



Marine Notice No. 27 of 2023

Notice to all Shipowners, Ship Operators, Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Masters, Skippers, Fishers and Seafarers.

Health and Safety onboard vessels – Recent incidents resulting in serious injuries.

The Department of Transport wishes to bring to the attention of all vessel owners, operators, Masters, skippers, fishers and seafarers two recent reports published by the Marine Casualty Investigation Board into marine casualties resulting in serious injuries. These reports are available from the website of the Marine Casualty Investigation Board, at the links below.

1. [Report No. MCIB/315: Investigation involving the merchant vessel “Arklow Clan” at the port of Aberdeen.](#)
2. [Report No. MCIB/307: Investigation involving “FV Marliona” at Greencastle, Co. Donegal.](#)

The purpose of this Marine Notice is also to remind vessel owners, operators, Masters, skippers, fishers and seafarers of their responsibilities in relation to carrying out routine tasks and maintenance operations onboard vessels in such a manner so as to reduce the risk of serious injury to the lowest possible level. Reference should also be made to the International Labour Office publication entitled “[Accident prevention on board ship at sea and in port](#)” published by ILO Publications, Geneva, Switzerland.

In particular, the following issues are highlighted:

- A hazard identification and risk assessment process should be carried out as part of the planning of hazardous operations onboard. Method statements should be compiled for all hazardous activities on vessels and kept under active review. Such documentation should be communicated fully and effectively to all relevant crew and taking account of the working language onboard.
- Permit to work procedures should be followed and personnel involved should be provided with a “toolbox talk” prior to commencing hazardous tasks.

- Appropriate PPE should always be available and used accordingly. Such PPE must be subject to regular inspections. Operators of vessels subject to the requirements of the International Safety Management Code should ensure such inspections are recorded in the vessel's planned maintenance system.
- The dangers of working at height and the obligation to follow both legislation and safety guidance, so as to always minimise risks.
- The dangers of operations involving the lifting of heavy equipment, e.g. trawl doors of fishing vessels as per the report highlighted. Owners and operators of vessels should ensure that crewmembers are aware of the hazards associated with crush zones and are especially careful not to put their limbs in crush zones. Vessels should be risk assessed for crush zones and they should be visibly marked with stencils or signage.
- For fishing vessels, the physical hazards associated with particular fishing methods such as trawling, beam trawling and scallop dredging, etc. should be understood by the crew. (See [Marine Notice No. 53 of 2021](#) – Hazards associated with trawling on small fishing vessels). Also, the hazards involved with operations in port involving lifting fishing gear need to be understood by both crew and any other personnel involved.
- Adherence to the relevant hours of work and rest legislation applicable to merchant ships or fishing vessels must be ensured. In particular, Masters/Skippers should ensure that personnel who are due compensatory rest periods in accordance with the legislation are not involved in hazardous operations until after they have taken such compensatory rest.

Note: Marine Notices are issued purely for maritime safety and navigation reasons and should not be construed as conferring rights or granting permissions.

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11/04/2023

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