



香 港 商 船 資 訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

A fatal accident happened on board when entering a cargo hold

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

Summary

A fatal accident happened on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier during her voyage from Vancouver, USA to Nghi Son, Vietnam. The Wiper, after assisting the Fourth Engineer (4/E) in overhauling a fuel oil pump (the pump) in the engine room, left the 4/E to carry out his next job without informing other crew members on board. The Wiper was later found lying on the scrap metal cargo inside a cargo hold and declared dead on the same day. 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. A fatal accident happened on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier loaded with scrap metal during her voyage from its loading port of Vancouver, USA to Nghi Son, Vietnam for cargo discharging. The Wiper was assigned to assist the 4/E in overhauling the pump in the purifier room of the engine room. He left the 4/E after the motor from the pump had been detached so as to carry out his next job without informing other crew members on board. He was seen carrying a bucket of tools proceeding towards the forecabin direction by other crew members on deck. The Wiper was later found lying on the scrap metal cargo beside the vertical ladder in a cargo hold. Although the Wiper was rescued from the cargo hold and received treatment immediately, he was declared dead on the same day.

2. The investigation revealed that the Wiper did not follow the enclosed space entry procedure when entering a cargo hold. The main contributory factors causing the accident were insufficient safety awareness of the Wiper who underestimated the risk of entering cargo hold; failure to lock the cargo hold access hatch; ineffective communication of the crew to prepare for jobs; lack of close supervision of the Wiper and ineffective training of enclosed space entry procedure

Lessons Learnt

3. In order to avoid recurrence of similar accidents in the future, all masters, officers, and crew of vessels should:

- (a) enhance training on enclosed space entry, including the awareness of the risks involved and the precautionary measures;
- (b) lock all entrances of all unattended dangerous spaces to prevent unauthorized entry;
- (c) ensure all crew members follow the safety requirements strictly when entering enclosed space; and
- (d) ensure close supervision of the work of a wiper by his supervisor.

4. The attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers, and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

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