

Injured while loading in port

The vessel was in port loading and discharging containers. It was winter, clear skies and no wind. The chief officer was working in the cargo office and an AB and bosun were on deck monitoring the cargo operation. Two cranes were working the vessel with the assistance of stevedores. It was just before lunchtime when the stevedore shift would change.

The crane operator was lifting an empty 40-foot container to fit in its designated position. The operator had a problem fitting the container into the designated bay and it got stuck several times. A stevedore who was close by came over without notifying the crane operator and tried to push the container as the crane operator tried to fit it in. The container bay was just by the edge of the cargo hold opening.

The crane operator could not see the stevedore pushing the 40-foot container to try to fit it in the container bay. The operator continued to manoeuvre the crane to try to fit the container into the assigned position. The

container suddenly slammed into the railing and broke it and also hit the stevedore. This caused him to lose his balance and fall 5m into the cargo hold.

The bosun who heard the scream, rushed to the edge of the cargo hold and could see the stevedore lying on top of a container in the cargo hold. He informed the Chief Officer over the radio. After about 15 minutes an ambulance arrived at the scene and the paramedics rushed the stevedore to hospital.

The stevedore had broken his leg and fractured his skull. He was not wearing a helmet or safety vest. ■



Discussion

Go to the "File" menu and select "Save as..." to save the pdf-file on your computer.

You can place the marker below each question to write the answer directly into the file.



When discussing this case please consider that the actions taken at the time made sense for all involved. Do not only judge, but also ask why you think these actions were taken and could this happen on your vessel?

1. What were the immediate causes of this accident?

2. Is there a risk that this kind of accident could happen on our vessel?

3. How could this accident have been prevented?

4. What are our procedures if we see a stevedore doing anything unsafe onboard?

5. How do we ensure that stevedores and contractors follow required safety practices?

6. Do we have a tool box meeting with the stevedores' supervisor when arriving in port?

7. If not, could this be useful?

8. What sections of our SMS would have been breached if any?

9. Does our SMS address these risks?

10. How could we improve our SMS to address these issues?

11. What do you think was the root cause of this accident?

12. Is there any kind of training that we could do that addresses these issues?

Issues to consider



It is difficult to ensure that contractors and stevedores comply with the vessels safety regulations, but it is imperative that the crew on watch on deck intervene, or inform the chief officer, if they see any unsafe practices.

Injuries onboard a vessel is the third most common claim category as per P&I insurance. Slips and falls are the most common cause followed by being struck by an object which is the case in this accident.

We believe that safety will improve if the consequences of unsafe working practice are shared within the entire shipping community.