

Near-miss: Dropped object from cargo

Safety Flash Published on 18 December 2014 Generated on 24 January 2025 IMCA SF 19/14

A member has reported a near-miss incident which a crew member was almost struck by a falling object.

What happened?

A steel object of approximately 1.8kg fell from a height of 12m onto the deck, landing close to the crew member.

Our member's investigation revealed the following:

- The cargo was not sufficiently cleaned or prepared before loading.
- During vessel movement, the loose object moved towards the edge and at a certain moment fell over the edge.
- The immediate causes were identified as follows:
 - insufficient cleaning of the cargo prior to delivery
 - insufficient checking of the cargo prior to loading by the member.
- The root cause was identified to be insufficient awareness of client failure to clean the cargo could result in a hazardous situation.
- Our member noted that although the responsibility for delivering the cargo in a safe state lies with the client, it should not be taken for granted that this had been done, and the condition of the cargo should always be checked before loading.

Our member took the following actions:

- Immediate inspection of the cargo for other loose items and removal thereof – insofar as the objects could be reached safely.
- Creation of exclusion zones underneath areas which could not be cleaned.
- Circulated this incident report to re-emphasize the hazards of dropped objects.
- Ensured pre-job risk assessments emphasize the possibility of loose objects on the cargo.
- Ensured client awareness of the responsibility to deliver the cargo in safe state.

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