



香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Fatal accident in closing weather-tight door at rough sea

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

Summary

A bosun on board a Hong Kong registered ship was smashed to death by waves suddenly washing over the forecastle deck when he attempted to close a weather-tight door on weather deck at rough sea. This Information Note draws the attention of the shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew to the lessons learnt from the accident.

The Incident

1. An accident happened on board a Hong Kong registered oil and chemical tanker (the *vessel*) while she was en-route from Singapore to China. A bosun was smashed to death by waves washing over the forecastle deck.
2. At the time the duty officer noticed the weather-tight door on the forecastle deck left open, the *vessel* was sailing at rough sea. He requested the bosun to close the door. The bosun reached forward alone and without any safety precautions. He was knocked heavily against the deck fixtures by waves suddenly washing over the forecastle deck. The bosun was seriously injured and subsequently he was rescued by other crew members back to the cargo control room at the aft of the *vessel*. The *vessel* was then diverted to the nearest port and the bosun was sent ashore for treatment. He was declared dead in hospital on the same day.
3. Investigation into the accident revealed the following contributing factors:
 - a) the master did not ensure that his crew had followed the safety procedures regarding closing of all deck openings and weather-tight doors before sailing in severe weather conditions; and
 - b) the safety awareness of the duty officer and the deceased bosun was inadequate as they under-estimated the danger of closing the weather-tight door on the forecastle deck while the *vessel* was sailing at rough sea.

4. The investigation also revealed the following safety issues:
 - a) the rescue operation was not executed in a coordinated manner according to the established safety procedures. Crew members rushed to the forecastle deck upon hearing the broadcast announced by the duty officer instead of following the instruction given by the master as per the shipboard safety procedures; and
 - b) the master did not seek radio medical advice, as per the shipboard safety procedures, which might cause the bosun unable to receive proper and timely first aid treatment while the *vessel* was diverting to the nearest port for rescue.

Lessons learnt

5. Crew members on board ships should strictly follow the relevant shipboard safety procedures. For instance, all deck openings and weather-tight doors should be properly closed before sailing.
6. Officer is responsible for health and safety for those under his supervision. Crew members should bear in mind that they are responsible for their own health and safety. Never under-estimate the danger of sea water washing over the deck when the vessel is sailing at rough sea.
7. The attention of the shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

Marine Department
Multi-lateral Policy Division

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