

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 134 OF 2005

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

Prevention of Containers Falling Overboard

On 20 August 2005, a total of 57 containers fell overboard from a river-trade cargo vessel carrying 91 containers stacked more than 3-tiers above the main deck while navigating in the waters south of Tsing Yi Island. A preliminary investigation into this incident revealed that a combination of inclement weather conditions and a failure to properly secure containers stowed on the main deck with adequate lashing arrangement were the major contributing factors leading to the accident.

In order to avoid recurrence of similar incidents, shipowners, masters and officers in charge of all ships carrying containers on deck plying between Hong Kong and mainland coastal/river trade ports are required to observe the following preventive requirement with effect from 1 September 2005:

- a) the stack of containers onboard the vessel should not exceed more than 2-tier above the main deck and all cargo units should be securely stowed and lashed,
- b) a securing and lashing manual approved by a competent authority in respect of different loading conditions should be carried onboard and strictly complied with if the master intends to carry containers exceeding 2-tier above the main deck of the vessel.

Masters and officers in charge of vessels carrying containers should ensure that containers onboard are safely stowed and secured in conformity with the approved securing and lashing arrangement as well as having adequate stability at all time during the loading period and throughout the voyage within the waters of Hong Kong.

S.Y. TSUI
Director of Marine

Marine Department

Government of the HKSAR

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