



## 香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

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**Deck officer fell overboard while recovering accommodation ladder***To : Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew****Summary***

While recovering the starboard accommodation ladder, a deck officer fell overboard from the last few steps of the ladder. He was later found dead. 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. Before the incident, a Hong Kong registered general cargo ship (the vessel) completed loading alongside a berth and was about to sail to an inner anchorage. After the river pilot boarded the vessel from the starboard accommodation ladder, the Master instructed the Third Officer (3/O) and an able seafarer deck (AB) to recover the ladder.
2. During the recovery of the ladder, the AB was standing on a step near the middle part of the ladder to retrieve the safety net attached, while the 3/O was standing on one of the last few steps to dismantle the portable stanchions of the ladder. Suddenly, the AB saw the 3/O holding onto a stanchion with both hands and his body was hanging outside the ladder. The stanchion eventually came off the socket of the ladder and the 3/O fell into the water.
3. A search and rescue operation was then carried out by the local coast guard upon receipt of the man overboard report, but the 3/O could not be found. Two days later, the dead body of the 3/O was found in the sea.
4. The investigation into the accident found that:
  - (i) crew members lacked safety awareness and underestimated the potential hazards of working on the slippery accommodation ladder. Working over the shipside was carried out without extra protections and crew members were not aware of the importance of wearing lifejacket; and

- (ii) the management company was not aware of the requirements of wearing lifejacket while working over the shipside as stipulated in the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (the Code). Lifejackets for work were not provided on board the vessel and no procedure for the recovery of accommodation ladder was prepared in the shipboard safety management system (SMS).

## **Lessons Learnt**

5. All masters, officers and crew of ships should always follow the requirements of wearing lifejacket while working over the shipside as stipulated in the Code and enhance safety awareness of the use of personal protective equipment such as lifejacket, safety harness, etc.

6. Management companies should provide lifejacket for working on board and establish safety procedures in the shipboard SMS for working over the shipside as well as rigging and recovering of accommodation ladder according to the Code and lessons learnt in this case.

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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