

**Marine Department Notice No. 74 of 2010**

**(Marine Industrial Accident)**

**Safe Handling of Cargo At Sea**

Whist a Chinese registered river-trade container vessel was moored alongside a dumb steel lighter at the Stonecutters Island Public Cargo Working Area undergoing cargo operations, a succession of waves rocked the vessels causing the an empty cargo slings to swing severely. A hook attached to the slings struck a sailor who fell, struck the hatch coaming and sustained serious injuries.

The investigation revealed that the sailor, working on top of the containers did not keep a safe distance from the cargo slings. Also, the master of the vessel and the person-in-charge of the lighter did not prepare a safety plan for shipboard cargo handling in inclement weather even though it was raining and the vessels were subject to wave actions.

2. To avoid recurrence of similar accidents, the attention of owners, masters and person-in-charge of all vessels are drawn to the following important advice: -

- The effect of weather and sea condition on safe cargo handling at sea must be carefully assessed as part of the work planning; and
- All persons involved in cargo operations must keep a safe distance from cargo slings as they may swing suddenly due to unexpected ship movements at sea.

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