Fatal accident on board Hong Kong Registered Ship "*Sainty Vanguard*" at sea 30nm west off Hadera of Israel on 19 December 2013

1.   The Incident

1.1 On 19 Dec 2013, a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier, *Sainty Vanguard*, was at sea waiting for berth at Hadera, Israel to discharge cargo coal in bulk. At the time of the accident, some crew members were repairing the faulty ballast valves actuating system inside the double bottom underneath the cargo holds.

1.2 For reasons unknown, a Bosun entered alone into a cargo hold access space without gas freeing and ventilation, wherein no repair work had been scheduled. He lost his consciousness and fell on the spiral ladder in the access space. He was then discovered by the chief officer who passed by the cargo hold and noticed a tool box placed beside the cargo hold access hatch.

1.3 The chief officer called for assistance and he immediately entered into the space without following the enclosed space rescue procedures. When a crew arrived, he entered into the space for assistance too, but came out immediately after he saw the chief officer and the Bosun lying inside the space. He called the Master through portable radiotelephone immediately and the rescue operation was commenced. Eventually, the chief officer was saved but the Bosun was certified dead later in the hospital ashore.

2.   Lessons learnt

2.1 It is important that all officers and crew on board ships with enclosed space entry or rescue responsibilities should strictly follow the relevant enclosed spaces entry and rescue procedures. They should participate in the drills at least once every two months and the drills should be planned and conducted in accordance with requirements stipulated in Chapter 3 Regulation 19 of SOLAS Convention.