



# 香 港 商 船 資 訊

## HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

### **A fatal accident while climbing down a vertical ladder**

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

#### *Summary*

During climbing down a vertical ladder inside the trunk of crane on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier, a crane operator lost his grabbing on the ladder and fell to the bottom of the trunk and dead. 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. The accident happened on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier during discharging of cargo at berth.
2. After completion of discharging for the No.2 cargo hold, the crane operator of a stevedore company left the control cabin of the No.2 cargo crane by climbing down a long vertical ladder inside the trunk of the crane. He was later found lying on the bottom of the trunk and was certified dead on board.
3. There was no witness to the accident. It was deduced that the crane operator lost his grabbing on the ladder and fell down to the bottom of the crane trunk while climbing down the internal vertical ladder. He fell to his death as he hit against the water ballast tank valves control block.
4. The investigation into the accident revealed the main contributory factor to the accident was the crane operator did not stay alert to avoid falling from height when climbing on a vertical ladder. A long vertical ladder without guard rings increases the risk of a person climbing on it to fall sideways and hitting on any hard object placed beside the ladder.

## **Lessons learnt**

5. It is important that, while climbing a long vertical ladder which is not fitted with guard rings on board a ship, all crew members and other personnel should stay alert at all time to avoid falling from height and sideways in case of losing grab or slipping on the ladder.
  
6. The attention of 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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