

## **Marine Department Notice No. 38 of 2007**

(Marine Industrial Safety)

### **Safe Means of Access to Cargo Hold on Local Lighters** **Engaged in Mid-stream Cargo Operation** (Amended)

In a recent accident, a local lighter worker lost his handhold and fell five metres to his death from the top of a portable steel ladder when he was climbing up to the main deck from the cargo hold of the lighter during mid-stream operation at Western Anchorage. The ladder was secured to the hatch coaming to prevent side movements. However, the ladder was not long enough to extend above the hatch coaming in order to provide a firm handgrip at the top landing nor were there other structures or suitable handholds to enable safe movement off the ladder.

2. A portable or fixed ladder is not considered safe for use unless at each rung of the ladder there is a foothold with a depth, including any space behind the ladder, of not less than 115mm and a width of not less than 250mm, and that there are sufficient firm handholds along each side of the ladder. The “Shipboard Cargo Handling Safety Guide” published by Marine Department advises that unless a portable vertical ladder has suitable objects on both sides at the top of the ladder for use as handholds, the ladder should extend from the landing place for a length of not less than one metre. Alternatively, the top of the ladder should be provided with stanchions of not less than one metre high at the upper landing place for access to the cargo hold unless there are other suitable handgrips for fall prevention. Persons in charge and workers engaged in cargo handling on board local vessels should follow the practices given in the aforementioned Safety Guide and exercise extreme care when accessing or exiting a cargo hold.

3. Owners, coxswains, operators and persons in charge of cargo handling of locally licensed vessels and lighters are reminded to ensure the provision of safe means of access, whether by portable means or fixed installations, to any person employed to carry out works in a hold. In addition, under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels)(Works) Regulation, Cap 548 sub. leg. I, employers and persons in charge of works are required to appoint an experienced works supervisor possessing a valid safety training certificate to provide such supervision, instruction, training and information as necessary to ensure the safety of a person employed at work, and that any equipment or appliance provided for carrying out works is in a safe working condition.

4. Copies of the “Shipboard Cargo Handling Safety Guide” are available free of charge from the Marine Industrial Safety Section at Room 2315, 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong. The Code of Practice can also be downloaded from Marine Department’s website at:-

[http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub\\_services/ocean/miss\\_guides.html](http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/ocean/miss_guides.html).

5. This Notice supersedes the previous Marine Department Notice No. 34 of 2007.

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Director of Marine

Marine Department  
Government of the HKSAR  
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