



SAFETY BULLETIN

Safety at Survey Sites



31st January 2026

1. Overview

Our Safety Bulletins are outcomes of investigations into specific incidents or near misses occurred during the course of survey within the ship/ shipyard or port/ workshop and aim to provide recommendations to our surveyors, to prevent such incidents from reoccurring in the future.

It's heartening to note the near miss reporting in the second half of 2026 was noticeably enhanced. Same can be concluded to better dissemination of the importance of near miss reporting & monitoring at the survey stations. While most incidents did **not result in an injury**, several had **high potential for serious harm**, underscoring the importance of vigilance, situational awareness, and assertive use of **Stop Work Authority**.

2. Accidents (Resulting in Injury)

A limited number of reported cases resulted in actual injury and loss of man-hours. These accidents underline how routine activities can escalate when basic safeguards fail.

- Surveyor slipped during pilot ladder disembarkation in choppy sea conditions, resulting in ankle sprain and medical leave.
- Surveyor slipped on wet stairway/deck during internal movement; three-point contact prevented fall but minor injury occurred.

In all such cases, contributing factors included environmental conditions and momentary loss of situational awareness.

3. KEY INCIDENT CATEGORIES & OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Unsafe Access, Working at Height & Openings

Examples include unsecured gangways shifting during boarding, pilot ladders rigged beyond safe reaching distance, unsecured hatch covers falling during ladder access, and missing handrails near deck openings, all of which had potential to cause serious falls.

- Gangway not fully lowered and temporary access provided using loose wooden planks which slipped during boarding.
- Gangway shifted due to improper securing, creating unstable boarding condition.
- Pilot ladder rigged beyond safe reaching distance from accommodation ladder; embarkation aborted.
- Hatch cover fell due to ineffective securing pin while exiting steering gear compartment.
- Deck lighting hole left open near tank ladder leading to near fall incident.

Potential Consequences: Falls from height, falls into tanks/sea, serious injury or fatality

3.2 Confined Space & Tank Entry Hazards

Near misses occurred due to inadequate ventilation ducting inside ballast tanks, standby personnel leaving post, oxygen-deficient atmosphere alarms activating mid-inspection, and low battery levels in gas meters and torches during entry.

- Ventilation trunking not extended into double bottom space of ballast tank; entry suspended.
- Gas testing carried out while blower was running, leading to stop work.
- Standby person left post during tank entry, resulting in immediate evacuation.
- Low battery alarms in gas meters and torches during tank entry necessitating safe exit.
- Oxygen deficiency alarm triggered during ballast tank inspection.

Potential Consequences: Asphyxiation, loss of consciousness, fatal accidents

3.3 Suspended Loads, Lifting & Testing Operations

Incidents included sling movement during slewing of heavy components, personnel standing close to snap-back zones during bollard pull testing, and hose whip during pressure testing due to inadequate clamping.

- Synthetic rope snapped during bollard pull test; no personnel in snap-back zone.
- Sling shifted during slewing of heavy propeller boss, narrowly missing personnel.
- Air hose coupling flew off during engine room rounds.
- Hydraulic hose disconnected during pressure testing causing hose whip.
- Unsafe demonstration of relief valve operation by shutting air discharge outlet valve, stopped by surveyor.

Potential Consequences: Severe injury, crushing, whipping injuries, fatal impact

3.4 Hot Work, Fire & Energy Isolation Risks

Fire outbreak in engine room bilge occurred during authorised hot work due to oil residue and absence of fire watch. LPG leakage was also reported due to improperly secured cutting equipment.

- Bilge fire occurred during hot work due to oil residue ignition.
- Fire watch absent during hot work activity.
- LPG leakage occurred due to unsecured gas cutting equipment.
- Welding attempted adjacent to tank scheduled for air pressure testing.

Potential Consequences: Fire, explosion, serious burns, structural damage

3.5 Machinery, Equipment & System Malfunctions

Examples include malfunctioning elevators with ineffective door sensors, indicator cocks left open during engine start, and fire doors being opened suddenly in accommodation areas.

- Elevator doors malfunctioned and failed to respond correctly.
- Fire door opened suddenly by exiting personnel in accommodation alleyway.
- Indicator cock left open during auxiliary engine start causing smoke spread.

Potential Consequences: Impact injuries, entrapment, exposure to hazardous environments

3.6 Travel, Transfer & Weather-Related Risks

Boat transfer operations were suspended due to adverse weather and excessive vessel motion. Road travel near misses included aquaplaning during severe rain and tyre failure on highways.

- Boat transfer aborted due to adverse weather and excessive vessel movement.
- Gangway detached from magnets during rolling while transferring personnel.
- Vehicle aquaplaned during highway travel in heavy rain.
- Flat tyre occurred during work travel; safe roadside repair carried out.

Potential Consequences: Falls into sea, collision, loss of vehicle control, serious injury

3.7 Behavioural & Organisational Safety Issues

Survey attendance was pressured to proceed despite unsafe weather conditions, reliance on crew assurances without independent verification, PPE non-usage during high-risk testing, and unauthorised access incidents at office premises.

- Pressure applied to proceed with survey despite unsafe weather conditions.
- Over-reliance on crew assurances without independent verification.
- Unauthorized person entered office premises without visitor pass.
- PPE not worn during high-voltage testing.

Potential Consequences: Escalation of minor hazards into major incidents

4. KEY LEARNINGS & SAFETY EXPECTATIONS

Surveyors are reminded to:

- ❖ **Exercise Stop Work Authority** without hesitation whenever unsafe acts or conditions are observed.
- ❖ **Refuse surveys or attendance** where safe access, safe environment, or certified arrangements are not provided.
- ❖ **Maintain three-point contact** at all times when boarding, climbing, or descending.
- ❖ **Ensure confined space readiness**, including ventilation, gas testing, standby personnel, and equipment readiness.
- ❖ **Maintain safe distance from mooring lines & suspended loads** and never position oneself in snap-back or shadow zones. **Avoid conducting surveys on items that are hanging, lifted, or otherwise not securely supported.**
- ❖ **Avoid proactive involvement** in operational activities meant to be carried out by crew or service providers.
- ❖ **Remain weather-aware**, reassess risks continuously, and reschedule work if conditions deteriorate. **Undergo site-specific training/familiarization upon transfer to a new worksite.**
- ❖ **Verify PPE usage** and ensure personal safety equipment is functional and adequately charged.
- ❖ **Trust professional judgment and situational awareness** over commercial or schedule pressures. **Line managers should proactively guide surveyors to avoid undertaking surveys when weather conditions are inclement.**
- ❖ **Report all incidents and near misses**, as shared learning is a key pillar of safety improvement.

5. CONCLUSION

Although many of the reported events resulted in **no injury**, they collectively highlight recurring safety gaps and behavioural risks. Consistent application of safety fundamentals, assertive decision-making, and adherence to established procedures are essential to ensure **every surveyor returns safely after each assignment.**

