



UK P&I CLUB

Ship Type: All Trade Area: Worldwide

Bulletin 506 - 01/07 - Enclosed space incident - Worldwide

For health and safety reasons, as well as for the good management of crew on board, ship's officers should ensure that a system is in place that involves daily meetings of senior personnel with other crew members on board to discuss the activities to be undertaken during the day.

Unfortunately such a system is not established on a significant number of ships and crew are often performing maintenance and other duties on board, unaware of the activities of others. The incident described below was brought to the attention of the Association in the hope that this information is shared and we can benefit from discussing the incident; taking note of the lessons learned in order to prevent a repeat occurrence on your own ships.

At the end of his day shift the boatswain performed rounds closing and securing all openings but was unaware of a fitter busily working in the forepeak store. The boatswain closed and secured the access to the forepeak store without noticing the fitter inside.

It wasn't until 0300 the next morning, when the motorman was looking for the fitter, that it was realised he was missing. The motorman informed the bridge and a search party was mustered.

The fitter was found in the forepeak store suffering from shock, the symptoms of which he suffered for several days.



Lessons learned:

- It is important for department heads to be aware of the work being undertaken by their staff. This is best done with a planned work schedule, which can be derived at the beginning of each day, or planned in advance and continuously modified as necessary.

Team meetings before work allow the opportunity for work progress to be monitored and for all crew to be aware of the work being undertaken by their fellow seafarers.

- The chief engineer would expect himself or his staff on duty to be notified of deck crew working in engine room compartments. In the same respect it is important that engineers notify deck officers of their intentions to work on equipment elsewhere on board.

If the chief officer is informed of engineer operations being undertaken in spaces such as the forepeak store, etc, then that information is probably useless unless shared. A good system would see the C/O inform the boatswain, who in turn should bring this to the attention of any crew working in the area.

- Before closing access to a space, the space should be checked even if only by a warning shout to determine that the space is cleared.
- A prudent officer will ensure that he knows where his staff are working and ensures that they report to him when work is completed or finished for the day.

Source of information: Loss Prevention Department
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