

Fatal accident on board the Hong Kong registered ship “Saga Frontier” at Antwerp, Belgium on 11 April 2015

1. The incident

- 1.1 An accident happened onboard the Hong Kong registered general cargo carrier “Saga Frontier” (hereinafter referred to as *the Vessel*) in the bulk terminal No. Q1211 at Antwerp, Belgium on 11 April 2015.
- 1.2 While the semi-coke bulk cargoes in the No.4 cargo hold was being discharged, two stevedores and one bulldozer operator entered the forward stair trunk for entry of the No.4 cargo hold to sweep the cargo for facilitating the discharge operation. They had been overcome by the oxygen deficient atmospheres at the bottom of the stair trunk due to the oxygen consumption of semi-coke and collapsed.
- 1.3 Some minutes later, another stevedore entered the stair trunk to check why his colleagues did not exit from the bottom door of the stair trunk and enter into the cargo hold. He discovered the incident, and escaped at once from the trunk, then reported the incident to the duty officer on deck.
- 1.4 The three casualties were transferred by the gantry crane to the jetty and sent to a hospital for treatment. However, they were certified dead later.

2. Lessons learnt

- 2.1 The stair trunk was categorized to be an enclosed space. Sufficient ventilation to the stair trunk prior to the entry required, it ensures safe working environment to the stevedores.
- 2.2 “enclosed space entry permit” required before entering an enclosed space. The entry permit certifies the safe working environment within the stair trunk.