Fatal accident on board the Portugal registered container vessel “Northern Jupiter” at Yiu Lian Dockyards, Tsing Yi, Hong Kong on 29 June 2017

1. The incident

1.1 At about 0900 hours on 29 June 2017, a fatal industrial accident happened on board a Portugal registered container vessel “Northern Jupiter” which was under repair at the main pier of Yiu Lian Dockyards, Tsing Yi, Hong Kong. Structural reinforcement work with carlings and T-shaped stiffeners was carried out in the steering gear room aiming to strengthen the underdeck structures in way of an unit of newly fitted mooring bitts on aft mooring deck. Two riggers used two chain blocks to lift a T-shaped stiffener up to the underdeck plate for welding. The stiffener overturned, swung and struck the head of one of the two riggers to his death.

1.2 The investigation revealed the contributory factors to the accident as follows:

   a) the work of hoisting the stiffener to its fitting position had not been planned properly in advance; and

   b) the riggers were left alone to carry out the work without any safety instructions given and without any supervisor on site to monitor the work.

2. Lessons learnt

2.1 It is important that the Dockyard to act as follows:

   a) to instruct their frontline staff to be vigilant about hoisting operation of heavy objects;

   b) to carry out work plan in advance by conducting risk assessment of heavy lifting to identify all potential hazards; and

   c) to issue lifting plan for every heavy lifting operation to show the lifting method, safety instruction, equipment arranged and the number of people involved, handling of emergencies etc. A safety officer should be deployed as supervisor to ensure the safety of the lift.