



## 香港商船資訊

## HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

**Fatal accident took place during the lowering down of collapsible stanchions**

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

**Summary**

When an Able Seaman was helping to lower down collapsible stanchions on the starboard main deck, he was crushed to death by the collapsible stanchions which suddenly gave way. 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. At the time of the accident, a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier berthed at Lanshan Port in China was unloading logs from its cargo hold. To facilitate the process, the deck crew, led by the Chief Officer, lowered down collapsible stanchions on the port and starboard sides main deck beside cargo holds. Some of the deck crew, including two Able Seamen (AB1 and AB2), had just joined the vessel on that day. At that time, beside the No.4 cargo hold AB1 was working at starboard side aft under the collapsible stanchions, while AB2 was at starboard side forward. AB2 inadvertently loosened the turnbuckle which secured the collapsible stanchions. Subsequently, the stanchions gave way without warning and crushed AB1. The turnbuckle should only be loosened after the wire of the collapsible stanchions has been tightly fastened to the ship's crane. Despite being rescued shortly thereafter, AB1 was declared dead at the scene by the paramedics onboard.

2. The investigation revealed that the main contributory factors of the accident were as follows:

- (a) lack of safety awareness and familiarity with the operating procedures of the collapsible stanchions;
- (b) lack of on-site supervision by the Chief Officer, who was preoccupied with the lowering operation of the collapsible stanchions; and
- (c) familiarization training for newly-joined crew was not implemented effectively according to the shipboard safety management manual.

3. The investigation also identified that the operating procedures of the collapsible stanchions was not stated in the Shipboard Safety Management System.

### **Lessons Learnt**

4. In order to avoid recurrence of similar accidents in the future, masters, officers and crew of vessels should be conversant with and strictly follow the manufacturer's operating manual for collapsible stanchions. Furthermore, all onboard personnel should strictly follow the shipboard safety management manual, carrying out familiarization training for newly-joined crew at the earliest opportunity.

5. 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**

5 May 2021