

SAFETY ALERT

Pilot Ladder Failure

Date: 11th July 2013.

Distribution: Port Skills & Safety Membership

PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS ALERT TO APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF YOUR TEAMS

**High Hazard
Reportable
Injury Accident** ✓

**Reportable
Dangerous
Occurrence**

**High Risk
“Near
Miss”**

**Plant/
Equipment
Defect Report**

During disembarkation of a 3695 DWT dry cargo vessel in ballast the ship’s pilot ladder failed as the pilot was climbing down to the waiting launch. Both ropes on the ladder parted simultaneously (refer to Photo 1) causing the pilot to fall approximately 2.0 metres to the deck of the launch. The pilot sustained injuries to his ankle which resulted in a considerable lost time accident. It could have been far more serious!

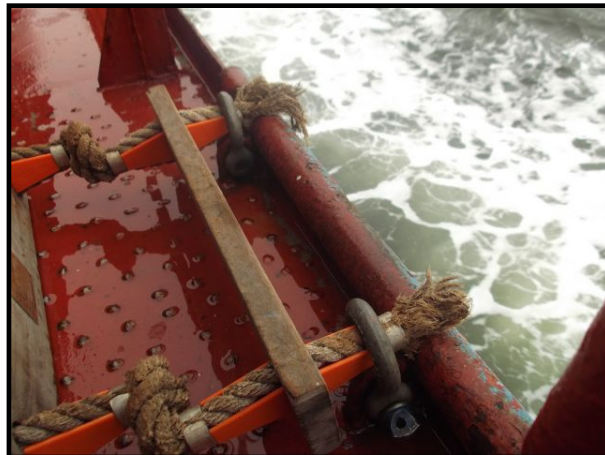


Photo 1 – Failed Ropes on Pilot Ladder

There are no secondary means of safety on a pilot ladder. As such, pilot ladders fail to danger. Given a repeat of this failure on a larger vessel a pilot would fall a significant distance. Investigations show that there are many similar incidents around the world.

ACTIONS:

- **Prior to using a pilot ladder confirm with the vessel's Master that the pilot ladder is safe to use and complies with all International Regulations.**
- **Pilots and Deckhands should visually inspect a pilot ladder for any obvious defects prior to its use.**
- **Pilot ladders are made of natural fibre rope and wood. Such materials can be subject to degradation from chemicals and cargoes which may impair the strength of the ladder and make them unsafe. Pilots and launch crew should be aware of this as part of their visual inspection.**
- **If there is any suspicion that a pilot ladder is unsafe – DO NOT USE.**
- **Defective ladders must be reported to MCA.**