

The fatal accident on open deck of Hong Kong registered bulk carrier “*HONY FUTURE*” in heavy weather on 29 February 2016.

1. The incident

- 1.1 On 29 February 2016, a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier “*Hony Future*” (*the vessel*) was at South China Sea en-route from port of Bandar Abbas, Iran to Caofeidian, China under adverse weather condition.
- 1.2 At about 0815 hours (UTC +8), when a fitter and an engine cadet just came on the port quarter deck from the accommodation to clean a bunker oil patch on deck, they were smashed by heavy waves suddenly washing over them in position of 09°10’N, 109°20’E. The engine cadet died two hours later due to serious injury on his head. The fitter was safely evacuated and admitted to the shore hospital in the nearest port Vung Tou, Vietnam on the next day. He recovered after about one-month’s medical treatment.
- 1.3 The investigation into the accident revealed the main contributory cause as follows:
 - a) the boisterous sea waves washed over the deck and pushed the fitter and the engine cadet heavily onto the deck fixtures when they were on main deck;
 - b) the fitter and the engine cadet lacked of safety awareness and vigilance of the seas might wash over the deck from windward side when they went to work on open deck in heavy weather; and
 - c) the shipboard safety procedures on conducting the risk assessment and monitoring the crew for working on open deck in heavy weather were not strictly followed.
- 1.4 The investigation also revealed the following safety factors:
 - a) the shipboard training was not effective; and
 - b) the shipboard procedure of handling bunker samples was not strictly followed.

2. Lessons learnt

- 2.1 When moving or working on open deck under adverse weather condition, the shipboard safety procedures and “Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers” must be strictly followed, particularly a risk assessment should be undertaken.

- 2.2 Senior officers in charge of the work must ensure that crew members be aware of and staying alert about the potential risks and safety precautions, and closely monitor the operation.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of shipboard training must be improved and verified/monitored.
- 2.4 Bunker sample must be retained properly in accordance with the shipboard procedure of handling bunker samples.