



香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Fatal accident of a bosun falling down from a stairway

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

Summary

The bosun of a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier anchored in port fell down from a stairway when he was walking up the stairway with both his hands holding a set of music audio system. He was sent to a local hospital and was declared dead later. This Note draws the attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew to the lessons learnt from this accident.

The Incident

1. When a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier anchored in port to wait for a berth, she encountered bad weather and rolled moderately, with sudden and heavy rolling at times. At the material time, when the bosun was walking up a stairway in the accommodation with both his hands holding a set of music audio system, he accidentally fell down from the stairway and bumped his head seriously and died as a result of it. According to the autopsy report, the blood alcohol concentration of the bosun was far exceeding the maximum allowable limit stated in the company policy.
2. The investigation revealed that the contributory factors of the accident were as follows:
 - (a) the bosun might have lost his balance and fell down from the stairway due to a sudden and heavy rolling of the vessel and/or under the effect of alcohol; and
 - (b) the bosun was lack of safety awareness. He used both hands to hold the three-piece music audio system and did not leave a hand free to hold the handrail when walking up the stairway.

Lessons Learnt

3. In order to avoid recurrence of a similar accident in future, masters, officers and crew of vessels should be aware of the following safety issues:

- (a) all crew including the master must always take care of themselves when moving around the ship;
- (b) care should always be taken when walking up and down stairways by holding a handrail throughout the walk; and
- (c) the company's alcohol policy should be strictly followed.

4. The attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

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