

## **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 137 OF 2008**

(Marine Industrial Safety)

### **Safe Practices for Unloading Block of Granite**

A fatal accident occurred in December 2007 in which a stevedore, whilst unloading heavy granite blocks from an ocean going vessel, was crushed by a granite block. During unloading, the stevedore climbed down into the gap between granite blocks attempting to make preparations for unloading. Suddenly, a granite block slid and the stevedore was crushed. The investigation into this accident revealed that the accident was caused by (a) improper stowage of the cargo; and (b) inadequate knowledge and a failure to assess the risk prior the handling of the very heavy cargo.

2. To avoid similar accidents in future, owners and masters of river trade and ocean going vessels, cargo operators, stevedore companies, workers and persons in charge of dumb steel lighters and the persons in charge of works are reminded to observe the following safe practices:

- i) Prior to commencement of cargo handling works on board vessels, the person in charge should fully appraise the risk involved in the work and take precautionary measures to minimize such risk;
- ii) Cargoes should be properly stacked in a stable condition; and
- iii) If stacked cargoes are unstable or likely to move due to vessel movement or other reasons, they should be properly secured.

3. The abovementioned safe practices can be found in the Shipboard Cargo Handling Safety Guide which is available on Marine Department website (address: [http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub\\_services/ocean/pdf/miss\\_guide\\_schs\\_eng.pdf](http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/ocean/pdf/miss_guide_schs_eng.pdf)), or at the Marine Industrial Safety Section, Harbour Building, 23/F, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong.

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Government of the HKSAR  
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