



香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Fatal fall accident happened while carrying out cargo hold cleaning operation

To : *Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew*

Summary

A fatal fall accident occurred when the Second Engineer (2/E) was cleaning a cargo hold alone at the Permanent Means of Access (PMA) platform on board a Hong Kong registered bulk carrier during her voyage from Bin Qasim, Pakistan to King Abdullah, Saudi Arabia. This Note draws the attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers, and crew to the lessons learnt from this accident.

The Incident

1. A Hong Kong registered bulk carrier was having cargo hold cleaning at sea during her voyage from Bin Qasim, Pakistan to King Abdullah, Saudi Arabia for loading clinker cargo. The 2/E fell from the PMA platform in the cargo hold at a height of about 15 meters onto the tank top while he was cleaning the topside area of the cargo hold without wearing a safety belt, resulting in his death on the same day.
2. The investigation revealed that the work of cargo hold cleaning was carried out without sufficient site supervision; the lack of safety awareness of the crew who underestimated the risk of falling from the PMA platform and did not strictly following the requirements of the “General Safe Working Practice” of the shipboard Safety Management System (SMS) to wear fall preventive equipment when working at height.
3. The investigation also identified that the preparation work for the cargo hold cleaning did not completely meet the requirements of Chapter 14 “Permit to Work Systems” and Chapter 17 “Work at Height” of the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (the Code).

Lessons Learnt

4. In order to avoid recurrence of similar accidents in the future, all masters, officers, and crew members of vessels should:

- (a) enhance safety culture onboard to ensure the permit to work system to be followed and safety belt to be worn before conducting work at height; and
- (b) strictly follow the requirements of the Code and shipboard SMS manual when working at height.

5. The attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers, and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt above.

Marine Department
Multi-lateral Policy Division

24 March 2022