

# **MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 251/2022**

(Navigational & Seamanship Safety Practices)

## **Fatal accident happened during securing of a ship crane**

### **The Incident**

A fatal accident happened on a Panama registered container ship (*the vessel*) while berthing at the Kwai Tsing Container Terminal, Hong Kong. On the day of the accident, an ordinary seaman (*OS*) was assigned to assist in securing a ship crane (*the crane*) with lashing ropes onto the lashing bridge before sailing. This was done by connecting the lashing ropes to the cargo block of *the crane (the cargo block)* through a plastic-coated wire loop (*the wire*) that was secured with bulldog grips. After that, an able seafarer operated *the crane* to lift *the cargo block* until the lashing ropes were in tension. All of a sudden, *the wire* slid out of the bulldog grips and dropped from a height of about 20 metres. The shackle connected to the lashing rope together with the bulldog grip hit the *OS* who was working on the lashing bridge underneath *the crane*. Afterwards, the *OS* was evacuated to hospital for medical treatment, but he was declared dead on the same day.

2. The investigation identified that the contributory factors leading to the accident were: failure to follow the requirements of the lashing arrangement of a ship crane as specified in the manufacturer's manual; lack of safety awareness and underestimating the risk of any objects falling from height while working on the lashing bridge underneath *the crane*; and lack of knowledge of using a proper wire in compliance with the requirements of the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers.

### **Lessons Learnt**

3. In order to avoid the recurrence of similar accidents during operation in the future, ship management companies, masters, officers and crew members should:

- (a) enhance the safety culture on board, in particular when a ship crane is in operation; and

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- (b) enhance the training on board to ensure crew members are familiar with lifting gears and lifting operation, particularly the lashing arrangement of a ship crane.

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Government of the HKSAR

Date: 13 December 2022

Action file ref.: L/M. No. 5/2022 in MAI/P 901/043-2021