

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 106 OF 2015

(Marine Industrial Safety)

Safe Handling of Containers

The Incident

A sailor on board an ocean going container ship was killed when unloading cargo operation was under progress.

2. During discharging of containers onto a barge from the container ship, the barge listed towards the container ship due to uneven disposition of containers loaded on the barge.

3. At the time of the accident, when a container was being lifted up by the crane of the barge from the container ship, the barge further listed towards the container ship. Suddenly, containers stacked on the barge collapsed resulting in four of the containers falling onto a hatch cover of the container ship. The victim, who was working on top of the hatch cover, was crushed and killed by the falling containers.

4. Investigation into the accident revealed that:

- a) the containers stowed in the cargo hold of the barge were not evenly distributed to prevent unduly listing of the barge;
- b) the containers in the cargo hold of the barge were not properly secured; and
- c) no risk assessment was conducted prior to commencement of works.

Lessons Learnt

5. During cargo operations for loading and unloading of containers at sea, it is important that:

- a) containers stowed on a vessel should be evenly distributed to prevent causing vessel heeling;
- b) containers should be adequately secured by twist-locks, stacking cones and lashing equipment; and
- b) the cargo work should be well-planned and the risks should be assessed taking into consideration of the ship's stability under cargo operations.

6. The attention of owners and masters of ships, persons-in-charge of works and works supervisors is drawn to the important lessons learnt from the accident.

Michael W. L. WONG
Director of Marine

Marine Department
Government of the HKSAR
Date: 4 August 2015
Action files ref: L/M. No. MAI/ P 903 /013-2014