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When vessels are manoeuvring at close quarters for operational reasons, the greatest potential danger exists when there is a large difference in size between the two vessels and is most commonly experienced when a vessel is being attended by a tug. A dangerous situation is most likely when the tug, having been manoeuvring alongside the vessel, moves ahead to the bow to pass or take a tow-line. Due to changes in drag effect, especially in shallow water, the tug has first to exert appreciably more ahead power than she would use in open water to maintain the same speed and this effect is strongest when she is off the shoulder. At that point hydrodynamic forces also tend to deflect the tug's bow away from the vessel and attract her stern; but as she draws ahead the reverse occurs, the stern being strongly repulsed, and the increased drag largely disappears. There is thus a strong tendency to develop a sheer towards the vessel, and unless the helm (which will have been put towards the vessel to counter the previous effect) is immediately reversed and engine revolutions rapidly reduced, the tug may well drive herself under the vessel's bow. A further effect of interaction arises from the flow around the larger vessel acting on the underbody of the smaller vessel causing a consequent decrease in effective stability, and thus increasing the likelihood of capsize if the vessels come into contact with each other. Since it has been found that the strength of hydrodynamic interaction varies approximately as the square of the speed, this type of manoeuvre should always be carried out at very slow speed. If vessels of dissimilar size are to work in close company at any higher speeds then it is essential that the smaller one keeps clear of the hazardous area off the other's bow.