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Subject: No wonder that oil man on Furzey Island was looking at us so oddly when we sailed by in the afternoon

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That sinking feeling
DAILY MAIL (London)
April 7, 2005

AS executives of a global shipping firm, they were used to navigating a steady course through the world of business.

But when eight managers from The Maersk Company tried a spot of canoeing as part of a teambuilding course yesterday, staying afloat proved to be more difficult.

The five men and three women managed to capsize the two Canadian kayaks they were in.

Then they sank a rescue boat as they all tried to scramble on board at the same time, plunging two instructors into the freezing water with them.

With one of the group beginning to show signs of hypothermia, they then decided to call for help but found the only mobile phone among them had been lost in the chaos.

They were plucked to safety only after managing to flag down a small supply vessel which fished them out of the water in Poole Harbour, Dorset.

A lifeboat crew was scrambled and the group were taken to Poole Quay where they were met by two ambulances which took them to hospital.

Two of the party were treated for mild hypothermia, while others were suffering from asthma.

The executives were on a five-day activity course run by Brenscombe Outdoor Centre in Poole.

Last night, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency criticised the centre for taking to sea without radio equipment or flares to raise the alarm in case of emergency.

A Coastguard Agency spokesman said: 'We have major concerns as to why they were at sea with only one mobile phone in case of emergency.

'We got a call from a vessel, the Furzey Squirrel, saying they had just pulled ten people out, but that was the first we'd heard about it. We didn't know they were out there and they didn't have any radio equipment or flares to raise the alarm.

Their own rescue boat would not have been able to fit all the people in any way. Lots of questions need answering.' Andrew Jenkins, watch manager at Portland Coastguard, said: 'The rescue boat rolled over, losing their only form of communication which was a mobile phone when they were trying to pull people on board.

'All the vessels sank, as did all their equipment. The instructors were also pitched into the water.

'Fortunately for them, a supply ship was passing the scene and took all the casualties on board. They were extremely wet, cold and there was some real concerns for an asthmatic lady who was unwell.' The rescue cost more than Pounds 5,000 and the incident is being investigated by the Marine Accidents Investigation Branch, part of the Department of Transport, and the Dorset Police Marine Unit.

The party, aged between 25 and 40, had strapped the two 17ft kayaks together. They were accompanied by two male instructors from the centre in a 12ft glass fibre rescue boat with an outboard motor.

Tim Hughes, of the Brenscombe Outdoor Centre, claimed the canoeists were never in grave danger, because Poole Harbour is only around 4ft deep. He added: 'There were no injuries and all personnel were wearing waterproof clothing and buoyancy aids.' John Kilby, company secretary of Maersk, said: 'We take the safety of our employees very seriously. Safety is paramount.

This was an isolated incident and everyone was fine.' A Maersk spokesman later said the company, based at Canary Wharf in London, was considering bringing its employees back to the capital.

Shipping firm's high fliers sink in harbour

This is Dorset
April 7, 2005

A MOBILE phone was used to call for help as a group of shipping company high fliers sank while canoeing in Poole harbour.

And as the eight canoeists on a team-building exercise tried to escape the freezing water on to a support boat it also capsized sending the phone - the group's only form of communication - into the harbour depths.

Two instructors on the 12ft fibre-glass boat also fell into the water.

By chance a passing barge rescued the 10 stranded men and women. The eight British employees of Danish shipping giant Maersk were taking part in a management training course at Brenscombe Outdoor Centre at Corfe Castle.

They set out on April 6 morning in two Canadian kayaks accompanied by a support boat and were between Brownsea Island and Furzey Island when disaster struck.

With gusting wind whipping up the waves the kayaks sank.

Once in the water the eight tried to clamber on a support boat nearby but this also capsized.

"They called their company on a mobile phone to get more rescue support boats to come out " said Mark Cole second coxswain on the RNLi Poole offshore lifeboat.

"Fortunately the Furzey Island transport barge was passing and picked them up. When we arrived they were transferred to the lifeboat. They were all very cold and some were having asthmatic attacks."

Commenting on the support boat that accompanied the kayaks Andrew Jenkins of Portland coastguard said: "There was no radio or flares onboard and this vessel also rolled over losing their only form of communication when they were trying to pull people onboard.

"It seems they had tried to instigate their own rescue by phoning their local office and rescue boats would have gone out from Ridge Wharf which was at least an hour away."

The Maritime Accident Investigation Branch has been informed.

Ten rescued as kayaks capsize

Western Daily Press
April 7, 2005

A Probe is under way after 10 adults on a team leadership course were rescued when their kayaks and a rescue boat capsized yesterday. Eight adults had gone out into Poole Harbour in two kayaks with a small rescue boat containing two instructors from Brenscombe Outdoor Centre, near Corfe Castle in Dorset.

The group were all from the same firm and were on a five-day team leadership course.

Portland Coastguard were alerted after the Furzey Squirrel, a BP supply vessel, rescued the 10 people from the choppy water.

They were taken ashore by lifeboat and ambulances took them to hospital. Two were believed to have suffered from mild hypothermia.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency press release:

Press Notice No: 095/05

Wednesday, April 6, 2005
Posted 13:46 GMT

TEN PEOPLE PULLED FROM WATER IN POOLE HARBOUR

At 11.00 o' clock this morning Portland Coastguard were alerted to an incident in Poole Harbour when the `Furzey Squirrel', a BP supply vessel, came across 10 people in the water after they had been spilled from two Canadian kayaks and a small rescue boat which had all upturned.

The inshore and all weather RNLI lifeboats were requested to launch and the individuals were transferred to the lifeboats before being landed ashore. Two individuals are reported to be mildly hypothermic and one is suffering from asthma. The Dorset Ambulance Service then transferred these individuals to hospital.

The weather on scene today is southwesterly winds veering west 5 to 7, with rain showers and a moderate sea state.

Andrew Jenkins, Watch Manager at Portland Coastguard said:

"Our thanks are due to the crew of the `Furzey Squirrel' for spotting these people in the water and for their speedy and safe recovery.

"It seems that a group of people had gone out in two canoes. The group consisted of 8 people with two instructors. The rescue vessel which accompanied the two canoes was a 12 foot fibreglass rescue boat with two instructors. There was no radio nor flares on board the rescue boat, and this vessel also rolled over losing their only form of communication which was a mobile phone when they were trying to pull people on board.

" It seems they had tried to instigate their own rescue by phoning their local office, and rescue boats would have then gone out from Ridge Wharf which was at least an hour away.

"All the vessels sank; as did all their equipment. The instructors were also pitched into the water. Fortunately no one has been seriously hurt but we will be looking at how risk assessments have been undertaken for this trip. The trip was instigated from an outdoor activity centre locally and the people on a team leadership course.

"All of the vessels have been taken to Shell Bay where they will be inspected. The Marine Accident Investigation Branch has been informed."

For further details contact:
The Maritime & Coastguard Agency Duty Press Officer

The Furzey Squirrel, motorised barge, plies back and fore to Furzey Island carrying stores for the BP/Amoco Oil Field; from Poole Harbour Commissioners website.

Then there is 'CargoLaw', which is the Daily International Vessel Casualties & Pirates Daily Report:

BP supply vessel M/V Furzey Squirrel -- came across 10 people in water after spilled from two Canadian kayaks & small rescue boat in Poole Harbor, UK -- all capsized. Inshore/all weather RNLi lifeboats launched & individuals transferred to lifeboats before being landed ashore. Dorset Ambulance Service then transferred individuals to hospital. Weather on scene today is southwesterly winds veering west 5 to 7, with rain showers & moderate sea state. Ah, tourists. (Wed. April 6 2005).

And finally if you are wondering how you get eight executives into two open canoes, then see how they might have done it, from a photo on the Brenscombe Outdoor Activity Centre website (about halfway down the page, with an aerial shot of our route from Cleavel Point past Green and Furzey Islands through to Brownsea Island at the bottom):

<http://www.brenscombeoutdoor.co.uk/Photo%20Gallery.htm#Activities>

Many thanks to everyone for all their hard work to make this camp such a success. Particular thanks to Nigel Chapman for all his help, and apologies for any stress when he thought these capsizes might be 8th Holborn!
But remember to keep those mobiles in their waterproof containers and secured with a lanyard!!!!
YiS
JF