



DIGEST issue 1, Oct. 2021

SAFETY LESSONS

from HELMEPA's
Maritime Community



Sharing lessons learned

VIRP Digest is a quarterly e-bulletin, sharing 'lessons learned' from maritime accidents, incidents, and near-misses uploaded by HELMEPA member-vessels to the Voluntary Incident Reporting Platform (VIRP).

Fostering proactiveness and sustainability

Sharing 'lessons learned' from the analysis of previous incidents helps avoid the human errors that lead to the repetition of similar incidents and accidents in the future. Active participation of a company in the VIRP reinforces a strong maritime safety culture at all company levels.

Being part of safety cause

All managing companies-members of HELMEPA are provided, upon request, with an exclusive access code to upload their vessels' incidents and near misses and view all the database reports and emerging trends through a wide variety of filters.

Collective impact

813 reports by 46 member managing companies are already uploaded to VIRP.

Already, useful statistics give lead to initial trends reporting and findings.

Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

STFs is the most frequent cause of personnel injury on-board, accounting for 36% of all accidents on ships between 2014 – 2020

EMSA 2021, Preliminary Annual Overview

Slips, trips and falls (STFs) are considered to be simple accidents, although they often pose a serious threat to crew members' health, and they are the main reason for many injury claims to P&I Clubs.

STFs may cause various types of injuries to seafarers, from less severe sprains to more serious back injuries, fractures and even fatalities while conducting duties onboard. For example, an A.B. nearly stepped on an oil spot that had leaked on deck by a nearby winch and was marginally saved by the shouting of a bosun. This case seems to become a trend as several similar near miss and accident reports are shared by our members regarding STFs during routine operations on board.



VIRP Statistics

Incident categories

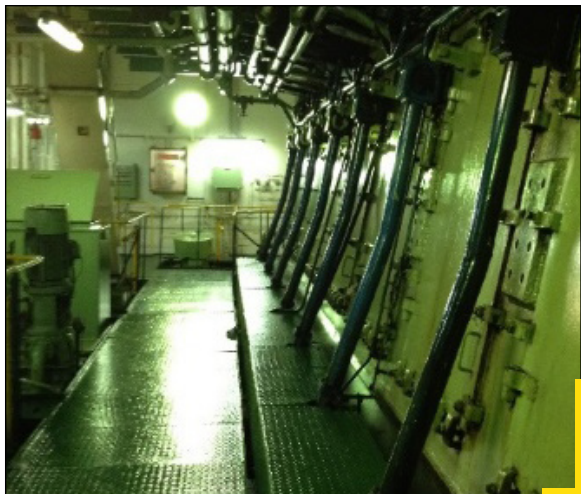
Sample: 813 reports

Mechanical Failure	54%	Cargo Issue	2%
Electrical/Electronic Failure	20%	Fire/Explosion	2%
Personnel Injury	12%	Collision	1%
Spill on Deck	5%	Contact/Groundin	1%
Hull Failure	3%	Fatality	0,3%

VIRP statistics are extracted solely from the incident reports submitted to the system and therefore can be used only in relation to the number and types of the platform's total reports.

STFs are preventable if procedures, processes, and risk assessments are strictly followed.

Apart from regularly inspecting machinery for leakage as well as floors and decks for oily / slippery spots and taking all necessary precautions, crews must often be reminded and trained to always watch their steps while walking onboard, as they live on a moving environment with obstacles and possible slippery or unstable ground.



Stairs and walkways root cause

Distraction, rushing, weather conditions, poor lighting, trailing cables, unsecured mats, changes in levels and slopes, etc.

- Ensure that there is always adequate lighting.
- Use precautionary warning signage and labelling near stairways, aisles and passageways.
- Use anti-skid tapes and cleats to improve stair safety.



Deck STF hazards root cause

Slippery flooring due to rainwater, oil, grease etc, permanent or temporary obstacles, poor housekeeping in general, bad weather and vessel movements, use of non-suitable footwear, fatigue, loss of concentration and low risk perception.

- Regularly inspect machinery for leakages and floors and decks for oily/slippery spots from leaked cargo or other sources.
- Improve housekeeping.
- Use suitable footwear when working on deck to prevent risk of slipping.
- Keep your crew trained and regularly updated

ON-BOARD REFLECTIVE LEARNING

Forward the VIRP Digest to your company's vessels to share in regular team and safety on-board meetings

Ask crew members to identify hazard areas on-board and place warning signs to increase awareness

Useful free resources

- The Nautical Institute Alert! video "[One hand for the ship ...and one for yourself!](#)" and poster "[Mitigating slips, trips and falls](#)"
- The UK P&I Club's "[Risk Focus: Slips, Trips and Falls](#)"
- Gard "[Keep an eye out for STFs](#)"
- North of England P&I Club "[Keep Trawling not Falling](#)"
- Standard P&I Club "[Spot the Hazard](#)"
- Swedish Club "[Most common causes of injury](#)"
- The American Club's "[Slips, Trips, Falls and Lifting](#)"
- West of England P&I Club "[Clean it Up](#)"
- Safety4Sea "[Seasense - Expert thinking on STFs](#)"

JOIN EASY

UPLOAD ANONYMOUSLY SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Join VIRP + Upload your company's most significant incident or near-miss reports directly [here](#) and help us enhance maritime safety culture. Special importance is placed on submitting High Potential (HiPo) incidents or near-miss that under other circumstances could have resulted in one or more fatalities.

Note

All information uploaded is strictly anonymous. HELMEPA is the Administrator of VIRP.



This initiative is part of the project titled "Enhancing the Understanding of New and Enduring Challenges in Maritime Safety Culture in the Eastern Mediterranean" coordinated by HELMEPA in cooperation with Associate Members Lloyd's Register and DYNAMARINE in Greece and sister Association CYMEPA in Cyprus with the kind support of Lloyd's Register Foundation (LRF).

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