



香 港 商 船 資 訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

A fatal accident happened on board during the topping up of fumigant in the cargo holds

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

Summary

A fatal accident happened on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier at sea while in-transit fumigation was being carried out in the cargo holds. When the Bosun was topping up fumigant in the cargo holds, he accidentally slipped onto the inclined ladder below the vertical ladder under the access hatch while he was attempting to retrieve a detached indicator stuck at about a meter below the access hatch. Afterwards, the Bosun was rescued and taken out of the cargo hold. Unfortunately, the Bosun was declared dead on board on the same day. 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. A Hong Kong registered bulk carrier departed from Tauranga, New Zealand to Jiangdu, China for cargo discharging. The vessel was fully loaded with logs and a fumigation process remained in transit on board. The Bosun was assigned to top up fumigant in the cargo holds during the sea passage. When the bosun noticed that the fumigant gas concentration indicator (dositube) was detached from the internal side of the access hatch cover of a cargo hold, he entered through the access hatch to retrieve the detached dositube inside. Unfortunately, the Bosun accidentally slipped onto the inclined ladder below the vertical ladder under the access hatch. Afterwards, the Bosun was rescued and taken out of the cargo hold, the Bosun was declared dead by the paramedics on their arrival on board on the same day.

2. The investigation revealed that the contributory factors causing the accident were: failure of the crew to follow the safety procedures of permit to work and carry out a proper risk assessment before entering cargo holds; their lack of knowledge of enclosed space entry and

insufficient safety awareness; and the inadequate and lack of comprehensive training on the fumigation procedures for the crew.

Lessons Learnt

3. In order to avoid the recurrence of similar accidents during operation in the future, all masters, officers, and crew members should:

- (a) conduct work for fumigation strictly in accordance with the fumigation company's instructions and the guidelines of the IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ. 1264;
- (b) enhance training plan on enclosed space entry, in particular, a fumigated cargo hold; and
- (c) ensure all crew members strictly follow the safety requirements when entering an enclosed space and in-transit fumigation.

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

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