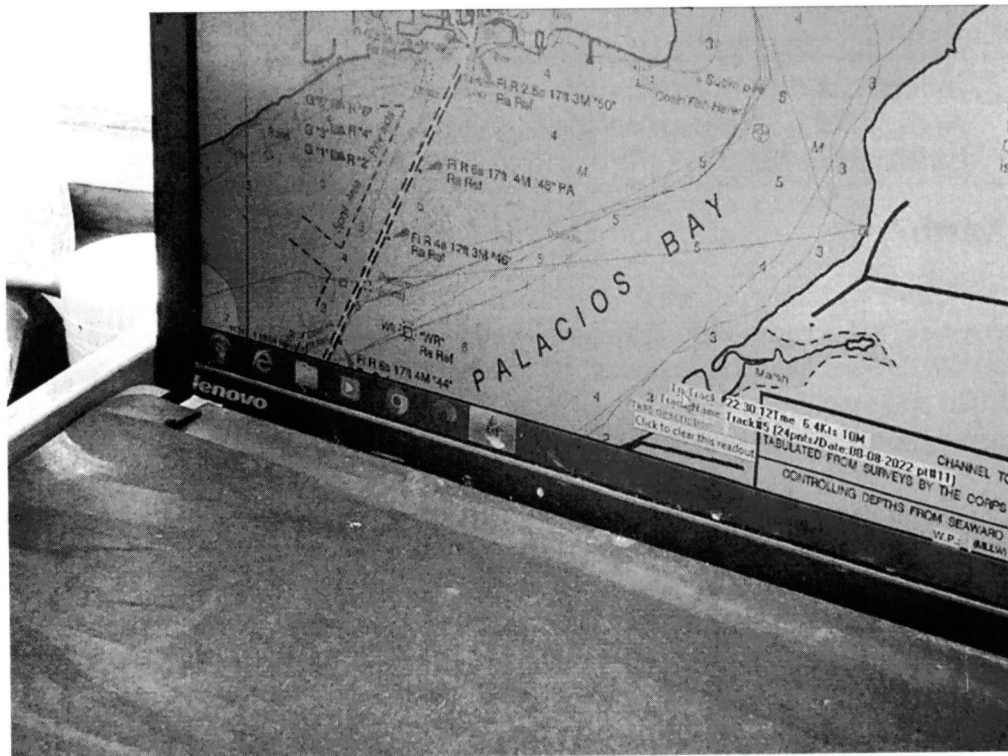


Figure 2: Photograph of GPS track line of F/V SEA TIGER.

4.1.6. At 0610, the son attempted to contact the Master multiple times with no answer. The son discovered the fishing vessel across Turtle Bay from his house and immediately went to the vessel in his own boat.

4.1.7. At 0630, the son discovered the fishing vessel without the Master. He found the vessel beached and engines still running at approximately 1300 rpm. The son stated there was no sign of his father and no evidence at the time where the Master may have fallen into the water.

4.1.8. At 0800, Texas Parks and Wildlife assisted Coast Guard in conducting Search and Rescue.

4.1.9. At 0948, the Master's body was recovered by Texas Parks and Wildlife west side of Turtle Cove. Autopsy was conducted by Galveston Medical Center and stated cause of death was drowning.

4.1.10. At 1600 on September 28, 2022, non-DOT drug and alcohol tests were conducted post-mortem. The result of the drug test was positive for Amphetamines. Based on medical officer review, drugs found were not a contributed factor to the death of the Master. Alcohol was detected at 0.013 via blood test. Medical Officer ruled alcohol was not a causal factor to the death of the Master.

#### 4.2. Additional/Supporting Information:

4.2.1. The SEA TIGER was a 45.8-foot-long wood hull vessel. It operated in Inland Waters (not to exceed three miles nautical miles offshore) and with no more than three persons on board.

4.2.2. The SEA TIGER was an uninspected rigged shrimp trawler. However, a dockside commercial fishing vessel safety examination was conducted on February 9, 2021, and April 5, 2023. There was no dockside commercial fishing vessel safety examination conducted in 2022.

## **5. Analysis**

5.1. *Failure to wear life jacket or personal floatation device.* When the Master was recovered, there was no life jacket or flotation device on the person. Having these type of survival devices has raised concern for getting caught in the fishing gear and tackle during normal and emergency operations. However, not having a means of flotation once the Master entered the water significantly decreased the chance for survival.

5.2. *Unknown cause of entry into water.* The Master entered the water from SEA TIGER. The Master was traveling alone at the time when entering the water.

## **6. Conclusions**

### **6.1. Determination of Cause:**

6.1.1. The initiating event for this casualty was the Master entering the water. The causal factor leading to this event was:

6.1.1.1. It was unknown how the Master entered the water since there were no witnesses onboard nor any recording equipment.

6.1.2. The causal factor leading to the Master's loss of life was:

6.1.2.1. The Master was discovered without a lifejacket on.

6.2. Evidence of Act(s) or Violation(s) of Law by Any Coast Guard Credentialed Mariner Subject to Action Under 46 USC Chapter 77: No credentialed mariner was involved in the incident and no acts were found meeting these criteria.

6.3. Evidence of Act(s) or Violation(s) of Law by U.S. Coast Guard Personnel, or any other person: No such persons were involved in the incident and no acts were found meeting these criteria.

6.4. Evidence of Act(s) Subject to Civil Penalty: No acts were found meeting these criteria.

6.5. Evidence of Criminal Act(s): No acts were found meeting these criteria.

6.6. Need for New or Amended U.S. Law or Regulation: No changes were determined to be needed.

6.7. Unsafe Actions or Conditions that Were Not Causal Factors: The Master's positive drug test for Amphetamines and positive alcohol test with a blood alcohol content of 0.013 was an unsafe condition while operating the vessel.

**7. Actions Taken Since the Incident**

7.1. Following the incident, the Investigating Officer conducted local community outreach with the fishing vessel community regarding the importance of wearing lifejackets or personal flotation devices.

**8. Recommendations**

8.1. None.

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Lieutenant, U.S. Coast Guard  
Investigating Officer