



香 港 商 船 資 訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Crew Fatality while working Deck Log Cargo

To : Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers

Summary

A fatal accident occurred on a Hong Kong registered cargo ship at anchor loading log cargo. An Ordinary Seaman fell overboard and disappeared into the water while he was working deck log cargo near the ship's side. This information note draws the attention of Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew to the lessons learnt from this accident.

The Accident

1. A Hong Kong registered cargo ship was at anchor loading logs. When the loading in No. 1 cargo hatch was completed, the ship's crew were tasked to tighten the lashings over the deck log cargoes while loading continued in other hatches. The Ordinary Seaman (OS) who was assigned to work on the deck cargoes near the ship's side fell overboard and disappeared into the water.
2. At the time of the accident, the weather was fine. The wind was southwesterly with force 3. The sea state was smooth but the water was muddy with current setting northeast at a speed of about 1 knot. Despite search and rescue operation being conducted for 7 days, the missing OS could not be found.
3. The investigation reveals that the missing OS was inexperienced and was not briefed of the risks involved, such as liable to slip and fall, in working deck log cargo before he was assigned the work. In addition, the guard lines or rails and the lifeline (or alternatively, the lifeline and fall protection system applied to crew member working on deck log cargo) as recommended in the Code of Safe Practice for Ships Carrying Timber Deck Cargoes, were not erected at the time of the accident. Moreover, the OS was neither equipped with a fall protection system nor wearing a life-jacket while he was working the deck log cargoes near the ship's side.

Lessons Learnt

4. Crew members, in particular, the inexperienced ones, should be briefed of the risks involved, such as liable to slip and fall, in working deck log cargo before they were assigned the work.
5. Crew members should be protected, according to Chapter 5 of the Code of Safe Practice for Ships Carrying Timber Deck Cargoes, either by guard lines or rails and lifeline (or, alternatively, by lifeline and fall protection system applied to them) in addition to the protective clothing and equipment, such as studded boots or studded overshoes and hard hats, when working deck log cargoes.
6. The attention of Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

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