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of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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Marine Advisory: 34/2024

Subject: Hazards Associated With Loading, Moving, and Storing Heavy Objects.

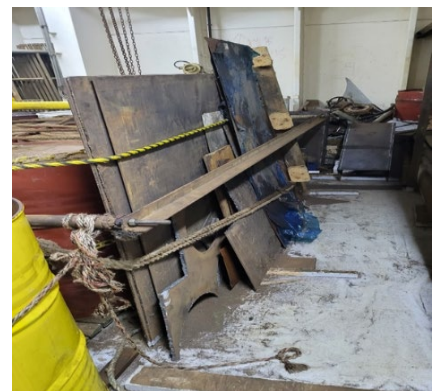
Reference: (a) [Marine Notice MLC-005](#)

Dear Shipowners/Operators/Inspectors/Masters/Crew:

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to draw the attention of ship owners, operators, inspectors, masters, and crew to the hazards seafarers are exposed to from the storage and moving of heavy steel plates for planned ship maintenance.

The Administration has recently investigated two fatal marine casualties related to the unsafe storage and movement of heavy steel plates for future repairs and maintenance. The crew members were crushed while handling the heavy steel plates in narrow places.

- The first case occurred while the vessel was moored in port. A toolbox meeting was held by the Chief Officer (C/O) and crew. The crew were then to retrieve steel plates that were kept in the steering gear room for a maintenance job.
- The trainee fitter went alone to the steering gear room and was later found unconscious, stuck between the steel plates and a steel shelf.
- The steel plates were usually secured by a locked steel bar connected to fixed steel rods on both ends of the lashing points and by two nuts. Both nuts were removed and placed on a nearby drum allowing the steel plates to fall on the trainee fitter.
- The victim was pronounced deceased by the paramedic who came onboard the ship shortly after.
- The second case occurred while the vessel was underway, a toolbox meeting was held by the C/O with the five seafarers involved to discuss the movement of nine (9) heavy steel plates from the weather deck to an interior storage location in the forecabin.
- The risk of the plates slipping and injuring a crewmember was discussed. The plan was to place



the plates slightly inclined vertically, with the upper edge resting on the passageway wall, before strapping them with a latching belt. Moving the steel plates was carried out successfully until the ninth (9th) plate.

- After the eighth (8th) plate was moved and before a coffee break, the Bosun secured the plates with the latching belt and added a wooden block across to the other side of the passageway. Upon returning from the coffee break, the Bosun removed the wooden block and latching belt while the rest of the crew moved the ninth (9th) plate.
- The steel plates then fell towards the Bosun and crushed his chest, resulting in the fatal injuries.



The investigations noted a lack of full awareness of the hazards associated with loading, moving, and storing heavy objects and equipment without taking necessary precautions before an operation/activity commences.

The Administration recommends owners, operators, masters, and the crew on Liberian flag vessels to review and amend as necessary their onboard safety training procedures developed in compliance with Part 7 of the ISM Code and paragraph 3.3.3 (c) of Liberian Marine Notice MLC-005 to ensure that masters and crew onboard receive training concerning the hazards associated with loading, moving, and storing heavy objects and equipment, which could potentially be hazardous to seafarer's health. A formal and thorough risk assessment must be conducted before loading, moving, and storing heavy objects and equipment. Additionally, a work permit should be considered to be added to the "company's operational procedures" as described in part 4 of the ILO Code of Practice, "Accident Prevention on Board Ships at Sea and in Port."

Companies should take every opportunity when conducting an ISM audit or other visits to ships in their fleet to ensure the crew is:

- following the company's safety instructions;
- are adequately trained regarding situational awareness; and
- that each seafarer understands their obligation to speak up and to stop an operation if they feel it is unsafe.

For more information, please contact the Investigations Department at investigations@lisr.com.

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