

## Confined space fatality

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A Member has reported an incident onboard a vessel in dry dock involving a number of fatalities caused by an explosion in a confined space.

### What happened?

The explosion occurred in a machinery space and caused a serious fire. Though the incident is still under investigation, it is considered possible that a build-up of flammable gas had occurred, which was ignited by an as yet unknown source.

### Lessons learned

The company involved has recommended the following actions:

- Ensure that confined or enclosed spaces are certified 'gas free' before work is commenced within them. It is also vital that to highlight the need to ensure that appropriate atmosphere monitoring within confined or enclosed spaces is undertaken throughout the period of work in a confined or enclosed space.
- The following precautions should also be taken:
  - All hoses carrying flammable gas should be isolated at the supply source shut-off valve and depressurised during short breaks in the work, especially during tea breaks, lunch breaks etc.
  - All hoses carrying flammable gas should be removed from spaces during longer breaks in the work, i.e. any duration in excess of one hour.

These precautions should ensure that the potential for build-up of flammable gases is minimised or prevented from reaching hazardous levels.

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