



Ship Type: All Trade Area: All

Bulletin 421 - 07/05 - Fall in Engine Room - Worldwide

The UK Club finds, through its large claims analysis, that the majority of personal injury claims are trip/fall incidents onboard and the major cause is input from the crews themselves. This bulletin highlights a recent incident onboard a Member's vessel, which has left a shipyard worker with severe injuries which he may not recover from.

The worker was preparing the area around an inspection tank for hot work on one of the upper decks in the engine room of the vessel when he stepped onto and fell through a grating in the deck. He fell a height approximately 7-8 meters and landed on one of the main engines. Bulletin 415 highlights a similar case where an engineering officer cadet fell through the space where a grating had been removed in one of the engine room decks but in this case the grating collapsed.

Upon inspection, it was found that a section of the grating had been cut away to allow two pipes to pass through it and appeared to have been in this condition for several years. The part that had been cut away was a supported section of the grating because it rested on the supporting bars of the deck but the cut left a section of the grating without support, which subsequently made the grating weak and unsafe. The worker must have stood on the weak section of the grating which then gave way and causing him to fall.

After investigation it was found that the modified grating had been a concern of a flag state inspector who noted it as a deficiency in his report a few months before this incident. Clearly nothing had been done by the crew onboard to improve the deficiency. Not being safety equipment or affecting the structure of the vessel, a modification such as this is not governed by class but by due diligence of the master and officers on board. In the opinion of the investigator, the modification was improperly done because after shortening the grating, there was no rail supporting the shorter extreme. Any modifications that may have safety implications must be planned with the ship managers and if necessary, an expert to do the work.

Source of information: Loss Prevention Department

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