

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 127 OF 2011

(Marine Industrial Safety)

Safe Stacking and Handling of Waste Paper Bales

A fatal accident occurred this year in which a slinger, whilst unloading waste paper bales on board a dumb steel lighter, was crushed by a large number of paper bales which was being toppled down from a tall single standing cargo stack. Unfortunately, the slinger suffered serious injury and later died in the hospital.

2. The investigation into the accident is still in progress. Preliminary findings revealed that, at the time of accident, the deceased was working near a row of waste paper bales which was stacked to seven tiers high without proper support. No one was aware of the hazard of bales toppling down from the tall cargo stack.

3. To avoid the recurrence of similar accidents, the attention of owners and masters of vessels and persons in charge of works are drawn to the following important advice:

- before starting work, a full assessment of the risk involved and effective measures to prevent workers from injury should be taken;
- cargo bales should be stowed by stacking them evenly in the cargo hold so as to avoid a big difference in heights and to ensure the stability of the cargo stacks is maintained;
- unloading of stacked cargo bales should start from the top tiers downward gradually in consecutive tiers to avoid forming single stacks or canyons between stacks; and
- shoring supports or other effective measures shall be employed to properly secure stacked cargoes to prevent workers from injury when working close to the cargo stacks is unavoidable.

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