



# Technical Circular

No.: 020/2025

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

## **Subject: Lessons learnt from Occupational Fatality during Personnel Transfer.**

1. This circular highlights safety concerns arising from incidents and casualties associated with occupational fatalities during personnel transfers. A fatality occurred in adverse sea conditions, wherein the Master of the ship fell from the ladder while disembarking to a service boat. While attempting to reach a lifebuoy, ship movement and prevailing rough weather prevented successful recovery. Despite immediate rescue efforts, including the deployment of the lifeboat and life raft, visual contact was lost, and retrieval attempts were unsuccessful.

The root cause of the incident can be attributed to unstable transfer conditions, inadequate securing arrangements, adverse environmental factors, and rescue coordination challenges. The disembarkation process occurred under dynamically shifting conditions, where ship movement and sea state contributed to instability, leading to the loss of balance while transitioning to the service boat.

This incident has resulted in a loss of life, underscoring the critical need for enhanced personnel transfer safety protocols and emergency response coordination.

2. Based on lessons learned from this incident, implementing the following measures can significantly mitigate the risk of recurrence:

### 2.1. Preemptive Risk Assessment & Weather Monitoring

- a. Mandatory pre-disembarkation risk assessments to evaluate sea state, ship motion, and environmental hazards before personnel transfers.
- b. Real-time weather tracking integration to equip vessels with monitoring systems and ensure timely risk communication before operations.
- c. Enhanced crew briefing procedures requiring structured safety discussions before boarding operations commence.

### 2.2. Emergency Preparedness & Rescue Coordination

- a. Optimized life-saving equipment positioning, ensuring lifebuoys are readily accessible and tethering options are available for personnel recover
- b. Refined SAR procedures, strengthening tracking mechanisms to maintain visual contact during retrieval efforts.
- c. Regular emergency response drills, including man-overboard recovery simulations, to improve crew reaction efficiency.

### 2.3. Ladder Stability & Securing Arrangements:

- a. Enhanced ladder stability and grip support, including secure handholds, non-slip rungs, and reinforced attachment points.
- b. Implementation of tethering systems, ensuring personnel transferring between vessels use safety harnesses or secured lines where feasible.
- c. Standardized safe transfer positions, minimizing exposure to ship pitching or unpredictable movements.

#### 2.4. Preventive Maintenance & Compliance Checks

- a. Boarding infrastructure maintenance, ensuring safer access points and improved illumination for emergency transfers.
  - b. Audits of securing mechanisms for personnel transfers, verifying boarding ladders, handrails, and grip points comply with industry standards.
  - c. Adherence to international maritime safety regulations, aligning vessel operational procedures with IMO guidelines and regulatory requirements.
3. Owners & Managers are to take note of above in order that corrective actions can be taken to avoid similar situations in future.

**Enclosure:** Nil.

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