



香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Man overboard accident during recovery of accommodation ladder*To : Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew****Summary***

After a pilot disembarked a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier, the Bosun and an able seafarer deck (the AB) then made preparation for recovering the accommodation ladder. During the recovery, the AB fell overboard from the lower platform of the ladder. He was not found eventually. This Note draws the attention of the shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew to the lessons learnt from this accident.

The Incident

1. When a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier had completed some of the cargo loading in a berth, she left under pilotage and anchored to wait for her next berthing at a nearby port.
2. The weather was poor with gale wind and high waves, and there was snowfall a few hours ago. Under such circumstances, the Bosun and an able seafarer deck (the AB) made preparation for recovering the accommodation ladder after the pilot disembarked the vessel.
3. When the AB went down the accommodation ladder and stayed on the lower platform of the ladder to release it from the ship side plating, a high wave suddenly struck at the lower platform which caused the AB to fall overboard. The AB was not found after a thorough search and rescue operation.
4. The poor weather with gale wind and high waves following the previous snowfall caused the AB to fall overboard from the slippery accommodation ladder. The investigation also identified the following contributory factors leading to this accident:
 - (a) the AB failed to wear a lifejacket and was not properly monitored by the Bosun when working over the shipside to recover the accommodation ladder;
and

- (b) There was a communication breakdown between the Master, the Chief Officer and the crew. The Master did not confirm his instruction of not requiring to recover the ladder after the pilot left the vessel was well received by the Chief Officer and the crew.

Lessons Learnt

- 5. All officers and crew on board ships should:
 - (a) familiarise with and follow the company's procedures of wearing lifejackets when working over the shipside;
 - (b) enhance safety awareness on the effect of poor weather and sea conditions; and
 - (c) strengthen the skill in the proper use of personal protective equipment.
- 6. The management company should review and establish guidelines/safety procedures on effective communication amongst the teams of the crew.
- 7. The attention of the shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

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