



# 香 港 商 船 資 訊

## HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

### **Crew killed in a car deck lifting operation**

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

#### ***Summary***

A fatal accident occurred on board a Hong Kong registered ship during a car deck lifting operation. Two movable deck lifter machines were used to raise the car deck into position. During the operation a crewmember was accidentally crushed against a ship's bulkhead by one of the deck lifter machines and was later died. This Note draws the attention of the Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers to the safety precautions in the usage of deck lifter machine on board.

#### **The Incident**

1. On 30 June 2005, the Hong Kong registered ship was waiting for berthing instruction off Ulsan, Korea, the crewmembers carried out a routine car deck lifting operation with two deck lifter machines. The Deck Cadet drove one of the machines and stopped in front of a bulkhead for lifting operation. He left the steering position in an attempt to raise the deck lifter machine with the stabilizers. At this juncture the deck lifter machine suddenly moved forward and crushed a sailor who was standing between the forward bumper of the deck lifter machine and the bulkhead. The sailor was badly injured and subsequently sent for medical treatment. He later died in the hospital.
2. The probable cause of the accident was the driver of the deck lifter machine accidentally dislocating the long handled lever-switch that caused the machine to move forward. The lever-switch controlling the forward-neutral-back movements of the deck lifter machine was rather long. It could be dislocated easily without notice by person moving away from the driver seat. During investigation it was also found that the lever-switch had been modified and the Deck Cadet was not a trained driver for the deck lifter machine.

## **Lessons Learnt**

3. It is stressed that the deck lifter machine should not be modified without the approval of the maker. It is also important that the driver of the deck lifter machine should be properly trained. The management company should also ensure that all concerned personnel working on board fully understand the safety instructions of the deck lifter machine before it is operated.
4. Personnel working in the area should avoid standing between the deck lifter and adjacent bulkheads or in any unsafe position during the car deck lifting operation. The officer in charge should have the responsibility to ensure that safety of work is maintained for the crewmembers at all times.
5. The attention of ship managers, ship operators, master and officers is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

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